

Dir Agriculture inaugurates first picking of exotic vegetables at Krishi Bhawan

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Director Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare Jammu Anil Gupta today inaugurated the first picking of exotic vegetables being cultivated under protected conditions at Krishi Bhawan, Talab Tillo, Jammu.

Tomatoes, red and yellow bell peppers have been grown under a Naturally Ventilated Polygreen House (NVPGH) structure using advanced vegetable cultivation practices. The initiative has been undertaken for demonstration and popularisation of protected cultivation technologies among farmers.

Joint Director Agriculture (SLUB/Farms), Aman Jyoti Sharma, Agronomist (Vegetable Improvement Scheme), Vikas Padha, Agriculture Economist, Tilak Raj Sharma, Farm Manager Chinore, Verinder Dogra, Assistant Botanist, Ajeet Singh besides other senior officers and staff of the Vegetable Improvement Scheme were present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, the Director Agriculture emphasised the need to promote the cultivation of exotic and high-value vegetables



under protected and controlled conditions to ensure round-the-year production and enhanced income for farmers. Director Anil Gupta further highlighted that round-the-year production of vegetables under controlled conditions not only ensures stable supply to the market but also reduces dependence on seasonal cultivation. He urged the officers of the department to intensify awareness and demonstration programmes so that more farmers are encouraged to adopt protected cultivation practices.

Agronomist, Vikas Padha

apprised the visiting officers about Tomato Himsona variety and other exotic vegetables being grown under the Vegetable Improvement Scheme.

It was informed that Himsona Tomato variety is a high-yielding hybrid variety characterised by vigorous growth, attractive red glossy fruits, uniform size and excellent shelf life, making it suitable for long-distance transportation.

The Director Agriculture along with other senior officers, also inspected vegetable and flower seedlings and other interventions be-

ing demonstrated under the Vegetable Improvement Scheme.

Later, Anil Gupta reviewed the progress of ongoing works of the Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Entrepreneurship in Precision Vegetable and Floriculture Farming being established under the Vegetable Improvement Scheme. He expressed satisfaction over the pace and quality of the works, which are nearing completion. The Director stated that the Centre of Excellence is ready for commissioning and will be made operational shortly.

Women's Empowerment will ensure greater political representation in local body elections: NC

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The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Provincial President, Jammu, Rattan Lal Gupta on Thursday reaffirmed that the party remains steadfast in its commitment to providing meaningful opportunities to women and ensuring their holistic development across social, political and economic spheres.

He was addressing a meeting of the Provincial Women's Wing office bearers at Sher-e-Kashmir Bhawan, Jammu. Speaking on the occasion, Gupta highlighted the landmark initiatives undertaken by successive NC governments under the visionary leadership of Sher-e-Kashmir Late Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, and Omar Abdullah to empower women and bring them at par with men in decision-making and economic participation.

Gupta recalled that it was the National Conference that pioneered progressive reforms such as 50 percent reservation for women in medical colleges, significantly expanding opportunities for higher education



and professional growth. He also underscored recent pro-women measures, including free bus travel for women, enhancement of various social welfare pensions, and increased financial assistance under marriage support schemes aimed at easing the burden on economically weaker families.

"The Omar Abdullah-led government is resolutely carrying forward the pro-women vision enshrined in the party's manifesto," Gupta said, adding that the focus is not merely on welfare but on ensuring women's active participation in governance and public life. He emphasized that the party envisions women occupying positions of leadership and influence in political institutions, local bodies, and grassroots

governance.

Gupta further stated that, under the guidance of Party President Dr. Farooq Abdullah, the National Conference is committed to ensuring substantial representation for women in the upcoming Urban Local Body (ULB) and Panchayat elections. "Women are not just beneficiaries of policy; they are equal stakeholders in shaping the future of Jammu and Kashmir. The National Conference will continue to open doors for them in every sphere," he asserted.

Calling upon the Women's Wing to strengthen outreach at the grassroots level, Gupta urged them to take the party's message of empowerment, dignity and equal opportunity to every household. He said the NC firmly

believes that the progress of Jammu and Kashmir is inseparable from the progress of its women, and pledged that the party will continue to champion policies that uphold their rights, aspirations and leadership.

Among others who were present in the meeting included:- Bimla Luthra former MLA and State Vice President Women Wing, Deepinder Kour former MLC, Pardeep Bali Provincial Secretary Jammu, Satwant Kour Dogra Provincial President Women Wing Jammu, Shamim Begum DDC Dansal, Vijay Laxmi Datta Senior leader, Rajni Devi Working President Women Wing Jammu, Dilshad Malik, Rita Gupta Vice Presidents Central Zone, Shama Akther former Corporator, Pinky Khalsa Senior leader and others.

