

Ito lays foundation stones for key development projects in Kulgam, reiterates Government's commitment to inclusive, accelerated growth

Also inaugurates 100-bedded Girls' Hostel, Ayush Dispensary

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, APR 18

Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo today laid foundation stones for several key developmental projects in Kulgam and also dedicated vital infrastructure to the public.

MLA, Kulgam, M.Y Tarigami; Mission Director ICDS, Director AYUSH, ADC Kulgam, senior officers of district administration, other sectoral officers and large number of locals were also present on the occasion.

In line with the Government's sustained push for inclusive and equitable development across Jammu & Kashmir, the Minister laid foundation stone for 'Viksit Village' at Yarikah-A, D.H.Pora.

Speaking on the occasion, Sakeena Itoo said that under this flagship initiative, rural infrastructure will be improved, besides basic amenities will be significantly enhanced to transform this village into a self-reliant and sustainable place. "Government is prioritizing rural transformation through targeted investments in infrastructure, education, healthcare, and social welfare", she stated.

She added that this initiative reflects the Government's approach towards grassroots-focused development strategy.

Afterwards, the Minister also laid the foundation stone for the construction and upgradation of the Chiripora-Trengabal road under the Public Works (R&B) department at an approximate cost of Rs. 2



crores.

Addressing the locals after foundation laying ceremony, the Minister said that this project is expected to significantly improve accessibility, reduce travel time and open new avenues for economic growth and service delivery in these areas.

Highlighting various achievements of Omar Abdullah led Government, Sakeena Itoo maintained that the Government is committed to equitable development of Jammu and Kashmir, with particular focus on rural and peripheral areas.

She outlined that the Government has accelerated rollout of rural road connectivity projects, expansion of educational infrastructure, strengthening healthcare facilities, and enhanced social security coverage to ensure that development benefits reach every section of society. She further underscored that special focus is being laid on bridging developmental gaps in remote and under-

as well as building for Higher Secondary School at Khull D.H.Pora.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister reaffirmed the Government's long-term vision, stating that sustained efforts are underway to build robust infrastructure, promote gender equity in education, and create livelihood opportunities, thereby ensuring comprehensive and inclusive growth across Jammu & Kashmir.

She emphasized that these initiatives are part of the government's broader vision to ensure equitable growth, improved public services, and enhanced quality of life for people in rural and underserved areas. She reiterated that the administration remains steadfast in its commitment to fast-tracking development works while ensuring transparency and accountability at every level.

Later, the Minister also visited Ardpora Khull, and witnessed the final match of Shaheed Wali Mohammad Itoo Memorial Cricket Tournament.

Interacting with the players on the occasion, Sakeena Itoo underscored the importance of sports in fostering discipline, teamwork, and a healthy lifestyle among young people. She assured participants continued government support for the promotion of sports infrastructure and youth engagement activities across the district.

She also distributed trophies among the Champion and runner up teams, as well as medallions among other top performers of the tournament.

DC, SSP Ramban interact with prominent citizens, religious leaders; call for unity, support to Nasha Mukta Abhiyan

RAMBAN, APRIL 18: Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Mohammad Alyas Khan, along with Senior Superintendent of Police Arun Gupta today held an interaction with prominent citizens and religious leaders of the district to discuss issues related to communal harmony, peace and social responsibility.

The meeting was attended by ADC Varunjeet Singh Charak, Additional SP Mujeeb-Ur-Rehman, Dy. SP Hqr Waqar Bhat and other senior officers. During the interaction, the Deputy Commissioner and SSP appreciated

the people of Ramban for their age-old tradition of communal harmony, unity and brotherhood, which has been a hallmark of the district.

Highlighting the importance of sustained peace, both officers urged the participants to continue fostering mutual respect and understanding among different communities. They emphasized that collective efforts of citizens, especially religious leaders and influencers, play a crucial role in maintaining law and order and strengthening social cohesion.

Seeking active support of the par-

ticipants in the ongoing "100 Day Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan", the Deputy Commissioner emphasised the significant role of community stakeholders in making the campaign successful. He called upon the participants to actively spread awareness about the harmful effects of drug abuse and encourage youth to adopt a healthy and responsible lifestyle. Stressing the need for a united approach, the Deputy Commissioner urged religious leaders to use their platforms to sensitize the masses against drug abuse.

LG Ladakh chairs high-level meeting to review preparedness for holy exposition of sacred Buddha

LEH, APRIL 18: The Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, today chaired a high-level meeting to review preparations for the Sacred Exposition of the Holy Relics of Tathagata Buddha in Ladakh.

