

DC Ramban reviews anti-drug measures at NCORD meeting

Calls for coordinated action to curb the menace

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 25

A District-Level Narco Coordination Committee (NCORD) meeting was held here today to review ongoing anti-narcotics measures and reinforce the same to eliminate the menace of drug abuse from the district.

Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan chaired the meeting. He emphasized the need to identify drug abuse hotspots and adopt a coordinated strategy to tackle the menace effectively. He called for innovative interventions and focused analysis to understand the root causes pushing youth towards substance abuse.

Directing strict enforcement, the DC asked the Drug and Food Control authorities to take effective action against perpetrators in close coordination with the Police Department. Tehsildars were directed to submit details of Drug-Free



Panchayats for cross-verification and ensure proper surveillance in such areas.

The CEO was directed to activate school-level monitoring Committees at Middle, High and Higher Secondary Schools.

Deployment of a counsellor at the Panchayat level was also stressed. The DSWO was asked to intensify awareness under the 'Nasha Mukta Bharat Ab-

hiyan' by hosting IEC activities in government and private schools, colleges, ITIs, Polytechnic institutes and libraries.

Reviewing the functioning of the De-addiction Treatment Facility (ATF) at District Hospital, the DC directed the CMO to ensure proper medical care, counselling and follow-up support for rehabilitation and prevention of relapse.

Among others present in the meeting included Superintendent of Police, Arun Gupta; ADC Varunjeet Singh Charak; ACD Sheraz Ahmed; Tehsildar Hqr Reejuta Mahajan; DSWO, CMO, CAO, Drug Control Officer and officers from various enforcement and line departments. Sub-Divisional Magistrates and Tehsildars participated through virtual mode.

Director Agriculture Kashmir inaugurates Exhibition Awareness Programme for GI-Tagged Saffron

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Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah, today inaugurated an Exhibition cum Awareness and Promotion Programme dedicated to GI-tagged Kashmir Saffron at the Agriculture Complex, Lalmandi, Srinagar.

The event was organized by the Spices Board of India, Regional Office, Srinagar (Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India). It aimed to showcase the exceptional qualities of Kashmir saffron, create greater awareness among stakeholders, and promote its international market potential following the award of the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

In his inaugural address, the Director highlighted the various initiatives undertaken by the Department of Agriculture for the promotion and development of GI-tagged saffron. He reaffirmed the department's full commitment to providing technical support, guidance, and assistance to saffron farmers to improve productivity, enhance production, and strengthen market link-



ages. He said that Saffron is our niche heritage crop, and Kashmir has the proud distinction of producing one of the finest and most premium saffrons in the world.

The GI tag has opened new global opportunities for our saffron, ensuring its authenticity and commanding higher value in international markets, he added. He called for a unified and collective approach among all stakeholders to further strengthen and promote the saffron sector.

The Director emphasized that the GI tag is playing a key role in enabling saffron growers to receive remunerative prices, thereby en-

sureing economic sustainability and long-term viability of saffron cultivation in the region.

Sartaj Ahmad Shah directed all concerned officers to ensure proactive outreach so that every saffron farmer is fully aware of the departmental schemes, programmes, and support measures available for the advancement and modernization of the saffron industry. Earlier, the Director visited various exhibition stalls set up by the India International Kashmir Saffron Trading Centre (IIKSTC), Spices Board of India, and private entrepreneurs. These stalls displayed saffron products, cultivation

practices, post-harvest techniques, and value-addition opportunities.

The programme was attended by representatives from the Spices Board of India, officers from IIKSTC and the Agriculture Department, and saffron growers.

This initiative reflects the strong collaboration between the Department of Agriculture Kashmir and the Spices Board of India to protect, preserve, and globally promote Kashmir's iconic saffron while empowering farmers through better awareness, improved market access, and sustainable development practices.

Entrepreneurship awareness programme held at ITI Billawar

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An Entrepreneurship Awareness Programme (EAP) was organized at Government ITI Billawar by the Ministry of MSME, Government of India, through MSME-Development and Facilitation Office (DFO) Jammu in collaboration with District Administration Kathua.

The programme aimed at motivating unemployed educated youth and PM Vishwakarma artisans to establish enterprises in rural areas and promote self-employment.

Over 180 participants, including ITI students and PM Vishwakarma artisans, attended the programme and evinced keen interest in the entrepreneurship and self-employment initiatives.

Young Professional, MSME-DFO Jammu, Shahid Hussain Wani delivered the welcome address and highlighted the importance of entrepreneurship in strengthening the local economy.



Assistant Director, MSME-DFO Jammu, Devender Kumar Tyagi (IEDS) apprised the participants about the flagship MSME schemes, detailing eligibility criteria, benefits and application procedures.

Superintendent ITI Billawar, Jitender Sharma spoke on the practical aspects of entrepreneurship, underscoring the significance of innovation, skill upgradation and proactive approach for successful enterprise development. Representative of District Industries Centre Kathua,

Masqueen Babu elaborated on Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) and other UT Government schemes, explaining financial assistance and incentives available to aspiring entrepreneurs.

A representative from Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), Dheeraj Handu briefed the participants about the J&K Startup Policy and the support ecosystem including mentorship, funding and incubation facilities. Director,

RSETI Kathua, Utpala Sekia along with Faculty Member Neha Salaria conducted sessions on financial literacy and credit linkages, emphasizing the role of financial inclusion in empowering first-generation entrepreneurs.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Senior Faculty Member, ITI Billawar, B.K. Dogoria, who reiterated the commitment of all stakeholders towards fostering entrepreneurship and self-reliance among the youth of Kathua district.

