

JAMMU & KASHMIR

Itoo lays foundation stone for Additional Classroom building at Kulgam

Reaffirms Govt's commitment to quality education, improving learning environments

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, APR 19

Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo today visited Chambgund Kulgam and laid foundation stone of Additional Classroom building for Government Girls Middle School.

Addressing a large gathering on the occasion, the Education Minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to providing quality education and improving learning environments, particularly for girl students in rural and under-served regions. She noted that the construction of additional classrooms will help ease space constraints, enhance student enrolment, and create a more conducive atmosphere for academic growth of female students.

Sakeena Itoo reiterated that the education sector remains a top priority of Omar Abdullah led Government and sustained efforts being made to upgrade school infrastructure, ensure availability of adequate teaching staff, and promote inclusive education across Jammu and Kashmir.

"Regular investments are



being made in education sector which directly contributes to improved learning outcomes and empowerment of young girls", she stated.

While highlighting various achievements of the Government, Sakeena Itoo stated that the present Omar Abdullah led Govern-

ment has brought significant improvements and upgradations in all sectors, especially in health and educational sectors.

On the sidelines of the foundation laying ceremony, the Minister also interacted with locals and listened to their issues and grievances. She assured

them that all of their genuine issues will be addressed on priority.

The locals appreciated the Minister for her continued commitment towards strengthening education and health infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir, as well as in Kulgam district.

16th J&K UCMAS Abacus Competition to Showcase Young Talent

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UCMAS Abacus Jammu is set to organise the 16th J&K UCMAS Abacus & Mental Arithmetic Competition 2026 at Gurjar Desh Charitable Trust, Channi Himmat Bypass, Jammu. The prestigious annual event will bring together hundreds of students aged 4 to 13 years from across Jammu & Kashmir to demonstrate their mental arithmetic skills, speed, and accuracy.

The competition aims to promote concentration, memory, visualization, and confidence among young learners through the globally recognized UCMAS Abacus Mental Math Programme. Building on the success of previous editions, the event continues to provide an excellent platform



for children to showcase their talent and academic discipline.

The programme will be graced by Chief Guest Mr. Yudhvir Sethi, along with Guest of Honour Mr. Sohail Kazmi, Madam Vijay Puri, and Special Guest Ms.

Karuna Gupta, whose presence is expected to inspire participants.

Top-performing students from this competition will qualify to represent Jammu & Kashmir at the National Level Competition in Mumbai (September 2026) and

the International Competition in Sri Lanka (December 2026).

The event is being organised under the leadership of Mr. Rupesh Masson, Director UCMAS J&K, and Mrs. Sonia Masson, Academic Director.

2 platforms, CNG, hybrids to electric, Renault gears up for a new journey in India

CHENNAI, APR 19: French auto major Renault is adopting a two-platform strategy in India to address the segment below Rs 10 lakh while pursuing a full multi-energy flexibility for vehicles longer than 4 metres, as it looks to expand its product portfolio to seven by 2030.

The company, which offered models, such as Kwid, Kiger and Triber on its CMFA platform in the past, is evolving into a new RGEP — Renault Group Entry Platform — as it aims to address customer expectations like native factory-fitted CNG, newer powertrains, and next-generation digital and electronic architecture, according to Renault Group in India CEO Stephane Deblaise.

On the other hand, for scale and electrification, the company is using the new RGMP — Renault Group Modular Platform, which will drive the next phase of its growth in India while laying the foundation of the company's electrification strategy. The newly



launched Duster SUV is the first of many products to follow, he added.

"RGEP is designed to deliver strong value for vehicles below Rs 10 lakh and supporting a competitive core line-up well beyond 2030," Deblaise said, adding that in the coming months, upgraded versions of Kiger and Triber would be brought on the new platform.

With Renault looking at a 5 per cent market share in India, the RGMP will help the company expand into new and higher-value spaces.

"The platform is designed for scale and adapt-

ability. RGMP supports multiple vehicle formats from 4.0 to 4.7 metres, high-value digital and interactive interfaces, and full multi-energy flexibility. By 2030, four products in India will be built on it, including Duster and Bridger," Deblaise said.

The RGMP platform is not only about expanding product range, but it is "also the foundation of our electrification strategy because electrification is not a mono technology. It is a spectrum of technologies", he noted.

Stating that customers will move across the spectrum of electrification at

different speeds, depending on infrastructure, affordability, and usage patterns, he said RGMP has been engineered for the full electrification roadmap, under the name 'E-tech solutions' across strong hybrid and full electric, while even exploring super hybrid and e-4WD (electric four-wheel drive).

Sharing the roadmap for E-Tech transition, he said it will expand progressively across the range from 2026 onwards with the 'Bridger', a sub-4-metre SUV, set to be a key part of the journey.

