

SKUAST-K launches farm machinery skill training for rural youth

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
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Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) today inaugurated a specialised 37-day skill training program focused on the “Repair and Overhauling of Stationary Engines and Power Tillers.”

The comprehensive training session was inaugurated by Prof Rehaina Habib Kanth, Director Extension at SKUAST-K, at the College of Agricultural Engineering & Technology. The event was attended by high-ranking university officials, including the Registrar, Associate Dean, heads of various divisions, and senior faculty members.

Sponsored by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India, under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) project, the program is being organized by the Farm Machinery Testing Centre, Division of Farm Machinery and Power Engineering,



SKUAST-K. The initiative has successfully drawn 30 rural youths from across the Kashmir valley, all eager to acquire technical expertise in agricultural mechanization.

Addressing the trainees as the Chief Guest, Prof Rehaina Habib Kanth emphasized that the program is more than just a technical course, it is a gateway to financial independence.

Prof Azmat Alam, Registrar of SKUAST-K, further highlighted how a skilled workforce serves as the

backbone of a successful entrepreneurial ecosystem. He spoke extensively on the pressing need for technical manpower in the remote areas of the valley, where the ability to repair engines and agricultural machinery can provide essential services to farmers while securing a stable livelihood for the service providers. He also noted that the program aligns with the NEP-2020 curriculum, which prioritizes vocational skilling alongside traditional education.

The Training Coordinator and Head of the Division (FMPE), Prof Jagvir Dixit, provided an overview of the 250-hour curriculum. He explained the critical importance of scheduled maintenance and overhauling in extending the life of farm equipment. Adding to this, Prof Rohitashw Kumar, Associate Dean of COAE&T, stressed that these sessions benefit both the individual participants and the overall productivity of the regional agricultural sector.

Tourism Department organises 1-day Snow Carnival at Doodhpathri

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Department of Tourism, J&K, through the Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir, organized the Doodhpathri Snow Carnival 2026 at scenic Parihas Maidan Doodhpathri, marking a significant milestone in the promotion of winter tourism in the Union Territory.

Held amidst the breathtaking snow covered landscapes of Doodhpathri, the carnival witnessed enthusiastic participation from tourists, adventure lovers, local residents, and stakeholders from the tourism and hospitality sectors. The event continued throughout the day, transforming Doodhpathri into a vibrant hub of winter sports, cultural celebrations, and recreational activities.

The Snow Carnival featured a diverse array of activities, including Snowshoe Race, Skiing demonstrations, Snow Cricket, Paragliding displays, Snow Tug of War, and captivating Cultural Programs showcasing the rich heritage, music, and traditions of Jammu & Kashmir. The events generated great excitement among participants and spectators alike, reinforcing Doodhpathri's emerging status as a premier winter tourism destination.

Senior officials of the Tourism Department and the District Administration Budgam and other dignitaries attended the event and appreciated the overwhelming response from visitors and the local community. They reiterated the Government's commitment to promoting lesser explored destinations and

diversifying tourism offerings across seasons to ensure balanced regional development.

The carnival not only highlighted the immense potential of Doodhpathri as a winter adventure destination but also provided livelihood opportunities to local stakeholders, including hoteliers, transporters, guides, and small business owners. The large turnout of visitors during the event is expected to further strengthen the winter tourism circuit in Kashmir and contribute to the local economy.

The successful organization of the Doodhpathri Snow Carnival reflects the Department of Tourism's sustained efforts to position Jammu & Kashmir as a year round tourism destination. The Department expressed gratitude to all participants, local authori-

ties, security agencies, volunteers, media representatives, and the people of the area for their support in making the event a grand success.

The CEO Doodhpathri, Riyaz Ahmad said that the department is giving a boost to Doodhpathri as winter destination.

He said that, various snow activities, operationalization of ski hire shop and ski drag lift at the destination would attract more tourists, and in coming years Doodhpathri would become the prominent skiing resort.

With the enthusiastic response witnessed this year, the Department of Tourism looks forward to organizing similar large scale events in the future to further enhance the tourism profile of the Union Territory at the national and international levels.



BIS J&K conducts 2-Day Capsule Course on Hand Tools in Jalandhar

JALANDHAR, FEBRUARY 19: The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), Jammu & Kashmir Branch Office, successfully conducted a two-day Capsule Course on Hand Tools on February 17-18, 2026, in Jalandhar, followed by a laboratory visit on February 18. The programme was aimed at enhancing industry awareness on standardization, quality compliance, and testing methodologies related to mandatory standards for hand tools.

