

JAMMU & KASHMIR

CM Omar visits GMC Udhampur to see injured persons of bus accident

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, APR 22

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today visited Government Medical College Udhampur to enquire about the health of those injured in the tragic road accident that occurred earlier this week. He interacted with the injured and their families, directing officials to ensure the best possible medical care with round-the-clock monitoring.

The Chief Minister, accompanied by Minister for Health & Medical Education Sakeena Itoo and Minister for Transport Satish Sharma, conducted a detailed inspection of the hospital facilities. Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Minga Sherpa, Commissioner Transport J&K Vishesh Paul Mahajan, DIG Udhampur-Reasi range and SSP, National Highway, Principal GMC Udhampur, Regional Transport Officer Jammu, Medical Superintendent GMC Udhampur and other concerned were also present.

along with senior officers from the civil administration, police, and medical fraternity, were also present during the visit.

While taking round of the hospital, the Chief Minister inspected the Trauma Centre, ICU, Orthopaedic and Surgery wards, and other sections of the hospital. He



met each injured patient individually, enquiring about their condition, treatment protocols, availability of medicines, nature of injuries, and expected discharge timelines.

The attending medical team briefed the Chief Minister on the line of treatment being administered, including surgeries and other medical interventions, as well as the recovery progress of the patients.

Assuring full support to the affected families, the Chief Minister emphasized the need for stringent measures to prevent such accidents in the future. He later chaired a review meeting to assess both the treatment being provided to the injured and the overall func-

tioning of GMC Udhampur. The meeting was informed about the preliminary causes of the accident and the status of the ongoing investigation.

Expressing concern over road safety, the Chief Minister directed the Transport Department to ensure adequate frequency of buses on various routes and strictly curb overloading. "Don't show any laxity on these issues," he asserted.

On the occasion, officials apprised the Chief Minister about the relief being extended under the Road Accident Victim Fund, which includes financial assistance of ₹1 lakh in case of death, ₹75,000 for permanent disability, ₹50,000 for grievous injuries, and ₹10,000

for minor injuries. The Chief Minister further instructed all concerned departments to extend maximum support to the victims and their families through various welfare schemes of key sectors, including health, education, and social welfare, ensuring a comprehensive support system during their recovery and rehabilitation.

Soon after the tragedy, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah announced immediate relief from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund for the victims with an ex-gratia of ₹2 lakh to the next of kin of each deceased, ₹1 lakh to those seriously injured, and ₹25,000 to those who sustained minor injuries in the accident.

Itoo reviews implementation of key academic, student welfare initiatives of DSEJ

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JAMMU, APR 22

Minister for Education, Sakeena Itoo, today chaired a meeting at Directorate of School Education Jammu (DSEJ) to review performance of the department as well as assess implementation of key initiatives related to academic planning and student welfare.

Director School Education Jammu, Naseem Javid Choudhary; senior officers of the DSEJ and other concerned officers were also present on the occasion.

During the meeting, the Education Minister held comprehensive assessment of all the ongoing initiatives of DSEJ and also reviewed the finalisation of BPL students for availing free coaching in registered and reputed coaching centres for competitive exams.



Sakeena Itoo endorsed the recommendation of 445 BPL students for availing free coaching facilities for the Academic Session 2026-27 in registered coaching centres, highlighting the Omar Abdullah Government's commitment to inclusive and equitable education.

She highlighted that the initiative aims to bridge the opportunity gap and empower deserving students to compete effectively in various competi-

tive examinations, ensuring equitable access to quality education, particularly for students from economically weaker sections.

The Minister on the occasion also launched the Uniform Academic Calendar for the Academic Session 2026-27, aimed at streamlining academic activities, ensuring institutional consistency, and improving the quality of education delivery.

She issued directions for effective policy implementation, adherence to academic calendar and timely service delivery, emphasizing coordinated efforts to strengthen the education system and ensure that benefits reach deserving students.

