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West Asia ...

Assam, Kerala and the Union Territory of Puducherry. On March 25, the government held an all-party meeting to brief the leaders of the political parties about the West Asia situation, where a detailed presentation was given about the steps taken by the government to deal with the situation.

While making a statement in Lok Sabha on March 23, the prime minister had said that the difficult global conditions caused by the West Asia conflict are likely to persist for a long time and called upon the nation to remain prepared and united, just as it had stood together during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Modi also drew the attention of the House to the internal security dimension of the crisis, warning that certain elements attempt to exploit such situations. He said all security agencies have been placed on alert and that security across all domains, coastal, border, cyber and strategic installations is being further strengthened.

"Whether it is coastal security, border security, cyber security or strategic installations, the security of all is being reinforced," he had said.

Urging patience, restraint and vigilance, and cautioning against those who may seek to exploit the situation by spreading falsehoods, engaging in black-marketing or hoarding, Modi appealed to all state governments to ensure strict monitoring and swift action against such elements.

Expressing his abiding faith in the collective resolve of the nation, the prime minister, in his speech in the Lok Sabha, also said that when every government and every citizen of this country walk together, "we can challenge every challenge, this is our identity, and this is our strength".

Addressing a media event later on the same day, Modi said challenges have continued to mount one after another even after the COVID-19 pandemic and there has not been a single year that has not tested India and Indians.

"But with the united efforts of 1.4 billion Indians, India is moving forward while facing every disaster," he said.

Modi said India is moving forward with renewed confidence and instead of postponing challenges, India confronts them head-on.

Petrol, diesel...

Hardeep Singh Puri at Rs 24 per litre for petrol and Rs 30 for diesel, and by his ministry at Rs 26 and Rs 81.90, respectively.

Alongside, the government imposed an export duty of Rs 21.50 per litre on diesel and Rs 29.50 per litre on aviation turbine fuel (ATF), reinstating a levy first introduced in July 2022 to curb windfall gains by refiners following Russia's invasion of Ukraine and later withdrawn in December 2024.

However, unlike last time, there is no windfall tax that has been levied on domestically produced crude oil by firms like ONGC.

Prices of crude oil – the raw material for making petrol and diesel – have gone up from around USD 70 per barrel before the start of the conflict in the Middle East to over USD 100, said Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.

"The government had two options – pass on the increase to consumers (by way of an increase in petrol and diesel prices) or take a hit (by cutting excise duty). The government chose the latter," she told reporters.

Fuel prices in India have remained largely unchanged since April 2022 despite geopolitical shocks – from the Russia-Ukraine war to the Middle East crisis – that have driven sharp swings in global oil prices. The country depends on imports for 88 per cent of its crude oil needs.

In contrast, fuel prices have risen by 30-50 per cent across South and Southeast Asian countries, 30 per cent in North America, and 20 per cent in Europe since the onset of the current crisis.

CBIC Chairman Vivek Chaturvedi said the windfall tax on exports will result in a gain of about Rs 1,500 crore in the first fortnight while the government will have to forgo over Rs 7,000 crore in revenue because of the excise duty cut.

Explaining the rationale for levy of the export tax in form of a special additional excise duty (SAED), he said the surge in international prices had created an incentive for refiners to export and this move will help make available fuel for domestic consumption.

Sharma said the 2022 requirement for refiners to sell 50 per cent of petrol exports and 30 per cent of diesel exports in the domestic market remains in place.

Chaturvedi said the export tax will be reviewed fortnightly – as was the practice previously – to align the duty with prevailing rates.

The government can levy up to Rs 50 per litre SAED on ATF. However, the levy will not be applicable on fuel exported by public sector oil companies to Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. It will also not apply to ATF supplied to foreign going aircrafts.

The excise duty on petrol has been cut from Rs 21.90 per litre to Rs 11.90 and that on diesel from Rs 17.80 a litre to Rs 7.80, he said.

The war in the Middle East has not just led to a spike in international oil prices but also disrupted global energy supply chains. While India has managed to secure crude oil lost in the blockage of a critical shipping lane of Strait of Hormuz, cooking gas LPG supplies have been disrupted.

State-owned oil companies have not just been absorbing the impact of high oil prices but have also managed to raise domestic LPG production by 40 per cent by diverting streams they previously used to make valuable petrochemicals. This led to a situation of record losses.

