

JAMMU & KASHMIR

Dy CM calls for safety alignment of Ramnagar accident site, says responsibility to be fixed

Inspects development projects across Udhampur, calls for quality, timely completion

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, APR 23

Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today called for safety alignment construction at Kaghoti Ramnagar accident site after detailed inspection of the spot.

Expressing deep sorrow over the loss of lives in the recent bus accident, the Deputy Chief Minister called for immediate road safety alignment and a comprehensive safety audit of concrete parapet and protection walls across the 13 kilometres long Udhampur-Ramnagar stretch.

"We have lost many innocent lives in the unfortunate accident, however, responsibility shall be fixed on it," he said.

The concerned Chief Engineer were instructed to prepare a plan after due consultation with the consultancy and ensure that the measures are enforced to prevent such tragic mishaps in the future.

The Deputy Chief Minister who conducted an extensive tour of to assess progress of ongoing infrastructure works across Udhampur District stressed strict adherence to quality standards, timely completion, and accountability at all levels.

He inspected the under-construction PWD Dak



Bungalow at Udhampur and emphasized timely completion of the renovation works. He directed the officials to ensure that all the works are completed by May 2026.

As part of the day-long tour, the Deputy Chief Minister also inspected several key road and bridge projects across the district, including Majalta Bridge, Doder Nallah Gudar Bridge and the Dhana-Bunal road.

He directed the concerned to expedite the pace of work while maintaining the highest quality standards to ensure timely completion.

Additionally, he reviewed the ongoing permanent protection works along the Sidra-Suransar-Mansar road, emphasizing durable

and resilient construction at all flood-affected stretches.

Reiterating the government's commitment to robust infrastructure development, the Deputy Chief Minister called for strict adherence to the set guidelines and quality benchmarks across all projects. He asserted that accountability must be ensured for any lapses, warning that action including blacklisting of contractors would be considered in cases of sub-standard work.

The Deputy Chief Minister said that the government remains focused on strengthening the infrastructure, enhancing road safety and ensuring sustainable development across Jammu and Kash-

mir. During the visit, the Deputy Chief Minister also carried out surprise inspections of local stone crushers and macadam plants at Birma Pull, directing the officials to ensure strict compliance with the mining norms. He warned that any laxity would be dealt with strictly as per rules.

He also assessed the ongoing mining operations and asked for ensuring strict ban on illegal mining operations.

Chief Engineer PMGSY, Purshotam Kumar, Chief Engineer DIQC Atul Bali, SDM Ramnagar, SDPO, SEs, Tehsildars, Executive Engineers and other concerned officers accompanied the Deputy Chief Minister during the daylong tour.

GBHSS Sarwal creates history with 4 merit list positions

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JAMMU, APR 23

Government Boys Higher Secondary School (GBHSS) Sarwal proudly announces a historic achievement in the recently declared Class 12 results. For the first time in the school's history, our students have secured four positions in the official merit list, marking an extraordinary milestone of academic excellence.

In the Humanities stream, Amit Sharma achieved the 4th position, while Keshav Suri secured the 6th position. In the Commerce stream, Rohan Gouria earned the 6th position, and Dhruv Salgotra attained the 9th position.

Principal Ms. Anshu



Thakur expressed heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for the relentless dedication of the teaching staff and the hard work of the students. She emphasized that this success reflects the collective spirit of perseverance, discipline, and commitment to excellence that

GBHSS Sarwal stands for. To honor this historic accomplishment, the school premises came alive with celebrations.

Students and teachers danced joyfully to the beating of drums, while the Principal, along with staff members, distributed

sweets to all present, making the occasion truly memorable.

This achievement not only highlights the brilliance of our students but also reinforces GBHSS Sarwal's legacy of nurturing talent and fostering academic distinction.

Secy RDD reviews draft O&M, FSSM policies

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Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, today chaired a meeting to review the draft Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and Faecal Sludge and Septage Management (FSSM) policies, which are in the final stages prior to notification, under the Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen (SBM-G).