The Minister also appreciated the Director School Education, Jammu, for improving the Class 10th result to 89%, as compared to the previous year 79%.

Rana calls for comprehensive strategy to address water scarcity in Kandi areas

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, APR 22

Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today emphasised the need for a comprehensive and result-oriented strategy to tackle the growing water scarcity in Kandi areas, stating that the challenge requires coordinated and long-term interventions.

The Minister made these remarks while interacting with the public delegations at Gurjar Desh Charitable Trust (GDCT), where the people from various parts of Jammu highlighted their concerns, with water supply emerging as the key issue.

Stressing sustainable solutions, the Minister underscored the importance of creating water harvesting tanks across Kandi belts to capture rainwater that otherwise goes unused. He said such infrastructure can serve as dependable local water sources during the dry spells and reduce dependence on distant supply lines. He also called for intensified awareness drives to sensitise the communities about water conservation and the limited nature of groundwater reserves in these areas.

Rana stressed the need for effective dovetailing of efforts among the Jal



Shakti, Rural Development, Forest and other line departments to ensure efficient water conservation and management. He highlighted that behavioural change among communities is as vital as infrastructure, urging judicious use of water in domestic consumption, agriculture and livestock rearing to prevent further depletion of already stressed sources.

The Minister directed the field officers to strengthen ground-level monitoring to detect and plug leakages in the water supply network, noting that such losses deprive end users of their rightful share. He instructed the officers to conduct regular inspections of pipelines, storage tanks and distribution points to ensure optimal utilisation of available resources.

To ensure equitable distribution in water-stressed areas like Bathindi, the Minister directed the officials to implement alter-

nate-day water supply and held field officers accountable for the quality and regularity of monitoring reports.

Earlier, a delegation from Bathindi raised the issue of irregular water supply and demanded drilling of a borewell in Sagri Mohalla. Another delegation from Chowadhi highlighted water scarcity and the poor condition of roads.

Delegations from Samba, Akhnoor and other areas of Jammu division also presented their grievances and sought early redressal.

The officers informed the Minister that work on six borewells in Bathindi and adjoining areas is underway and nearing completion, which is expected to significantly ease water scarcity and ensure a reliable supply. Rana reiterated that coordinated planning, community participation and efficient resource management form the three pillars of a lasting solution to wa-

ter scarcity in Kandi areas. Later, the Minister held a detailed interaction with the officers and trustees regarding establishment of a Tribal Museum at GDCT. The proposed museum is envisioned as a dedicated space to preserve and showcase the rich cultural heritage, traditions and history of the tribal communities of Jammu & Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Chief Engineer I&FC, Jammu, Manoj Gupta, Chief Conservator of Forests, Jammu, Dr V S Senthil Kumar; Director Tribal Affairs Department, Mohd Mumtaz Ali, Chief Engineer PHE, Mohd Hanief; Director Tribal Research Institute Dr Abdul Khair and other officers. Trustees of GDCT including Patron in Chief Abdul Hamid Coudhary, Chairman Arshad Ali Choudhary and General Secretary Er. M. Sadiq Azad also attended the meeting.

Govt focused to transform J&K into a hub of quality education, innovation: Sakeena

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, APR 22

Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo today laid e-foundation stone for Classroom Block for Innovative learning under Design Your Own Degree (DYOD) and Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUGP) frameworks at Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) Awantipora. Vice Chancellor, IUST, Prof. Shakeel Ahmad Ramshoo; Dean Academic Affairs, Prof Ayaz Hassan Moon; Registrar IUST, HoDs of various departments, senior faculty members and other concerned officers were also present on the occasion.

Addressing the officers virtually, the Education Minister said that this unique initiative marks a major stride in strengthening higher education infrastructure and promoting flexible, multidisciplinary



learning and skill-oriented education in this prestigious university.

She added that this initiative reflects the government's focused commitment to transform Jammu and Kashmir into a hub of quality education and innovation. She noted that the proposed infrastructure will play a pivotal role in fostering experiential learning, critical thinking, and research-driven academic engagement among students.