Puri in a post on X put the "very high losses" at Rs 24 per litre for petrol and Rs 30 for diesel.

His ministry, however, in a statement gave rationale for the excise duty cut and said, "At current international crude prices, under-recoveries (difference between cost and retail selling price) stand at approximately Rs 26 per litre on petrol and Rs 81.90 per litre on diesel. The combined daily under-recovery being absorbed by oil marketing companies (OMCs) is approximately Rs 2,400 crore."

After the reduction in duty, the incidence of excise on petrol will be Rs 11.90 per litre (Rs 1.40 basic excise duty, Rs 3 special additional excise duty, Rs 2.50 agriculture infrastructure and development cess and Rs 5 on road and infrastructure cess).

On diesel, the incidence will be Rs 7.80 per litre (Rs 1.80 basic excise duty, Rs 4 agriculture infrastructure and development cess and Rs 2 road and infrastructure cess).

Considering 175 billion litres of auto fuel sales annually (115 billion litres of diesel and 60 billion litres of petrol), the impact of the duty cut would be Rs 1.75 lakh crore annually, according to industry estimates.

The first signs of stress came when Nayara Energy, the country's largest private fuel retailer, raised petrol price by Rs 5 per litre and diesel by Rs 3 a litre on Thursday. Petrol at Nayara pumps now costs Rs 100.71 a litre and diesel costs Rs 91.31 per litre.

State-owned fuel retailers, who control about 90 per cent of the market, continue to keep rates unchanged at Rs 94.77 a litre for petrol in Delhi and Rs 87.67 per litre for diesel.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in a post on X said the reduction in excise duty "will provide protection to consumers from rise in prices".

The government, she said, has always ensured that citizens are protected from vagaries of supply and costs of essential goods.

"Further, duties have been imposed on exports of diesel at Rs 21.5 per litre and on ATF at Rs 29.5 per litre. This will ensure adequate availability of these products for domestic consumption," she added.

Oil Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said international crude prices have gone through the roof in the last one month from around USD 70 dollars per barrel to around USD 122.

"Consequently, petrol and diesel prices for consumers have gone up all over the world. Prices have increased by around 30-50 per cent in Southeast Asian countries, 30 per cent in North American countries, 20 per cent in Europe and 50 per cent in African countries," he said, adding that the government had two choices – either increase prices drastically or bear the brunt on its finances.

In keeping with the commitment of the last four years since the conflict in Russia-Ukraine started, the government decided to take a hit on its own finances again to safeguard the Indian citizens.

"The government has taken a huge hit on its taxation revenues to ensure very high losses of oil companies (approximately Rs 24 per litre for petrol and Rs 30 a litre for diesel) at this time of sky high international prices are reduced," he said.

J-K Assembly ...

University (NLU) in Jammu. Speaker Rather requested the MLAs to remain seated, assuring both sides that he would provide them enough time to speak on the issues.

"I have heard everyone. I request that you allow the Question Hour to proceed. We have not come here for sloganeering. There could be important issues; we cannot deny that. But we will raise it in an orderly manner after the Question Hour," Rather said.

As the MLAs sat down and Minister Sakeena Itoo started replying to the first question, BJP legislator Surjit Singh Slathia rose and demanded assurance from the

government on the NLU.

Chaos erupted again as National Conference, PDP, Congress, CPI(M) and Independent MLAs trooped to the Well of the House but were stopped by the Marshalls, leading to intensified sloganeering against Israel.

The BJP MLAs also shouted "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" and "Vande Mataram", and called for the alleged discrimination against Jammu to end, triggering noisy scenes.

There were heated exchanges between the treasury and opposition benches, with Congress MLA Irfan Hafiz Lone and BJP legislators virtually coming to blows amid pro- and anti-Modi sloganeering. Timely intervention by Marshalls prevented the situation from getting worse, prompting the speaker to adjourn the house for half an hour.

Earlier, Congress MLA Sadig held a protest outside the assembly in support of Iran.

"We understand that Khamenei was not a political leader but a religious leader, but no country has the right to assassinate any religious leader of any country. We consider him a martyr. We stand in solidarity with Iran," Sadig said.