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An inspiring and intellectually stimulating Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament was today organized by GDC Shopian in collaboration with Mera Yuva Bharat Shopian at Government Degree College, Shopian with the theme "50 Years of Emergency-Lessons for India".

Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament is a platform for young voices to engage in national discussions and contribute to shaping the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047. It fosters leadership, civic participation, and meaningful policy dialogue, enabling students to deliberate on key national issues.

The venue was beautifully decorated to resemble a Parliament, with the Speaker, Dr. Aftab Ahmed in the Chair presiding over the proceedings.



The event featured two full-fledged sessions of the House along with an engaging Zero Hour, providing participants the opportunity to raise issues and present their viewpoints.

The young participants delivered impactful speeches on various contemporary topics, reflecting confidence, awareness and a deep understanding of democratic values. They eloquently threw light on 50 years of Independence, highlighting the nation's

journey, achievements and the responsibilities of citizens in strengthening democracy.

The programme was graced by MLA, Zainapora, Showkat Hussain Ganie. On the occasion, he threw light on the theme of the event and appreciated organisers for providing such a meaningful platform to the youth.

SSP, Shopian, Mushtaq Ahmed Choudhary also attended the program and emphasized that participa-

tion in such activities strengthens leadership qualities, enhances public speaking skills and prepares young minds to work hard and shine in their future endeavors.

Principal, GDC, Prof. Tariq Ahmed, Dy. CEO, Aijaz Ahmed, Shopian, BDO, Shakeel Ahmed, NSS, Coordinator, GDC, Dr. Mudasir Iqbal, faculty members, students and youth in large numbers participated in the programme.

Budgam Administration bids Farewell to outgoing Deputy Commissioner

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District Administration Budgam today organized a warm farewell function in honour of the outgoing Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, on his transfer to district Anantnag as the Deputy Commissioner.

The function was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR) Budgam, Chief Planning Officer (CPO) Budgam, all Sub-Divisional Magistrates (SDMs), all Tehsildars, and officers and officials from various departments.

During the occasion, several senior officers shared their experiences of working under the leadership of Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, appreciating his commitment, efficiency, and people-centric approach. They remarked that he carried out his responsibilities with utmost sincerity, dedication, and professionalism, ensuring that all administrative tasks were



handled effectively and within stipulated timelines. His ability to maintain transparency, responsiveness, and strong inter-departmental coordination was widely acknowledged and praised.

While speaking at the farewell, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, expressed heartfelt gratitude to the entire

district administration team for their constant support, dedication, and collaboration throughout his tenure in Budgam. He acknowledged the valuable contributions of officers at every level, stating that the achievements during his term were the result of collective efforts rather than individual

merit. He also extended his sincere thanks to the people of Budgam for their warmth, trust, and cooperation. The event concluded on a heartfelt note, with warm wishes, gratitude, and sincere prayers for the outgoing DC's continued success and well-being in his new assignment.

DC Ramban reviews implementation of HPV Vaccination Programme

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Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Mohammad Alyas Khan, today chaired a meeting of the District Task Force (DTF) to finalize modalities for the implementation of the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination programme in district Ramban.

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the preparedness of the Health Department for the effective rollout of the HPV vaccination drive, scheduled to be launched on

February 28, 2026 at 11 identified health centres across the district.

Detailed deliberations were held regarding the target population, infrastructure readiness, availability of trained manpower, cold chain management and identification of vaccination sites.

The Committee was informed that an estimated 3,304 girls aged around 14 years were identified as the target group. Out of these, 2,789 girls have been verified through headcount surveys conducted by ASHAs, AWWs and other field functionar-

ies. All identified health facilities have functional cold chain points, dedicated Medical Officers for AEFI management and the required IT infrastructure for U-WIN implementation.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed the importance of coordinated efforts among health officials to ensure smooth and timely vaccination, proper awareness generation and 100 percent coverage of eligible beneficiaries within the prescribed timeline. He directed the concerned officers to maintain close monitoring

to ensure that no eligible beneficiary is left out.

He also directed the Chief Education Officer to coordinate with schools to facilitate vaccination of eligible girls enrolled in educational institutions across the district.

The meeting was attended by Chief Medical Officer Kamal Je Zadu, MS DH Ramban Dr. Surdasha Katoch, District Immunization Officer, Block Medical Officers and other concerned officers of the Health & Family Welfare Department Ramban, besides the Chief Education Officer.

District-Level Volleyball Championship Kicks Off at Kupwara

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District-level Volleyball Championship under the Youth Engagement Programme commenced today at Natnussa in Kupwara, witnessing enthusiastic participation from around 240 players representing 24 blocks of the district.

The championship is being organised under the di-

rections of Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, as part of sustained efforts to channelize the energy of youth towards constructive and competitive sporting activities. The event was formally inaugurated by Assistant Commissioner Kupwara, (ACR) Peerzada Mumtaz Ahmad in the presence of DYSSO Kupwara, Nazir Ahmed and of-

ficials of the Youth Services & Sports Department.

Speaking on the occasion, the ACR highlighted the importance of sports in fostering discipline, teamwork, and a spirit of healthy competition among youth. He emphasized that such platforms not only nurture sporting talent at the grassroots level but also contribute to the overall physical and mental well-being of

young participants.

The Youth Services & Sports Department has devised a comprehensive calendar of sports activities across the district to ensure sustained engagement of youth in positive pursuits. The initiative aims to provide equal opportunities to aspiring sports persons from all blocks and to identify promising talent for higher-level competitions.