"The foundation of this innovative classroom facility signifies our resolve to align higher education with global standards and empower students with choice-based, future-ready learn-

ing opportunities," she said. The Minister highlighted that the project is being developed under the progressive Design Your Own Degree (DYOD) and Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUGP) frameworks, which are central to building a knowledge-driven and skill oriented society.

She added that this foundation marks another milestone in the Omar Abdullah led Government's sustained efforts to modernize higher education institutions and create an enabling environment for holistic student development.

On the occasion, Vice Chancellor Shakil Ahmad Romshoo underscored the

university's commitment to academic innovation and institutional growth. He stated that the upcoming facility will significantly enhance IUST's capacity to deliver high-quality, outcome-based education and provide students with a dynamic and engaging learning environment.

Pertinently, the Classroom Block will be constructed at an estimated cost of over ₹16 crore and will feature modern lecture halls, digital learning environments, collaborative spaces, and advanced academic infrastructure tailored to support the evolving needs of DYOD and FYUGP programmes.

Dosti Discussion under Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyan Continues in Gurez

BANDIPORA, APRIL 22: Continuing the outreach under the 100-Day Mission Mode campaign of Nasha Mukht Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan, District Administration Bandipora on Wednesday organised a "Dosti Discussion" programme at Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Badugam in Sub-Division Gurez during the second day of the Deputy Commissioner's tour.

The programme, conducted by DPO, ICDS and Chief Education Officer (CEO) Bandipora, began with the National Anthem. Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, also undertook a plantation drive within the school premises.



A panel discussion under the "Dosti Discussion" series was held as part of the anti-drug campaign, with students actively interacting with the Deputy Commissioner and sharing their

perspectives. They discussed the psychological, physical and social impact of substance abuse, legal provisions, and the broader national scenario. A student also presented findings of a

survey highlighting deaths linked to drug abuse.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner urged students to act as ambassadors of change and led them in a pledge to keep their homes and communities free from tobacco and substance use.

On the sidelines, the Deputy Commissioner heard public grievances. Locals raised issues related to winter hardships, gas supply, and staff shortages in the education sector. The students raised issue of lack of transport facility, noting that they walk long distances to school and sought a school bus. The CEO informed that transport routes have already been formulated.

Satish attends Village Mela at Thanger; pays tribute to former MP

JAMMU, APRIL 22: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports, and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, today attended a Village Mela organised at Thanger, to mark the birth anniversary of former Member of Parliament Madan Lal Sharma.

The mela was held as a tribute to the life and contribution of Late Madan Lal Sharma, a revered leader known for his unwavering dedication to public service and grassroots development.

Remembering his legacy, the Minister described him as a people-centric leader who worked tirelessly for the upliftment of the poor and marginalised sections of society.

Speaking on the occasion,



Satish Sharma said that Late Madan Lal Sharma's contribution to the region remain unparalleled and continue to inspire public representatives and youth. "His vision of inclusive development and his deep connection with the people set a benchmark in public life. We must strive to carry forward his ideals with the same commitment and sincerity," he remarked.

The Minister visited various departmental stalls set up during the mela, where different government schemes and services were showcased. He interacted with the officials and members of the public, reviewing the outreach efforts and ensuring that on-the-spot assistance and awareness dissemination were being effectively carried out.

A plantation drive was

also organised on the occasion in memory of Late Madan Lal Sharma.

The Minister participated in the drive and highlighted the importance of environmental conservation, stating that such initiatives serve as a meaningful tribute to the legacy of great leaders while contributing to a greener and sustainable future.

Emphasizing the role of such initiatives in strengthening governance at the grassroots level, the Minister highlighted that village melas serve as an important platform for bridging the gap between the administration and the public. He also underscored the importance of youth participation, stating that such events provide opportunities for engagement in sports, innovation and community-building activities.