He lauded Iran for resisting the aggression despite economic sanctions.

Talking to media, CPI(M) leader Tarigami described the Iran crisis as a serious global concern.

He said the conflict has created a grave situation worldwide, impacting economic stability, fuel supply, and increasing tensions across regions.

Highlighting India's historical and cultural ties with Iran, Tarigami said the Government of India must take a clear stand and openly condemn the war.

"India, as a country with a rich civilisational legacy and global standing, should play an active role in promoting peace," he said.

Tarigami said disputes must be resolved through dialogue, urging India to take a strong, proactive role on the global stage to ensure peace.

The second phase of the budget session began on Friday after a five-week recess. The first leg began on February 2 and ended on the 20th of the month.

In the first phase, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah presented the Union Territory's budget on February 6, and the House passed grants for various departments after detailed discussions conducted in twin sittings each day.

The current session will conclude on April 4.

According to the notified business schedule, March 30 and April 1 have been earmarked for private members' bills, while March 31 and April 2 are reserved for private members' resolutions.

7killed...

Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday took stock of rescue and relief operations following a major avalanche at Zojila pass along Srinagar-Leh National Highway.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah also expressed deep sorrow over the tragic loss of lives in the incident and extended heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

"The Lt Governor spoke to the senior officials and took stock of the rescue and relief operations following the tragic avalanche at Zojila, Ganderbal.

"The Lt Governor has extended his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families who have lost their loved ones in the unfortunate incident and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured," an official spokesman said.

He said Sinha has directed the officials to ensure the safety of the stranded persons and extend all possible assistance to those affected.

"Deeply pained by the loss of precious lives due to the tragic avalanche at Zojila. My heart goes out to the bereaved families in this hour of grief. I pray for the speedy recovery of the injured," the LG said.

West Asia ...

from escalating costs. Export duties strategically levied at Rs. 21.5 per litre on diesel and Rs. 29.5 on aviation turbine fuel, prioritizing ample domestic supply.

My deepest gratitude to Hon'ble PM Shri Narendra Modi Ji for this visionary intervention, which ensures affordability, restrains price escalation, and prioritizes India's interests above all. While global markets are in turmoil, our citizens remain shielded and secure."

Meanwhile, LG Manoj Sinha today interacted with the students from Army Goodwill School (AGS), Sautijyan, Poonch, visiting Jammu as a part of J&K Integration Tour under Operation Sadbhavana.

The tour, organised as part of the outreach programme of the White Knight Corps, is aimed at fostering national integration and holistic development of children from remote border areas.

The Lieutenant Governor lauded the Indian Army's continued commitment towards the welfare and development of youth in border areas. He said, such initiatives are instrumental in nurturing young minds and strengthening the spirit of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat'.

The contingent, comprising 33 students accompanied by teachers and Army personnel, also shared their personal experiences from the tour.

The primary objective of the tour is to provide exposure to children from border villages and to broaden their understanding of the nation's cultural, social, and institutional framework, while fostering confidence and a sense of belonging. The itinerary included visit to Poonch, Rajouri, Jammu, and Srinagar, where the students were exposed to diverse environments and institutions.

The tour also marked several first-time experiences, including rail travel to Srinagar and exposure to urban settings such as shopping complexes, Air Force Station, Jammu and exposure to Army way of life significantly broadening their outlook and confidence.

CM says ...

When noisy scenes continued, Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather adjourned the House for half an hour.

As the House assembled after the adjournment, National Conference MLA Tanvir Sadiq sought a statement from the Leader of the House against the war on Iran.

Short speeches by various MLAs in support and against the demand followed.

"The House is not united on this issue; there is no single opinion. If you wish, a discussion can be held so that differing views may be expressed. If I speak on behalf of the demand and opposition emerges afterwards, it would not be appropriate," Abdullah said initially, asking the speaker to decide how to proceed.

After hearing the opinions of several members from both benches, Rather requested the chief minister to make a statement in the House, pointing out that Parliament has done it as well.

Abdullah said, "I don't think anyone can stand here and support the manner in which an unjust and illegal war has been imposed on Iran. No amount of condemnation would be sufficient to state how humanity was crushed, and the brutal way in which Iran's Supreme Leader and his close associates and relatives were killed," Abdullah said.

