

J&K Bank hosts HNI Customer Meet in Kathua Kathua

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 05

In a bid to strengthen customer engagement and gather first-hand feedback, Jammu & Kashmir Bank on Tuesday organised a High Net-Worth Individual (HNI) Customer Meet at its Kathua Zonal Office.

The interactive session witnessed enthusiastic participation from the Bank's valued HNI customers belonging to the Kathua zone, which covers areas from Samba to Batala, Mohali and other parts of Punjab.

The meeting was chaired by Managing Director & CEO Amitava Chatterjee and attended by Chief General Manager Sunit Kumar, General Manager & Divisional Head (Jammu) Ashok Gupta, Zonal Head (Kathua) Suresh Kumar Choudhary, and other senior officials of the Bank.

President Lays Foundation Stone for 360-Seated Girls' Hostel at Rairangpur Women's College

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 05

The Hon'ble President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu laid the foundation stone for the construction of a 360-seated Girls' Hostel at Rairangpur Women's College, Rairangpur Block, Mayurbhanj District, Odisha on 04.02.2026. The hostel project with an estimated cost of ₹10.23 crore is being undertaken under the Corporate Social Responsibility initiative of NHPC Limited, a Navratna Public Sector Enterprise under Ministry of Power, Government of India. The project is being implemented through Hindustan Steelworks Construction Limited (HSCL), a subsidiary of NBCC (India) Limited in coordination with the Mayurbhanj Dis-



President Droupadi Murmu laying the foundation stone for a 360-seated Girls' Hostel at Rairangpur Women's College, Rairangpur Block, Mayurbhanj District, Odisha on 04.02.2026.

trict Administration. The initiative aims to address the growing need for safe, secure and accessible residential facilities for students of Rairangpur Women's College, particularly benefitting young women from tribal and remote areas. The hostel is expected to improve stu-

dent enrolment and retention, ensure uninterrupted academic pursuit and strengthen access to higher education for marginalized communities.

The proposed hostel will be a state-of-the-art, RCC-framed and earthquake-resistant facility. It will include well-furnished

rooms, round-the-clock CCTV surveillance, comprehensive fire safety systems, dedicated study spaces, a modern dining hall and recreational facilities. Designed to ensure safety, comfort, and academic focus, the facility will provide a secure and enabling residential environment for young women pursuing higher education.

Aligned with national priorities such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao and the National Education Policy (NEP), the project reflects the collaborative efforts of NHPC Limited, HSCL, and the Government of Odisha/Zila Parishad, Mayurbhanj. The initiative reinforces the commitment to women's education, tribal empowerment, and inclusive socioeconomic development in the region.

Review Meeting Held by Cross-Functional Team of Ministry of Labour and employment

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 05

A review meeting of the Cross-Functional Team (CFT) for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir was held at the Regional Office, EPFO, Jammu, to assess the progress made under various flagship initiatives of the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

The meeting was attended by Heads of Departments of organisations under the Ministry of Labour and Employment. During the deliberations, members shared common experiences, exchanged relevant data, and chalked out a roadmap for organising joint outreach and awareness programmes in the near future.

At the outset, the officers were welcomed by Sh. Sumeet Singh, Regional Provident Fund Commissioner-I, EPFO Jammu. The following key points were discussed in the meet-



ing: Implementation Strategy: The team reviewed the transition roadmap for the Code on Wages (2019), Industrial Relations Code (2020), Social Security Code (2020), and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code (2020), which were formally notified by the Government of India in 2025. Public Outreach: Plans were solidified to launch joint outreach programmes targeting both organised and unorganised sectors to ensure every stakeholder understands the updated compliance re-

quirements. Awareness Campaigns: The officers emphasized the need for intensified Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) activities to sensitize employers and employees about enhanced welfare measures, including overtime wages and expanded social security nets.

The data pertaining to the Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PMVBRY) was reviewed, wherein it was noted that more than 1,804 establishments have registered under EPFO Jammu. The reg-

istrations have benefited approximately 9,390 first-time employees and 15,276 rejoining employees in the region.

The committee also reviewed the outcome of the SPREE campaign conducted by ESIC and expressed satisfaction over the encouraging results achieved in the UT.

The meeting was attended by Shri Sumeet Singh, Regional Provident Fund Commissioner-I, EPFO Jammu; Shri Vikas Kundal, Regional Director, ESIC Jammu-Kashmir and Ladakh; and Shri Ashwini Mani Tripathi, Regional Labour Commissioner (Central), Jammu, among other senior officers.

The meeting concluded with a resolve to host regular interactive sessions with industry associations and trade unions to address operational queries and ensure a smooth transition to the new legal framework in the UT of Jammu & Kashmir and the UT of Ladakh region.