DC Kathua reviews implementation of Social Welfare schemes

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Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma today chaired a review meeting of the Social Welfare Department to assess the implementation of various welfare schemes and programmes in the district.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer Ranjeet Thakur, District Social Welfare Officer Varun Chaudhary and officers of allied wings.

During the meeting, schemes being implemented by the Social Welfare Department and its allied wings were discussed in detail. The Deputy Commissioner reviewed various pension schemes under the Integrated Social Security Scheme including Old Age Pension, Women in Distress Pension, Physically Challenged Pension and Women Marriage Assistance.

The status of Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarship schemes and Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana was also reviewed. The meeting further discussed initiatives under Mission



Shakti in which women affected by violence in government as well as private places are provided support services including medical aid, legal aid, temporary shelter, police assistance and psychological counselling under one roof. The scheme Samarthya for empowerment of women was also reviewed.

Progress under Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan and Mission Vatsalya, including

Pareesha and Palash components, was reviewed. Issues related to child abuse, child labour, rescue drives for abused children and the functioning of Child Helpline Number 1098 were also discussed.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed the need to strengthen the online presence of the department through social media handles for wider dissemination of information. He also

directed the department to conduct awareness campaigns and programmes in far-flung and remote areas of the district so that people are informed about government schemes and programmes. The DC said that the district administration is committed to reach out to people who are not familiar with government welfare schemes and to ensure that benefits reach the deserving sections of society.

Kishtwar Admin in collaboration with Kishtwar Fitness Club organises NASL

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To prevent drug abuse and curb the drug menace in the district, the District Administration Kishtwar in collaboration with the Kishtwar Fitness Club organised the Northern Arm Strength League (NASL) 2026 at the Auditorium, Government Degree College Kishtwar, under Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan implemented by Social Welfare Department.

The event brought together some of the strongest athletes from across the region and showcased an impressive display of strength, dedication and sportsmanship. Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar, Pankaj Kumar Sharma graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

In his address, he emphasised the importance of fitness, discipline and leading a healthy, drug-free lifestyle. He encouraged the youth to actively participate in sports and constructive activities to stay away from



substance abuse.

The competition witnessed enthusiastic participation across various age and weight categories. The event inspired young people and promoted the values of hard work, determination and healthy living.

Gold, silver and bronze medals were presented to

the winners.

The prestigious "Champion of Champions (COC)" titles were also awarded to outstanding performers.

The successful organisation of NASL 2026 marks a significant step towards promoting strength sports and spreading awareness about a drug-free lifestyle in

Kishtwar.

The event reflects the continued commitment of the District Administration and the Social Welfare Department towards youth empowerment and community well-being.

ADC Kishtwar Pawan Kotwal was also present on the occasion.

DLSA Udhampur organises legal awareness programme

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District Legal Services Authority Udhampur in collaboration with Jammu Kashmir Blood Donors Organisation (Regd.) organised a Legal Awareness Programme on Mediation 2.0 and a medical camp at District Court Complex Udhampur.

The programme was inaugurated by Principal District & Sessions Judge/Chairman DLSA Udhampur Kalpana Revo, who delivered a comprehensive overview of Mediation 2.0. Participants included judges, President of the Bar Association, members of the Bar Association, District Court Udhampur staff, medical professionals and the general public.

DLSA mediators who had disposed of cases in 2025 were felicitated with appre-



ciation certificates, recognising their outstanding efforts in promoting alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. A highlight of the programme was the presence of doctors, including eye specialists, who pro-

vided free consultations and medicines to those in need, addressing various health concerns of the attendees. The doctors were also felicitated for their services.

The programme was conducted under the supervi-

sion of Kalpana Revo, Principal District & Sessions Judge/Chairman DLSA Udhampur and Ms Sumati Sharma, Sub-Judge/Secretary DLSA Udhampur, ensuring its success and impact.

Street plays organised across Doda to promote girl child education under BBBP Mission Shakti

DODA, FEBRUARY 12: The Department of Social Welfare Doda, under the direction of Deputy Commissioner Doda and the overall supervision of District Social Welfare Officer Doda, in collaboration with the Cultural Department, organised a series of Nukad Natak (street plays) across various locations in the district under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) Mission Shakti initiative.

The street plays served as a powerful medium to spread awareness about the importance of girl child education, gender equality and women empowerment.

The campaign aimed to sensitise the public and encourage community participation in promoting the rights, dignity and development of the girl child.

Various educational institutions, cultural groups and local organisations actively



participated in the initiative by performing impactful Nukad Natak that conveyed strong messages against gender discrimination and emphasised the need to ensure equal opportunities for girls in all

spheres of life. The performances effectively highlighted critical issues such as declining child sex ratio, importance of educating girls and collective responsibility of society in safeguarding and empowering

them. Through engaging storytelling and direct interaction with the public, the initiative succeeded in drawing attention and generating meaningful dialogue among community members.