The meeting was attended by Director General Rural Sanitation Anoo Malhotra, Director Finance Umar Khan, Superintending Engineers REW (Jammu/Kashmir), Deputy Directors Rural Sanitation and other senior officers.

The Secretary directed that key features be refined and aligned before notification, particularly with regard to enforcement provisions and a clear appellate mechanism. He emphasized that the Assistant Commissioner Panchayat (ACP) should act as the appellate authority, with oversight at the Directorate level.

Reviewing alignment with the Solid Waste Management Rules, he reiterated that Panchayats will be empowered to levy user charges and impose penalties for non-compliance, especially for failure to ensure source segregation.

"Source segregation is the cornerstone of effective waste management and must be strictly enforced," he said, stressing segregation

into dry, wet, sanitary and special waste streams.

The Secretary underscored the role of Deputy Commissioners, as heads of District Sanitation Committees, in strengthening the monitoring frameworks, particularly for door-to-door collection systems and ensuring elimination of visible litter. He also called for preparation of district-specific waste management plans, detailing logistics such as vehicle deployment, manpower, collection frequency and ward-wise schedules.

On financial sustainability, he stressed the rationalisation and enforceability of user charges, noting limited willingness to pay in rural areas.

The meeting also discussed provisions related to

the Bulk Waste Generators (BWGs), including incorporation of Extended BWG Responsibility in the policy framework.

Highlighting the need to sustain SBM-G gains, the Secretary called for a robust, community-driven O&M framework to maintain sanitation assets, particularly in over 5,900 ODF Plus villages across the UT.

The officials informed that 10 percent of PRI Capex allocation has been earmarked for O&M of sanitation and SLWM assets.

Regarding FSSM, he emphasized the importance of a structured system for safe collection, transportation, treatment and disposal of faecal sludge, noting that nearly 60 percent of rural households rely on on-site sanitation systems.

Toppers honoured on JU Bhaderwah Campus

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JAMMU, APR 23

A grand 'Shining Star Event' was held today on Auditorium of Jammu University Bhaderwah Campus to recognize and celebrate the achievements of meritorious students in academics and sports.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Sunil Kumar Bhutyal attended the event as the Chief Guest. Among others present were Assistant Professor and Head of the Department of Zoology Dr. Ajaz Wani; Tehsildar Kamalpreet Singh; TSWO Shah Nawaz Ahmed; ZEPO Vijay Kotwal, representative from 4 RR (Indian Army) along with several other officials.

During the event, NEET toppers, sports achievers and Class 12th toppers were felicitated with medals and



appreciation certificates in recognition of their outstanding performance and dedication.

A pledge on Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan was also

taken by all officers and participants, emphasizing the importance of a drug-free society and encouraging awareness against substance abuse.

The event concluded on an inspiring note, motivating students to excel in their respective fields while promoting social responsibility.

Satish reviews functioning of Transport Deptt; asks for strict compliance to traffic rules

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, APR 23

Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology, Transport, Youth Services & Sports, and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, today convened a review meeting regarding functioning of the Transport Department for Jammu Division at the Civil Secretariat, Jammu.

The meeting was attended by all wRegional Transport Officers (RTOs) and Assistant Regional Transport Officers (ARTOs) of the division.

The Minister had a detailed review of the departmental functioning across key domains, emphasizing transparency, efficiency and strict enforcement of transport regulations.

Taking serious note of recent road accidents, the Minister stressed that vehi-



cle fitness must be ensured without any compromise. He directed the officers to strictly enforce the fitness norms, with special attention to critical components such as tyres, mirrors, front glass and emergency exits in public transport vehicles.

Satish Sharma called for stringent action against the defaulting officers and warned that any negligence in enforcement would not be tolerated.

He further directed the enforcement teams to curb the use of retreaded tyres

and unauthorized vehicles plying without valid fitness certificates.