Secy RDD chairs DRC meeting; reviews suspension cases

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 05

Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj Department, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, on Thursday chaired a meeting of the Departmental Review Committee (DRC) to review the status of suspension cases of departmental officials.

The meeting was attended by Director RDD Kashmir Shabir Hussain Bhat, Director RDD Jammu Shahnaz Akhtar, Director Finance Umar Khan, Additional Secretary Waseem Raja, Deputy Legal Remembrancer Parmjeet Singh, concerned Assistant Commissioners Development (ACDs) and other senior officers.

During the meeting, the Secretary undertook a detailed review of ongoing cases. He emphasized the need for fair, transparent and time-bound dis-



posal of departmental inquiries. He directed the officers to strictly adhere to prescribed timelines and ensure timely submission of reports to avoid unnecessary delays.

The Secretary stressed strict compliance with the judicial directions, particularly in cases where court verdicts have already been pronounced, reiterating the department's commit-

ment to the rule of law. He also underscored that safeguarding public funds remains a top priority.

The Secretary assured that the rights of employees would be fully protected and that all proceedings would follow due process, reflecting a balanced approach of firmness and fairness.

He further called for strengthening financial discipline, institutional integrity and good governance practices across all levels of the department.

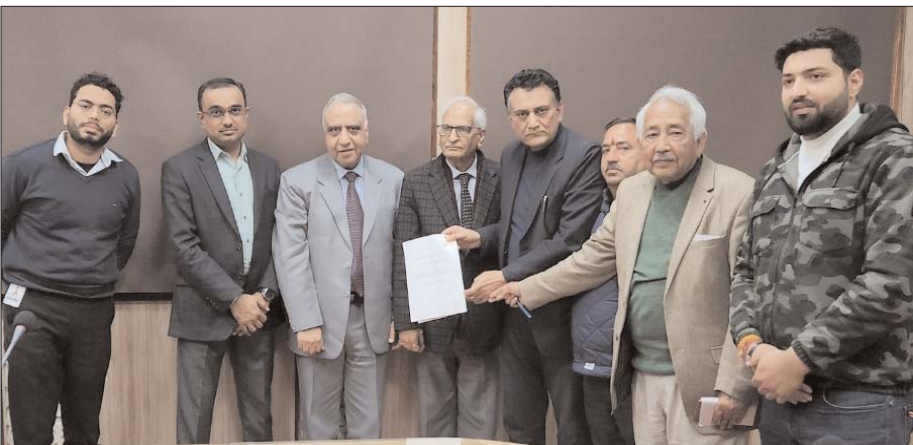
Pertinently, the Departmental Review Committee was constituted vide Government Order No. 320-JK (RD&PR) of 2021 dated November 18, 2021, to ensure systematic, transparent and time-bound review of suspension cases, including monitoring inquiry progress and recommending appropriate action.

HRA Katra Submits Memorandum to High-Level Committee on Ropeway Project

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 05

Hotel & Restaurant Association (HRA), Katra today submitted a comprehensive memorandum to the High-Level Committee constituted for the Ropeway Project comprising of SMVD Shrine Board members Dr.Ashok Bhan & Retd.Judge Suresh Kumar Sharma, Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar, CEO Shrine Board Sachin Kumar Vaishya, highlighting key concerns and suggestions related to the proposed project and allied measures aimed at improving pilgrim facilitation, enhancing the overall Yatra experience, and increasing Yatra footfall.

The memorandum was submitted by HRA Katra, President Rakesh Wazir alongwith Chairman Shyam Lal Kesar, Sr. Vice President Virender Kesar, Executive members Sahil Heera & Sohan Chand who thanked the Hon'ble Committee for providing stakeholders an opportunity to present their views. They emphasized that the Ropeway Project should be initiated only after thorough consultation with all stakeholders, and if started, its starting point should be from a place from where base Camp of Katra be not ignored and sanctity and faith of Town and Vaishnovevi Shrine is maintained.



nored and sanctity and faith of Town and Vaishnovevi Shrine is maintained.

Since every one in the Committee was associated with Shrine Board in one way or the other thus other issues pertaining to the Shrine were also discussed including, serious concern over frequent suspension of the Yatra, stating that even a one-day stoppage adversely impacts tourism and hospitality-related activities for an entire month. The memorandum stressed that facilitation of Yatries must remain the top priority, with no diversion of funds from essential Yatra-related facilities. It also called for a detailed analysis of the stagnation of Yatra since 2012 and a review of the unprecedented decline witnessed during the previous year.