In the meeting, the Lieutenant Governor directed all departments to expedite preparations, ensure the cleanliness of venues and surrounding areas, remove debris, and intensify drives to manage stray animals. He also reviewed infrastructure readiness, including sanitation, power supply, and availability of toilets and drinking water.

The Lieutenant Governor also directed the incorporation of suggestions from stakeholders, including the provision of shuttle services for elderly devotees, decorative lighting and lighting of lamps, installation of prayer flags, and beautification of key routes, to enhance the overall experience.

Reiterating the importance of coordination and commitment, the Lieutenant Governor called



upon all stakeholders to work collectively to ensure the successful conduct of this spiritually significant and globally important event.

Since assuming office, the Lieutenant Governor has been personally monitoring the preparations through a series of meetings with venerable Rinpoches, religious leaders, government officials, stakeholders, and other concerned departments to ensure the successful and grand organisation of the exposition. These continuous engagements reflect the Administration's commitment to providing a seamless, enriching, and spiritually fulfilling experience for devotees from Ladakh, across India, and abroad.

In a proactive step, the Lieutenant Governor also visited Jivetsal—the main venue for the Buddha Purnima celebrations—along with representatives from the Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre to assess on-the-ground arrangements and issue necessary directions.

As scheduled, the sacred relics are expected to arrive in Leh on April 29 and will be welcomed with a grand ceremony. The 2569th Buddha Purnima will be celebrated on May 1 at Jivetsal, followed by public exposition of the relics from May 2 to May 9. The relics will then be taken to Zanskar on May 11 and 12, and subsequently displayed at the Dharma Centre in Choglamsar on May 13 and

14, before returning to Delhi on May 15.

In addition to the main exposition, a series of parallel events will be organised across Ladakh. These include exhibitions of Buddhist artefacts and scriptures at the Central Institute of Buddhist Studies and Leh Palace, meditation and yoga sessions, medical health camps, and interfaith dialogues at the Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre.

Major conferences and seminars on themes such as International Conference on Himalayan Buddhism, Peace in Times of Conflict, and the Past, Present and Future of Buddhism in Ladakh will also be held.

Highlighting the broader vision, Shri Saxena stated that the event presents a unique opportunity to position Ladakh as a global hub for spiritual tourism and wellness.

He stressed the importance of robust security arrangements, adequate public amenities, drinking water facilities, and the installation of CCTV cameras to ensure the safety and comfort of devotees.

DC Ramban chairs DRAC, CLU meetings

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Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Mohammad Alyas Khan, today chaired meetings of the District Rent Assessment Committee (DRAC) and the District Level Committee on Change of Land Use (CLU) to review key administrative matters concerning rent assessments and land use cases across the district.

The meetings were attended by Additional Superintendent of Police, Mujeeb-Ur-Rehman; Additional Commissioner Revenue Shokat Hayat Mattoo; Assistant Commissioner Development Sehzad Ahmed; General Manager, District Industries Centre Ravinder Anand; Chief Medical Officer Chief Agriculture Officer; Executive Engineers of Jal Shakti, PWD and



JPDCL, along with other concerned officers.

During the DRAC meeting, attended by senior officers including ACR, ACD, CMO, CAO and Executive Engineers of Jal Shakti, PWD and JPDCL, the Committee reviewed 14 rent assessment cases of various departments. After detailed deliberations, 12

cases were approved, covering departments such as Police, Agriculture, Handicrafts, Handloom, Health, FCS&CA, JKPDCL, CDPO, MC Banihal and JKRLM.

The Deputy Commissioner directed timely disbursement of rent to building owners and stressed maintaining safety and security of government assets

and rented accommodations.

In a separate CLU meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed seven applications seeking change of land use. Each case was examined thoroughly to ensure adherence to prescribed norms and regulations. The meeting also reviewed revenue records, status of No Objection Certificates (NOCs) and overall progress in disposal of CLU cases.

Emphasizing transparency, efficiency and accountability, the Deputy Commissioner directed all departments to strictly follow provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Land Revenue Act and relevant government guidelines. He further stressed expediting NOC processing and adopting a proactive approach to ensure timely disposal of cases and improved public service delivery across the district.

Director Agri conducts intensive Poonch Tour, reviews schemes and farmer welfare initiatives

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Director Agriculture Jammu, Anil Gupta, conducted a comprehensive two-day tour of District Poonch to assess the on-ground implementation of various agricultural initiatives and to interact directly with farmers and stakeholders. He was accompanied by Joint Director Agriculture (Extension) Sanjay Anand and Chief Agriculture Officer (CAO) Poonch, Yograj Singh Salathia along with other senior officers and field functionaries of the Agriculture Department.