"At launch, it will introduce a new 1.2-litre turbocharged engine and, a few months after the Bridger launch, it will evolve into Renault Group's first fully electric vehicle in India," Deblaise said.

Besides products, he said India will play a significant role in Renault Group's technology roadmap and vehicle developments, with the India Engineering Centre set to be a key development hub for software.

Army organises educational visit to Akhnoor Heritage Museum

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In a bid to promote cultural awareness and instill pride in Jammu and Kashmir's rich heritage, Indian Army organized an educational visit for school children to the Akhnoor Heritage Museum on the occasion of World Heritage Day.

The visit provided an invaluable opportunity for students to explore the region's historical treasures, helping them understand the significance of the Akhnoor region's ancient legacy.

The students were guided through various exhibits showcasing artifacts and historical narratives, which are pivotal in preserving the



region's cultural identity.

By immersing the younger generation in the rich heritage of their own region, the initiative aimed to spark a deeper sense of pride and responsibility towards preserving cultural

landmarks and traditions.

The White Knight Corps remains committed to fostering a strong bond between the Armed Forces and the local community, empowering youth through educational outreach initia-

tives.

This event not only commemorated the importance of World Heritage Day but also reinforced the values of cultural preservation, educational engagement and community development.

Social welfare, excise deptts join hands, stress collective responsibility to combat drug abuse

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In a continued effort to combat drug abuse and promote a healthier society, the Social Welfare Department, in collaboration with the Excise Department, organised a comprehensive awareness programme at Panchayat Kaskoot in Sub-Division Banihal under the ongoing Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan (100 Days Drug-Free Campaign).

The programme was conducted under the overall supervision of the Deputy Commissioner Ramban, the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Banihal, and the District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO) Ramban. It witnessed active participation from a cross-section of society, including local residents, former Panchayat Raj Institution (PRI) members, Panchayat officials, Mission YUVA motivators, youth club members, and employees from both the Social Welfare and Excise Departments.



Tehsil Social Welfare Officer Banihal, Musavir Giri, was also present on the occasion and highlighted the growing need for awareness and community involvement to eradicate the menace of substance abuse. Speakers during the event emphasized the harmful effects of drug addiction on individuals, families, and society at large, urging the youth to stay away from intoxicants and become ambassadors of change.

A key highlight of the programme was the administration of the Nasha Mukta pledge, wherein participants collectively resolved to contribute towards building a drug-free Jammu and Kashmir and to spread awareness within their communities.

The event forms part of a larger, sustained campaign being carried out across the district to sensitize the public about the dangers of substance abuse and to encour-

age preventive and rehabilitative measures.

It is pertinent to mention that earlier, on April 15, a massive padyatra led by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha was organised from District Police Lines (DPL) Ramban to the District Administrative Complex. The rally witnessed participation from thousands of people, including school and college students, reflecting strong public support for the anti-drug campaign.

4-Day Bhagwan Parsuram Jayanti celebration function concluding with Jagnopareet ceremony

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The four-day long celebrations in connection with Bhagwan Parshuram Jayanti by the Dogra Brahman Pratinidhi Sabha, concluded today with Yagnopaveet of Hindu boys ceremony at a well-attended function held in the premises of the Sabha with fervour and enthusiasm.

Amidst Vedic rituals, the Yagnopaveet was performed by adorning sacred thread to the young boys, who were also ordained into Gayatri Mantra by scholarly Pandits. Director ACB Shakti Pathak was the chief Guest on the occasion while Amit Sharma Director Census J&K and Ladakh Govt. of India was the Guest of Honour.

The baptized boys were told that besides spiritual and religious responsibilities, the Yagnopaveet also imposes a duty on them to work for humanity, nation, honesty and eradication of social evils.

Besides Ved Parkash Sharma, president of the Dogra Brahman Pratinidhi Sabha, its chairman Advocate P.C. Sharma, Former JMC



Commissioner Soujanya Sharma, Former Deputy Commissioner B.S.Jamwal, NMC President Subash Shastri, Senior BJP Leader Chander Mohan Sharma, Sunil Sharma, M.L. Sharma, N.C. Sharma, Gurdass Sharma, Davinder Sharma (Baboo), Ramesh Sharma, Atul Pangotra,

Ritz Khajuria, Jagannath Sharma, M.L. Padha, B.R.Sharma, Shiv Ram Sharma, Rajesh Sharma, Sanjiv Kerni, Krishan Lal Sharma, K.L. Sharma, Surinder Chowdhary, Surinder Sharma, Sri Kerni, Raman Sharma, Prem Balotra and Retired Col. Adarsh Khajuria, beside representatives of

various religious social organization were also present on the occasion. The religious function was followed by a grand Bhandara.

Meanwhile, reports said that Bhagwan Parshuram Jayanti were also celebrated by the Sabha units in various parts of the Jammu region.