The inaugural session on Day 1 was delivered by Mr. Pankaj Atri, Joint Director, who provided a comprehensive overview of BIS, Quality Control Orders (QCOs), and the Conformity Assessment framework. He underscored the significance of adherence to Indian Standards to ensure product safety, reliability, and enhanced market credibility.

Subsequently, Mr. Niraj Kumar Mishra, Deputy Director, conducted an in-depth technical session on mandatory standards applicable to hand tools. The session included detailed deliberations on failure analysis, compliance requirements under relevant Indian Standards, and best practices for maintaining product quality and regulatory conformity.

On February 18, participants visited the Central Institute of Hand Tools (CIHT), Jalandhar, to gain hands-on exposure to advanced testing facilities and methodologies. The technical session at CIHT was led by Mr. Pradeep Kumar Verma, Principal Director, along with Mr. Amit Kumar, Deputy Director.

During the laboratory visit, partic-

ipants were acquainted with various testing procedures and processes, including operations of the Universal Testing Machine (UTM), chemical testing analysis, heat treatment and hardness testing, as well as forging processes. The interactive engagement enabled attendees to develop a clearer understanding of quality evaluation mechanisms and compliance requirements in hand tools manufacturing.

The capsule course witnessed active participation from industry representatives and stakeholders from the hand tools sector.

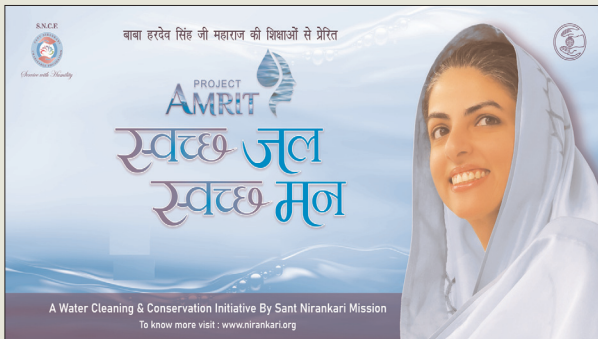
The initiative reflects BIS's continued commitment to promoting quality consciousness, strengthening compliance with Indian Standards, and supporting the growth of the manufacturing ecosystem through focused capacity-building programmes.

Strong Step by Nirankari Mission Towards Water Conservation: 4th Phase of ‘Project Amrit’

NEW DELHI, FEB 18: When service transforms into spiritual devotion and sensitivity towards nature becomes a guiding principle of life, sacred resolutions take birth.

To give meaningful expression to this divine consciousness of human service and public welfare, the Sant Nirankari Mission is organizing the grand launch of the fourth phase of the ‘Swachh Jal, Swachh Mann’ (Clean Water, Clean Mind) campaign under Project Amrit. As per the directions of Her Holiness Satguru Mata Sudiksha Ji Maharaj, this initiative will be conducted across India on Sunday, 22 February 2026, from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Informing about the campaign, the Secretary of Sant Nirankari Mandal, Respected Shri Joginder Sukhija Ji, stated that this massive initiative will be carried out simultaneously at more than 1,500 locations across the country. Owing to its extensive



scale, this effort will assume a historic dimension, effectively spreading the message of water conservation and cleanliness to every section of society.

The core objective of this initiative is to instill the realization that water is not merely a resource, but the very foundation of life and a priceless gift from the Divine, whose protection is the moral responsibility of every individual. Inspired by the teachings of Baba Hardev Singh Ji, the Sant Nirankari Mission launched Project Amrit in 2023 in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. This noble initiative seeks to

make water conservation not just a one-day activity or campaign, but a way of life—an expression of values and service—where clean water leads to a clean mind and a clean society.

Dedicated to the preservation and rejuvenation of natural water bodies such as rivers, lakes, ponds, wells, and springs, this people's movement has set remarkable examples of service, dedication, and participation during its first three phases. Building upon these achievements, the fourth phase is being implemented with greater expansion, organization, and a visionary approach, aiming to strengthen

awareness and active participation towards nature among all sections of society.

Through melodious musical presentations, collective singing, awareness seminars, and social media campaigns, the initiative is promoting public awareness about water-borne diseases and the importance of cleanliness.

It reminds us that when the mind is pure, nature too becomes pure; and when service is performed with dedication, it leads to the reconstruction and upliftment of society.

The message of Satguru Mata Ji has always emphasized preserving this Earth in a more beautiful, clean, and balanced form for future generations. The ‘Swachh Jal, Swachh Mann’ campaign stands as a living symbol of that sacred resolve, guiding humanity towards a compassionate, harmonious, and sustainable future—connecting individuals with nature, society, and the soul.