Highlighting road safety as a top priority, the Minister issued directions for zero tolerance against overloading and repeat offenders, strict check on school buses, including CCTV compliance and speed limiting devices besides re-evaluation of hilly route permits to ensure passenger safety identification and mitigation of accident-prone black spots. He emphasized the need for coordinated efforts with the

concerned agencies to reduce road accidents and ensure safer transport systems.

The Minister directed the department to intensify awareness campaigns under the road safety initiatives, including promotion of helmet use, seat belts and child safety measures. He also instructed the officers to organize special campaigns against drug abuse (Nasha Mukh Abhiyan) in collaboration with the stakeholders, including youth organizations and educational institutions.

Satish Sharma stressed the need to resolve the operational issues in the online platforms such as Vahan and Sarathi and ensure seamless service delivery to citizens. He also called for improving integration with digital services and reducing delays in issuance of documents like driving licences and registration certificates.

J&K set to spread red carpet for International Film Festival this year

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In a significant initiative to promote cinema, culture, and tourism, the Government of Jammu & Kashmir has initiated plans to host a prestigious international film festival through the Department of Information & Public Relations (DIPR).

The decision was taken during a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, which was attended by the Additional Chief Secretary, Finance; Additional Chief Secretary, Tourism; Commissioner Secretary, Information; Director, Information & Public Relations, and other senior officers.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary directed the Information Department to begin preparations for this maiden film festival in the Union Territory. He emphasized the need for a professionally managed event of national stature, drawing parallels with the International Film Festival of India held in Goa.

To ensure seamless execution, it was decided that a



dedicated committee will be constituted at the earliest to oversee all arrangements related to the festival. The committee will be responsible for planning, coordination, and overall supervision to ensure the smooth and successful conduct of the event.

The Chief Secretary further instructed that a competent and experienced agency be identified and engaged for efficient management of the festival. He stressed the importance of exploring best practices by studying similar events organized across the country.

Underscoring the impor-

tance of adhering to timelines, he directed that the process be initiated promptly, with the issuance of the work order to the selected agency targeted before the end of May.

The Commissioner Secretary, Information, while addressing logistical and financial aspects, informed that the National Film Development Corporation of India has indicated reasonable financial requirements for organizing the event. She added that the Department has already undertaken the necessary groundwork and is well-prepared to ensure its suc-

cess. The proposed festival is envisaged to be held after the conclusion of the annual Amarnath Yatra, with final dates to be decided by the concerned department.

Highlighting the importance of inclusive development and tourism promotion, it was also decided that the festival will not be confined to Srinagar alone. Film screenings and related events will be organized across multiple scenic locations, including Bhaderwah, Pahalgam, Gulmarg, and Jammu, thereby boosting both emerging and established tourist destinations.

Kishtwar gears up for Census 2027

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, APR 23

Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma (Principal Census Officer) today chaired a meeting to review the district's preparedness for the Census 2027.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner underscored the significance of the Census as a crucial national exercise that generates vital demographic data essential for evidence-based policymaking, effective governance and developmental

planning. He directed the concerned departments to maintain close coordination for smooth and efficient conduct of the enumeration process.

After taking a comprehensive review of the ongoing arrangements, he emphasized the importance of meticulous planning, inter-departmental coordination and time-bound execution for the successful conduct of the Census 2027 exercise. He asked the stakeholder departments to launch an extensive awareness campaign to ensure maximum participation and cooperation from the public. Calling for mass

awareness, he asked for disseminating information through distributing pamphlets, putting up posters and banners at strategic locations like bus stands, public offices and other prominent sites across the district.

The Tehsildars (Charge Census Officers) were asked to establish Census Control Rooms at the tehsil level to ensure smooth, efficient and hassle-free implementation of the census process. He further emphasized the need for timely identification of gaps and the adoption of proactive, field-level interventions to address them effectively.