Stating that a school was bombed, killing scores of female students, Abdullah said it is difficult to recall such a horrifying incident in the recent past.

"And what is the objective? Even now, it is not clear. If you listen to the statements coming from America, it seems even they are unsure. In the morning, they speak of regime change, in the afternoon of security concerns, and by evening, they talk of oil prices. Perhaps they themselves do not know why the people of Iran were made to suffer for the last three weeks," he said.

The chief minister said the BJP members are of the view that the House should not discuss matters that do not directly affect the region.

"How can they say this does not affect us? Many of our citizens are in Iran, so it directly affects us. The queues outside our petrol pumps today – isn't that affecting us directly? And above all, the pain and anguish felt by our people, that too is an impact," the chief minister said.

"It is true, we cannot stop the war by merely sitting here," he said, reminding the MLAs that, however, the Central government has repeatedly claimed that it has strong relations with many countries.

"Our relations with America and Israel are good. With Iran, too, we have historically been strong. I have personally witnessed this when I served as Minister of State for External Affairs with Atal Bihari Vajpayee. India also maintains good ties with Iran's neighbouring countries," he said.

"Therefore, there should not be any objection if this House collectively appeals to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to use his office and personal diplomatic relations to help bring this war to an end as soon as possible, so that the suffering of the people there may end and Iran may once again enjoy peace fully with the world," Abdullah said.

Meanwhile, PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti today criticised Chief Minister Omar Abdullah for taking almost a month to unequivocally condemn Israel's attack on Iran, calling the delay "disheartening".

CM Abdullah, in the Legislative Assembly on Friday, condemned the "unjust and illegal war imposed on Iran" and requested Prime Minister Narendra Modi to use his influence to end the war in the interest of humanity.

CJI to ...

senior officers from the civil administration, judiciary, Army, and police, officials said.

They said Justice Kant was presented with a ceremonial Guard of Honour, fol-

lowed by a traditional welcome showcasing the rich cultural heritage of Ladakh. Thereafter, he interacted with the lieutenant governor, judges, and senior district officials of Leh.

During the visit, the CJI is scheduled to inaugurate the newly constructed District Court Complexes at Leh and Kargil, along with the office of the Ladakh Legal Services Authority, which will ensure enhanced access to justice with state-of-the-art facilities.

A mega legal services camp and awareness programme is also being organised as part of the visit, aimed at enhancing legal awareness and outreach among the local population, they said.

Officials said the visit follows up on deliberations at the North Zone Conference held in July 2025 in Srinagar, which focused on "Reaffirming the Constitutional Vision of Justice for Defence Personnel & Tribals: Bridging the Gaps".

In this regard, the CJI shall be interacting with Army personnel to further strengthen institutional engagement and address their legal concerns, they said.

The visit marks a significant step towards strengthening judicial infrastructure and promoting access to justice in the remote and challenging terrains of Ladakh, officials said.

It underscores the continued commitment of the judiciary to ensure inclusive and effective justice delivery across all regions, they said.

Assembly passes ..

key Appropriation Bills during the ongoing Budget Session of the House.

Earlier, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah moved the bills for consideration and passing. The bills include:

"A Bill to authorize payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir for the services of the financial year 2025-2026" (L.A. Bill No. 04 of 2026);

"A Bill to authorize payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir for the services of the financial year 2025-2026" (L.A. Bill No. 06 of 2026); and

"A Bill to authorize payment and appropriation of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir for the services of the financial year 2026-2027" (L.A. Bill No. 05 of 2026).

BJP youth ...

The police stopped the protesters from marching to the Civil Secretariat at the assembly. Heavy police deployment, including barricades, barbed wire and security vehicles, was in place.

Alleging police excesses, BJYM J&K president Arun Prabhat said, "We were not doing anything wrong and had called for a peaceful march. But thousands of police personnel were deployed to stop us from marching to the Secretariat. Despite this, protesters broke through barriers and reached near the Secretariat."

He said this is just a trailer. "If you do not see an NLU in Jammu and revoke decisions like the alleged selling of 24,000 jobs, this struggle will turn into a movement."

MLA Rana said the party was not opposed to an NLU in Kashmir but demanded equal rights for Jammu.