DC Kupwara chairs DRSC Meeting

KUPWARA, FEBRUARY 18: Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, today chaired the monthly meeting of the District Road Safety Committee (DRSC) to review road safety measures across the district.

Stressing that road safety is paramount for protecting lives, the DC urged stakeholder coordination to ensure strict public adherence to traffic rules.

He directed enforcement agencies to intensify on-ground regulation with stringent action against vi-

olators, including a crackdown on underage and teenage driving, overloading, speeding, etc.

Traffic police was instructed to ramp up surprise checking drives, deployment additional personnel at critical junctions and market areas, as well as conduct of frequent anti-encroachment drives by MCs and the revenue department to control congestion.

The DC called for extensive awareness campaigns in schools and colleges targeting students, youth, and commercial drivers, led by

ARTO, Traffic Police, and the Chief Education Officer.

He also reviewed action taken regarding the audit of school buses as well as inspections of driving schools by ARTO.

He also reviewed progress made regarding road safety audits, particularly on hilly roads and highways by PWD/PMGSY and BEACON, along with black spot identification and rectification.

Executing agencies were directed to ensure curve improvements and timely patching or repair of main

and inner roads, as well as installation of signages at blind curves, and to ensure full safety compliance.

For emergency medical response, the DC emphasized ambulance deployment considering accident-prone spots as well as health institutions' readiness.

Departments were also asked to submit proposals for funding under the Road Safety Action Plan to augment infrastructure and medical care, and were directed to focus on accident-prone areas on the iRAD portal.

ICC welcomes development of Shankaracharya temple in Jammu

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Rahul Sahai, Chairman, Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC), Jammu Chapter, has warmly welcomed the visionary initiative of conceptualizing the Holy Temple of Shankaracharya at Jammu.

Expressing his gratitude, Sahai thanked the Chairman of SMBDSB and Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha for taking this significant step towards strengthening the spiritual and cultural landscape of the region.

He stated that the proposed temple is not only a matter of deep religious sentiment for devotees but will also emerge as a landmark spiritual destination in Jammu. “Such initiatives



reinforce Jammu's identity as a prominent pilgrimage hub and reflect the administration's commitment towards preserving and promoting our rich spiritual heritage,” he said.

Sahai further expressed confidence that once completed, the Shankaracharya Temple will add im-

mense value to the existing pilgrimage circuit of Jammu, attracting devotees and tourists from across the country and abroad.

This, he noted, will also provide a boost to the local economy by generating opportunities for trade, hospitality, transport, and allied sectors.

Highlighting Jammu's growing importance as a gateway to major shrines such as Vaishno Devi Temple and Amarnath Temple, Rahul Sahai said the addition of the Shankaracharya Temple will further strengthen the region's position on India's spiritual tourism map.

The ICC Jammu Chapter reiterates its full support to initiatives that promote religious tourism, infrastructure development, and holistic economic growth of the Union Territory.

DC Ramban reviews arrangements for holy month of Ramzan

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In view of the forthcoming holy month of Ramzan, Deputy Commissioner Ramban Mohammad Alyas Khan convened a meeting today with religious leaders and district officers to finalise necessary arrangements for ensuring the smooth, safe and harmonious observance of the holy month across the district.

The meeting was attended by ADC Varunjeet Singh Charak, ACR Showkat Hayat Mattoo, Chief Medical Officer, Executive Engineers of Jal Shakti and PWD, representatives of Municipal Committees and other concerned officers.

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the arrangements made by var-



ious departments and directed all concerned to ensure coordinated efforts for the smooth conduct of religious activities. Emphasis was laid on maintaining essential services, sanitation, healthcare facilities and uninterrupted public utilities.

All BDOs and Municipal Committees were instructed to ensure proper

cleanliness in and around mosques and other religious places. The AD Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs was directed to conduct joint market inspections with Revenue, Police and other departments to monitor quality, prevent overpricing and ensure adequate availability of essential commodities, LPG cylinders and food items.

The Executive Engineer JPDCL was directed to ensure uninterrupted electricity supply, particularly during Sehri and Iftar hours, while the Jal Shakti Department was asked to maintain regular water supply and deploy water tankers wherever required.

The Chief Medical Officer was instructed to ensure the availability of quality healthcare services, essential medicines and necessary medical facilities in health institutions during Ramzan.

Reviewing the overall preparedness, the Deputy Commissioner stressed intensified cleanliness drives around mosques, uninterrupted power and water supply, proper sanitation arrangements and strict market checking to prevent price escalation of essential commodities.