During the visit, the Director inspected the Kisan Khidmat Ghar (KKG) at Panchayat Bhata Dhurian, where he interacted with Krishi Udhmi Afzaal Naïem Khan. He reviewed the ongoing activities at the centre and took stock of the operational challenges being faced. SDAO Mendhar, Sanjeev Gupta along with AEO, JAEs and AEs of the concerned zone, were also present during the inspection and briefed the Director on the functioning



of the KKG.

Subsequently, Director Agriculture held detailed interactions with local farmers to evaluate the outreach and effectiveness of various agriculture schemes. He enquired whether the intended benefits were reaching the farming community and attentively listened to their concerns, particularly those related to field-level constraints and productivity.

Continuing his tour, Anil Gupta visited Zone Chandak in District Poonch, where he inspected the fields of a progressive farmer, Ishtaq Ahmad. The farmer has successfully adopted the bower system for the cultivation of bitter

gourd and bottle gourd, demonstrating an innovative and efficient approach to vegetable production.

The Director also inspected M/s Sumeet Seed and Fertilizer Store at Chandak, Poonch, where he reviewed the availability and distribution of fertilizers. He interacted with local farmers present at the outlet to obtain firsthand feedback regarding the supply and accessibility of essential inputs. Stressing the importance of uninterrupted availability, the Director directed the CAO to ensure that there is no disruption in fertilizer supply to farmers. He further warned that strict action must be taken against any dealer found indulging in

malpractices.

Later, Director Agriculture visited the Mini Soil Testing Laboratory at Chandak established under HADP (Project No. 19). He conducted a detailed inspection of the facility and reviewed its functioning and service delivery.

Addressing the farmers, Anil Gupta highlighted the critical role of soil testing in sustainable agriculture and said scientific soil analysis is the foundation of balanced nutrient management. Strengthening soil testing infrastructure will empower farmers to make informed decisions, optimize input use and enhance soil health, thereby ensuring long-term agricultural sustainability.

MVD Kishtwar goes tough against habitual traffic offenders; Suspends 43 Route Permits & 203 RCs, 66 vehicles blacklisted

KISHTWAR, APRIL 18: To initiate strict action against habitual traffic violators, the MVD Kishtwar led by the Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO), Kishitwar Tasleem Wani ordered the suspension of Registration Certificates (RCs) and Route Permits of 246 habitual offenders across the district.

Out of the total 246 vehicles, 193 are non-commercial/private vehicles, including 171 two-wheelers and 22 LMV cars, while 53 are commercial vehicles.

During the enforcement action, RCs of 203 vehicles have been suspended, Route Permits of 43 commercial vehicles have been suspended and 66 vehicles have been blacklisted.

The action follows the receipt of a list of habitual offenders from the office of the Transport Commissioner and Traffic Police authorities.

These violators have been booked more than five times for offences under the Motor Vehicles Act, in compliance with the guidelines of the Hon'ble

Supreme Court of India.

The violations include non-wearing of helmets, non-use of seat belts, overloading, over-speeding, drunken driving, use of mobile phones while driving and other serious traffic offences committed repeatedly.

As per Order No. ARTO/KTR/2026-27/235-41 dated 17-04-2026, the suspension has been imposed for a period of three months with immediate effect. During this period, the vehicles shall not be permitted to ply on roads and

the concerned owners have been directed to deposit their original RCs/Route Permits in the office of the ARTO, Kishtwar.

The department also urged District Police and Traffic Police authorities to strictly enforce the order, including the seizure of such vehicles if found operating during the suspension period.

The ARTO urged citizens and transporters to adhere to traffic rules and avoid repeated violations, failing which stringent legal action shall continue to be taken.

SWD Baderwah organises awareness & pledge programmes for drug-free society

BHADERWAH, APRIL 18: Under the ongoing 100 Days Nasha Mukta Campaign, on its 6th day, the Social Welfare Department Baderwah under the guidance of DSWO Doda and close supervision of Tehsil Social Welfare Officer (TSWO) Baderwah Shah Nawaz Ahmad organized a series of awareness-cum-pledge taking programmes against drug abuse.

A series of awareness-cum-pledge taking programmes against drug abuse were successfully organized by the officials of TSWO Baderwah at Pan-



chayats Chinote, Chakka, Kulchhari, Gatha, Sarna and Udrana of Baderwah

Block, besides Bhartiya Vidya Mandir School and the TSWO Office Bader-

wah.

During the programmes, special emphasis was laid on sensitizing youth and students about the harmful effects and serious consequences of drug abuse. Participants were encouraged to take collective pledges to stay away from drugs and to contribute towards building a healthy, disciplined and drug-free society. The initiative witnessed active participation from various sections of society, reaffirming the commitment towards achieving the goal of a Drug-Free Baderwah in line with the UT-wide campaign.