Mr.Wazir while Highlighting long-term growth

measures, HRA Katra proposed a strategy to rotate nearly one crore pilgrims visiting Vaishno Devi annually to other pilgrimage and tourist destinations across Jammu & Kashmir, with Katra as the focal point. Citing success stories such as Shiv Khori, Nau Devian, Baba Dhansar, Sear Baba, Patnitop, and Bhaderwah, the Association recommended expanding this model to destinations like Deva Mai, Devi Pindian, Mathwar, Ambaran, Showa Mata, Raghunath Temple, and Bawe Wali Mata.

Mr.Kesar while speaking on the occasion advocated introduction of a Light and Sound Show on the history of Maa Vaishno Devi Ji, promotion of Mata Ki Parikrama Yatra, revival of traditional ancient routes, and planned beautification of Katra town on the lines

of the Golden Temple precinct and Chandni Chowk models.

Mr.Virender Kesar emphasized the need for stronger publicity and promotion through print, electronic, and digital media, greater participation in national tourism fairs, and a review of policies discouraging film and devotional shootings, recommending facilitation during lean periods to boost pilgrimage promotion.

The delegation stated that these measures would significantly improve pilgrim satisfaction and contribute to the sustainable growth of the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Yatra.

The Committee members listened each and every point patiently and assured that sympathetic consideration would be given to each and every point raised in the meeting.

Shrine Board Distributes Sports Equipment to Govt Schools in Reasi under social support initiative

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 05

In a significant step towards promoting physical fitness and nurturing a sports culture among students, the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) today distributed sports equipment to nine Government Schools in Reasi district. This initiative follows the successful renovation and restoration of several Government schools, further strengthening the Board's commitment to holistic development in the region.



Shri Sachin Kumar Vaishya, Chief Executive Officer, SMVDSB, emphasized that under the visionary guidance of Shri Manoj Sinha, Hon'ble Chairman, SMVDSB (Lt. Governor, J&K UT), the Board remains committed to empowering youth and nurturing sporting excellence in the region. He affirmed that this initiative will benefit hundreds of children in rural and semi-urban schools, many of whom have limited access to proper sports infrastructure. He underscored that while infrastructure development is essential, an

equal focus on sports and extracurricular activities plays a crucial role in shaping disciplined, and healthy students.

Teachers present at the event expressed gratitude, highlighting that government schools in remote areas often face challenges due to inadequate sports resources. They affirmed that this support will enable regular sports activities, strengthen physical education programs and motivate students to actively participate in games and competitions.

Noteworthy that the Shrine Board has consistently undertaken community-oriented initiatives in the fields of education, healthcare, environmental sustainability and regional development.

This latest effort further underscores its unwavering commitment to inclusive growth and the holistic well-being of society, with a special focus on the younger generation in Reasi district.

The distribution ceremony was attended by officers of the Shrine Board, coaches from the SMVD Sports Complex and a large gathering of teachers and students.

Enforcement Team foils tax evasion at Udhampur, recovers Rs 8.96 lakh penalty for violation of the GST framework

UDHAMPUR, FEBRUARY 05: In a decisive action, the State Taxes Enforcement Team, Udhampur today foiled a major Tax evasion bid by intercepting a vehicle carrying mixed scrap in violation of the GST framework.



The enforcement team recovered a fine of ₹8,96,128 for violations of GST provisions. The interception was made possible through data analysis of the e-Way Bill portal and RFID tracking, reflecting the department's increased use of technology-driven enforcement measures.

The enforcement action was executed by a team headed by GST Inspector Mohit Jamwal, assisted by Sub-Inspectors Rajesh Singh Batla, Rakesh Kharka, Mohsin Riaz and Guards, Barkat Ali and Sandesh Singh under the

close supervision and guidance of Deputy Commissioner, State Taxes Enforcement, Jammu North, Anil Kumar Chandail. Preliminary verification revealed serious irregularities in the movement of goods, indicating deliberate attempts to evade tax and misuse the GST framework.

Till the end of January 2026, the Udhampur Enforcement Team has realized penalties totaling

P. K. Bhat who stated that the enforcement measures are balanced, fair and mature, as reflected by the negligible number of cases challenged before appellate authorities. Additional Commissioner, State Taxes (Administration & Enforcement), Jammu, Namrita Dogra also lauded the team for their professional, focused and result-oriented approach.

The State Taxes Department has issued a stern warning to all tax violators, particularly in high-risk sectors such as the scrap trade, that any attempt to bypass statutory provisions will invite strict legal action, heavy penalties and prosecution wherever applicable. The department has intensified surveillance and intelligence-based enforcement to detect and deter such malpractices.