"If an NLU is established in Kashmir, Jammu also deserves one. We are not saying Kashmir should be deprived, but both must get equal opportunities," she said, referring to an alleged resolution passed in October 2025 seeking an NLU for Kashmir.

MLA Ajay Gupta said Jammu has historically secured its rights through sustained struggle.

"Whether it was for the central university or AIIMS, Jammu has always had to fight for its due. The demand for an NLU has been ongoing for quite some time, and people will continue the agitation until it is achieved," he said.

Gupta also alleged that the assembly did not allow debate on the issue.

MLA Sethi accused the government of attempting to create divisions. "We will continue our struggle to bring the university to Jammu."

Sethi further claimed that a future BJP government would ensure equitable development.

J-K aims ...

private sector projects during this period". Consequently, the total installed hydropower capacity of Jammu and Kashmir is projected to reach around 11,000 MW by 2035, he added.

The government also said that in the backdrop of the Indus Water Treaty being kept in abeyance by the government, construction on ongoing projects has accelerated, and efforts are underway to identify potential storage projects to maximize the remaining hydropower potential.

On the existing operational capacity, he said that union territory-owned hydropower projects contribute 1,197.4 MW, including major plants such as Baglihar-I and II (450 MW each), Lower Jhelum (105 MW) and Upper Sindh projects.

Central sector projects operated by NHPC account for 2,250 MW, including Salal (690 MW), Uri-I (480 MW), Dulhasti (390 MW), Kishenganga (330 MW) and Uri-II (240 MW), he said.

"Private sector projects contribute 92.75 MW through smaller installations across districts such as Doda, Poonch, Bandipora, Baramulla, Ganderbal, Budgam, Anantnag and Ramban", he added.

Speaker calls ...

effectiveness and balance. He stressed that the law should be formulated after an extensive study of existing legal frameworks and best practices adopted by various states and other jurisdictions.

Advocating on a well-researched approach, the Speaker said that such legislation should aim to create a robust mechanism capable of countering fake news while safeguarding democratic values and responsible communication.

Replying to the discussion, Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary today said that the media, regarded as the fourth pillar of democracy, has historically played a significant role in the nation's freedom struggle and enjoyed the trust of the people.

The Deputy Chief Minister was replying to the issues raised by the Members during a Short Duration Discussion on tackling fake news and misinformation in the Legislative Assembly. He observed that times have changed and with the advent of social media, which was initially expected to improve people's lives, has also brought new challenges.

The Deputy Chief Minister said that while the government will take necessary corrective measures, but the media must also introspect and work towards strengthening its credibility, reflecting on how it wishes to be remembered by the society.

He said that the media has important role to play for strengthening of J&K. "A strong J&K will lead to strong India. For this we all have to play the role," he said.

He added that Media, being called as the fourth pillar of democracy, has a great responsibility and urged the media professionals to follow their conscience and act responsibly, adding that no law can work effectively without self-discipline and ethical conduct.

The Deputy Chief Minister expressed gratitude to the members for participation in the debate and raising significant issues concerning ethical information dissemination by the media.

Minister for Youth Services and Sports, Satish Sharma, while speaking during the discussion, emphasized that genuine and responsible media practitioners should be encouraged and promoted. He stressed that those involved in spreading fake news, misinformation and disinformation must face exemplary punishment in order to uphold credibility in the media space.

Earlier, the House witnessed a broad consensus across party lines on the need to curb fake news and misinformation, with members calling for stronger measures while safeguarding freedom of speech and expression.

MLA, Ranbir Singh Pathania, while initiating the discussion on tackling fake news and misinformation in Jammu & Kashmir, said that while freedom of speech is a fundamental right, it must be protected from being misinterpreted and misused. He called for a robust regulatory framework, proposing a 36-hour take-down mechanism, clear district-level definitions of fake news, and effective corrective measures.

Highlighting the rise of unregulated digital platforms, particularly on Facebook and Instagram, he stressed the need for mandatory registration and regulatory oversight.

Pathania also advocated for a UT-level Fact Check Unit (FCU) and grievance redressal systems on social media platforms. Citing global frameworks like the Online Safety Act and the Digital Services Act, along with measures in Singapore and Indian states like Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh, he stressed on adopting the best practices in J&K.

