

Itoo reviews performance of School Education deptt across Jammu division

Calls for effective, transparent utilisation of public funds



HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, NOV 03

Minister for Education, Sakeena Itoo today chaired a meeting at Civil Secretariat here to review the performance and functioning of School Education department across Jammu division. The meeting was attended by Secretary School Education department, Ram Niwas Sharma; Project Director Samagra Shiksha, Bhawani Rakwal; Director School Education Jammu, Naseem Javid Chowdhary; Chief Education Officers of all districts of Jammu and other concerned officers of School

Education department. During the meeting, the Minister assessed the progress of various centrally sponsored schemes, infrastructure development projects, academic reforms, and digital learning initiatives aimed at improving the quality of education across government schools. During the meeting, the Minister emphasized on the efficient and transparent utilisation of public funds to strengthen the education ecosystem. She stressed that every rupee allocated for education sector must be spent judiciously and with measurable outcomes. She directed officers to ensure timely completion of

ongoing projects, particularly those related to school infrastructure, ICT labs, teacher training, and learning enhancement programmes. She asked them to address bottlenecks on priority and submit regular progress reports to the department. The Minister called for the adoption of transparent monitoring mechanisms and periodic audits to prevent fund lapses and ensure that benefits reach the grassroots level. She further instructed officers to strengthen community participation through School Management committees and promote accountability at every administrative tier. Highlighting the govern-

ment's focus on inclusive and equitable education, the Minister also underscored the importance of bridging learning gaps, enhancing the teaching-learning process, and improving student learning outcomes, particularly in rural and far-flung areas. Reiterating the Government's commitment to transforming the education sector, the Minister assured that the government would continue to support initiatives that empower teachers, modernize classrooms, and create a robust learning environment for all students. "Education is the foundation of any progressive society. Transparent utilisation of funds and effective monitoring of schemes will ensure schools becoming centres of excellence," the Minister stated. While reviewing other aspects of the department, the Minister strictly instructed the CEOs that school children shouldn't be sent to Government functions, particularly during peak academic and examination session, without prior approval and permission of respective Directors.x

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The Department of Horticulture Jammu and Kashmir today announced its active participation in the upcoming Jhiri Mela 2025, a revered cultural and spiritual fair held annually in honour of farmer saint Baba Jitto. This yearly event will be held from November 4 to November 12 at Jhiri village and is expected to draw thousands of devotees and visitors from across the region. The Horticulture Department will set up a dedicated exhibition stall to highlight



the rich diversity of horticultural produce from Jammu and Kashmir. The stall will feature fresh

ance on government schemes and subsidies. Speaking about the initiative, the Director of Horticulture, Jammu said, "Jhiri Mela is not only a spiritual gathering but also a platform to connect with our farming community. Through this exhibition, we aim to educate and empower growers with modern horticultural practices and promote horticulture-entrepreneurship." The department has invited the public, especially farmers and agriculture-enthusiasts to visit the stall and interact with horticulture experts, extension officers and progressive growers.

Mission Director HADP reviews progmm implementation across J&K

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Mission Director HADP/JKCIP Sandeep Kumar today chaired a meeting to take a comprehensive review of the progress of the programme in the Union Territory. The meeting was held here in the Conference Hall, Directorate of Agriculture- Krishi Bhawan. The Mission Director reviewed the physical and financial achievements under different HADP projects being implemented in both public and private sectors. The meeting was attended by Director Agriculture Jammu Anil Gupta; Director Horticulture Jammu Gul Sayed; Director Horticulture Kashmir Vikas Anand and Deputy Director Agriculture (Planning) Jammu Priyanka Parihar, along with Technical Officers HADP (Agriculture and Horticulture) Jammu, technical staff of Mission Directorate HADP, representatives and Principal Investigators from SKUAST-Jammu. Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah; Chief Agriculture Officers and Chief Horticulture Officers of all districts of Jammu and Kashmir; Tech-



nical Officers HADP Kashmir; representatives and Principal Investigators from SKUAST-Kashmir and other officers from Kashmir attended the meeting through video conferencing (VC). During the deliberations, Sandeep Kumar emphasized the need to achieve 100 percent expenditure targets by the end of the current month to ensure timely implementation of project activities. While reviewing the progress under the Promotion of Nutri-Cereals (Millets) component, he directed to establish millet mills in those areas where millet cultivation is expanding and the beneficiaries have an actual need. He also took a detailed review of the Kisan Sathi Portal activities and instructed to clear all pending approvals immediately. He further directed to remove inactive applications systematically and register those genuinely in need of support. The Mission Director also stressed the importance of regular photo documentation with GPS coordinates to be shared with the Mission Directorate for real-time monitoring. Highlighting the importance of GI tagging of indigenous millet varieties, he urged SKUAST to expedite the process. SKUAST-Jammu informed that work is already underway on seven such millet varieties. The Mission Director also emphasized the development and sharing of Packages of Practices (PoP) and technology transfer by SKUAST Jammu and SKUAST Kashmir with their respective Directorates for wider farmer adoption. Sandeep Kumar further underscored the need to establish canning units under HADP to enhance the shelf life of agriculture and horticulture produce, thereby increasing farmers' income. He also highlighted the significance of exposure visits of farmers at the national level, enabling them to learn about new technologies and innovative practices. He directed that consolidated reports of such exposure visits be submitted to the Mission Directorate in a timely manner. The Mission Director laid special emphasis on strengthening Research and Development (R&D) efforts to ensure the availability of improved seed varieties, which would enhance yield and productivity across the UT.