He proposed a multi-pronged approach, including an FCU, stakeholder involvement, citizen reporting mechanisms, coordination with national initiatives, timely clarifications and defined take-down timelines.

Pathania emphasized that the key challenge is ensuring accountability while addressing impunity, reiterating the need for a balanced framework to curb misinformation while safeguarding democratic values.

MLA, Dr. Bashir Ahmad Shah Veeri stated that in the present times, misinformation has taken deep roots and is impacting almost every aspect of public life.

He cautioned that if not curbed in a timely manner, it could have serious consequences for society and governance.

He emphasized that all stakeholders must play a constructive role and urged that accountability must be clearly fixed, expressing hope that the government will take effective steps in this regard to ensure responsible communication and curb the spread of misinformation.

MLA, Ifthikhar Ahmad said that the media has an important role to play in society, and while many are doing commendable work, some elements are unfortunately indulging in the spread of fake news. He stressed the need for a clear policy framework, suggesting that minimum qualifications and standards be prescribed for individuals practicing journalism to uphold credibility and professionalism.

MLA, Sajjad Shaheen also stated that there should be minimum qualification criteria for individuals engaged in media and information dissemination and the space should not be a free-for-all. He emphasized that unverified and misleading content must be effectively restricted, calling for proper regulation to determine eligibility and accountability of those operating in the digital and media space.

MLA Khurshied Ahmed in his address said that the media forms the fourth pillar of democracy and lauded those who are performing their duties responsibly for the benefit of society.

He, however, noted that certain elements indulge in spreading fake news and stressed that strict provisions should be put in place to take such elements to task, including the imposition of appropriate penalties to ensure accountability and deter misinformation.

MLA Pawan Gupta, while speaking on the occasion, raised concerns over several media outlets and channels operating without proper authorization from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. He noted that many platforms function without requisite licenses, underscoring the need for strict regulatory measures to tackle the spread of fake news.

MLA Nazim Ahmad Khan (Gurez) stated that with the ease of creating channels and digital portals, individuals are increasingly entering the information space without adequate regulation. He cautioned that once a person's image is tarnished through false or misleading information, it becomes extremely difficult to restore, highlighting the serious consequences of fake news.

He pointed out that there is a lack of comprehensive legal provisions to regulate such channels and platforms, while strongly advocating for enacting a robust law to effectively tackle this growing menace.

MLA Rafiq Ahmad Naik suggested that there should be strict legal provisions to effectively curb the spread of fake news and misinformation. He observed that people today are well aware and informed and therefore emphasized the need for responsible dissemination of information, cautioning against the misuse of digital platforms for misleading narratives.

MLA Nizam-ud-din Bhat observed that the media landscape has undergone a significant evolution, bringing both the opportunities and challenges in the dissemination of information.

He noted that the rise of provocative content and instances of defamation has become a matter of concern, stressing that if society is to be kept informed through accurate and factual information for the collective good, it is essential to ensure that this right is not infringed upon.

Bhat added that legal provisions already exist and emphasized the need for their effective implementation to safeguard truth and accountability in the media space.

He further remarked that the issue is fundamentally one of ethics, urging all stakeholders to adhere to responsible practices and uphold the integrity of information dissemination.

MLA Dr. Rameshwar Singh stated that while there are many responsible media professionals, there are also individuals without requisite qualifications who indulge in defamation and tarnishing of reputations. He stressed the need for regulatory oversight and accountability, suggesting that a proper system be put in place to verify credentials and curb such practices.

MLA, Dr. Sajjad Shah, while speaking during the discussion, emphasized that there should be a minimum educational qualification for individuals entering journalism to ensure responsible reporting in the interest of society. He hailed the role of professional media persons but also stated that some fake media persons indulge in black mailing.

He noted that members across party lines are in agreement on the need for a law to regulate the sector and curb the spread of fake news, reflecting a shared commitment towards accountability and responsible media practices.

MLA Saif-ud-Din Bhat stated that while many journalists are doing commendable work, there are some who unfortunately indulge in the spread of fake news. He emphasized the need to distinguish responsible journalism from misinformation, and called for measures to uphold credibility and accountability in the media space.

MLA Pirzada Farooq Ahmad Shah stated that the media has a crucial role in holding the government accountable and strengthening democratic institutions.