One-Day Sensitization Workshop on PCPNDT Act held at Samba

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A one-day sensitization workshop on the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act was organized today under the Chairmanship of Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Jagdish Singh in the presence of Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr. Vidhi Bhatial; Assistant Director DHS Jammu, Dr. Summi Thakur; Law Officer, Shivali Gupta; Block Medical Officers (BMOs), Nodal Officers and public and private sonologists, gynecologists, pediatricians, proprietors and NGO representatives. The workshop aimed to enhance awareness and understanding among medical practitioners, health officials and other stakeholders regarding the provisions, rules and regulations of the PCPNDT Act. The Act seeks to prevent the misuse of prenatal diagnostic techniques and curb the practice of sex selection, thereby promoting gender equality and protecting the rights of



the girl child. Addressing the participants, ADC Jagdish Singh emphasized the importance of strict implementation of the PCPNDT Act and called upon all stakeholders to work collectively towards eradicating gender-based discrimination. He highlighted that effective monitoring and compliance at every level are crucial to uphold the spirit of the Act. CMO Dr. Vidhi Bhatial elaborated the key objectives of the Act, including the regulation of diagnostic techniques, ensuring accountability of registered medical practitioners and promoting awareness about gender-sensitive practices in healthcare. She urged the medical fraternity to maintain transparency in record-keeping and adhere to the legal provisions to prevent any violations. Dr Simmi Thakur presented a Powerpoint presentation on the importance of this act, while Shivali Gupta conducted detailed sessions on the legal framework, reporting procedures and responsibilities of clinics and ultrasound centers under the PCPNDT Act. The workshop also featured interactive session and case-based learning to help participants understand the practical aspects of its implementation. The workshop concluded with a collective pledge to strengthen coordination between the health department and enforcement agencies to ensure the effective implementation of the PCPNDT Act in the district and to uphold the objective of safeguarding the girl child

Vigilance Awareness Programme held at TSO Office Ramgarh

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As part of the ongoing Vigilance Awareness Week-2025, a programme was organized today at the Tehsil Supply Office (TSO), Ramgarh under the supervision of the Assistant Director, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs and overall guidance of the Deputy Commissioner Samba. The event commenced with the integrity pledge, wherein the officials, staff members and Fair Price Shop (FPS) dealers reaffirmed their commitment to uphold the principles of transparency, accountability and ethical conduct in public service. The pledge ceremony reflected the collective resolve of the department to strengthen integrity mechanisms and ensure corruption-free service delivery. The participants were sensitized about the importance of maintaining the highest standards of honesty while performing professional duty. FPS dealers and beneficiaries were reminded of their pivotal role in promoting transparency



in the Public Distribution System (PDS) by ensuring that ration is lifted and distributed strictly as per entitlement. Beneficiaries were urged to promptly report any irregularities, overcharging or malpractice observed in the ration distribution process. The programme concluded with a collective affirmation to uphold this year's theme — "Vigilance: Our Shared Responsibility"—highlighting that integrity and vigilance are not merely administrative duties but shared moral obligations of every citizen and stakeholder. The event was attended by departmental officials, FPS dealers and local beneficiaries, who appreciated the initiative and expressed their commitment to support a transparent and corruption-free system.

DC Udhampur discusses activity plan for celebration of 150 Years of Vande Mataram

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To discuss the modalities for the commemoration of 150 Years of National Pride Vande Mataram in the district, Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Saloni Rai today chaired a meeting of officers from the line departments in the Conference Hall, DC Office Complex. The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Prem Singh; PO Poshan Subash Dogra; GM DIC Kishore Singh Katoch; Assistant Commissioner Revenue Dr. Umesh Shan; Chief Planning Officer Utam Singh and other district officers. At the outset, ADC Prem Singh gave a detailed PowerPoint presentation highlighting the objectives and framework of the campaign. He informed that the com-



memoration will be organized in four phases, with the first phase scheduled to commence on November 7. He added that the initiative envisages a series of activities to celebrate the timeless message of unity and national pride embodied in the National Song Vande Mataram. The DC asked the officers to chalk out department-wise action plans for organizing awareness activities and outreach programmes across the district. She directed the officers to submit their respective action plans at the earliest. "The celebrations shall be people-centric, reflecting the patriotic spirit and cultural vibrancy of Udhampur district," she added. The heads of departments and educational institutions were asked to ensure maximum public participation through meticulous planning, effective coordination and creative execution of the proposed events.

Fisheries Department Kupwara Stocks Brown Trout Fingerlings in Designated Trout Streams

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The Department of Fisheries Kupwara has undertaken a significant initiative by stocking Brown Trout fingerlings in the upper reaches of Mawar, Dringyari, and Kalaroose streams, which have been

officially declared as trout streams under the J&K Fisheries (Amendment) Act, 2018. The genetically improved eyed ova of Brown Trout were imported from Denmark under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampadha Yojana (PMMSY) 2024-25 and were reared to fingerling size at the departmental hatchery in Kulgam before being released into the natural streams. This milestone initiative aims to replenish and enrich natural trout habitats, ensuring the sustenance of fish biodiversity and promoting sport fishing in the region. Pertinently, Brown Trout, a globally renowned sport fish, attracts anglers from across the world. Kashmir, known as the "Angler's Paradise," continues to host thousands of fishing enthusiasts every year.