

# JAMMU & KASHMIR

## Rana reviews development scenario of Kishtwar, holds interaction with public

### Asks to frame DPR for developing Kalamstar as eco-tourism hub

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
JAMMU, APR 26

Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment, and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today chaired a review meeting at Kishtwar, to assess the progress of key development initiatives across the district.

Member Parliament (Rajya Sabha), Sajjad Ahmed Kitchloo; MLA Kishtwar, Shagun Parihar; Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar, Pankaj Kumar Sharma; ADDC Vinod Kumar Behnal; ADC Pawan Kotwal and senior officers from the district attended the meeting.

Javed Rana undertook an in-depth review of the sectors including Jal Jeevan Mission, irrigation and flood control, forest, rural development, health, power and education.

While addressing the meeting, Javed Rana asked the officers to redouble their efforts towards timely completion of the ongoing projects and the effective delivery of public services.

Highlighting the environmental priorities, the Minister emphasised water and environmental conservation and directed the Divisional Forest Officers to coordinate with the road construction agencies to ensure conservation measures alongside road development, including slope stabilisation wherever required.

In a significant boost to the tourism potential of the Kishtwar region, Javed Rana announced develop-



ment of the Kalamstar area as a major tourist destination. Noting untapped potential of the area to attract the visitors and generate sustainable livelihoods for local communities, the Minister directed the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Kishtwar, to prepare a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the initiative at the earliest.

The development of Kalamstar, the Minister observed, is envisioned as a catalyst for tourism-driven economic growth in the region, one that would open new avenues of employment and enterprise for the people of Kishtwar.

Earlier, the Deputy Commissioner presented a comprehensive PowerPoint presentation detailing the sector-wise physical and financial progress under UT CAPEX, District CAPEX, NABARD and other schemes. Regarding water supply infrastructure, the Minister directed the upgradation of old water supply schemes and expedited certification under the "Har Ghar Jal" initiative. He also instructed for submission of

a DPR for a ₹2.75 crore lift water supply scheme for the Badhat (Saroor) area from Kandni Nallah. Special focus was laid on improving the water supply and irrigation facilities in Badhat (Saroor), Tunder (Dachan) and other underserved areas to enhance agricultural productivity.

He directed the CEO Municipal Council Kishtwar, to expedite completion of the garbage dumping site at Khanwari Shalamar. He also called upon the concerned to ensure swift electrification of 35 unelectrified remote villages alongside accelerated implementation of the RDSS scheme.

Taking a firm stance on environmental protection, the Minister directed the Pollution Control and Mining Departments to strictly monitor and prevent the dumping of construction muck into the Chenab River, warning that accountability would be fixed in case of violations.

He further reviewed progress on the proposed Gujjar-Bakarwal hostel and

directed for early identification of suitable land for its construction.

Javed Rana also held an interaction with the people from across the district lending a direct hearing to the grassroots concerns. He was apprised of several critical issues confronting the district, including the urgent need for upgradation of road infrastructure, expediting ongoing developmental works, strengthening water supply schemes, regularisation of daily wagers and the release of their outstanding wages.

The repair of damaged footbridges, creation of sustainable employment opportunities for local youth, relief and assistance to flood-affected families in Chasoti and shortages in drinking water supply across Kishtwar town also figured prominently among the concerns raised.

The Minister heard all representations attentively and assured the delegation that their concerns would be taken up with the concerned departments for expeditious redressal.

## Satish Sharma calls for transforming J&K into sports epicentre at Chintan Shivir

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
JAMMU, APR 26

Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, IT, Transport, Youth Services and Sports, Satish Sharma, today outlined a bold and transformative vision to position Jammu and Kashmir as the sports epicentre of the country while addressing the concluding session of the Chintan Shivir at SKICC, Srinagar.

The Minister emphasized the immense potential of Jammu and Kashmir to emerge as the winter sports capital of India, alongside its growing reputation as a hub for water sports. He called for creation of a dynamic and inclusive sports ecosystem that promotes sporting activities from grassroots to national level, backed by robust infrastructure development and effective policy support.

Highlighting the need for focused intervention, Satish Sharma urged the Union Ministry for Youth Affairs and Sports to extend liberal financial assistance for development of world-class



sports infrastructure and the expansion of sports programmes, particularly in border and far-flung areas. He stressed that such initiatives would not only harness the immense talent of youth in these regions but also provide them with meaningful opportunities for growth and engagement.

Batting strongly for establishment of a dedicated Sports University in Jammu and Kashmir, the Minister said that such an institution would serve as a centre of excellence for training, research and capacity building, further strengthening the region's sports ecosystem and nurturing future champions.

The Minister also underscored the need to promote border and rural sports, saying that despite challenges, youth in these areas possess unmatched passion, resilience and patriotism. He called for targeted incentives and structured programmes to ensure their active participation and success in various sporting disciplines.

Referring to Jammu and Kashmir's growing achievements in sports, the Minister highlighted the region's commendable performances in national events, including progress in the

Santosh Trophy and participation in premier tournaments like the Ranji Trophy. He said these achievements reflect the untapped potential of local youth and the positive impact of sustained investment in sports.

Satish Sharma also drew attention to the immense economic potential of the Kashmir willow bat industry, which accounts for nearly 70 percent of the global bat production. He called for strategic measures to promote and modernize this sector, stating that it has the capacity to revolutionize bat manufacturing while generating substantial employment opportunities for local youth.

Sharing his personal journey, the Minister spoke about the transformative role of sports in shaping character and discipline. He emphasized that sports can serve as a powerful tool to counter the growing menace of drug abuse in the region by channelizing the energy of youth towards constructive and healthy pursuits.

## Delegations of Milk Cooperatives, Farmers call on Javid Dar

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
JAMMU, APR 26

Several delegations of Milk Cooperative Societies and Dairy Farmers from across Jammu Division today met Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Cooperatives and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, and apprised him of their demands for strengthening the sector.

The delegation sought interventions in milk procurement prices regulation, expansion of retail outlets at key urban locations and focused training support for the youth to set up dairy units. They also raised demand for increasing cooperative registrations, access to credit and need for stronger marketing and logistics.

Responding to the demands, the Minister called for closer coordination between the Animal Hus-



bandry and Cooperative departments to ensure that farmers receive timely and effective support. He directed the officers to address the bottlenecks on priority and improve ground-level facilitation for dairy cooperatives.

Javid Dar said that strengthening of the cooperatives is central to improve the farmer incomes and make the dairy sector

more viable. He stressed the need to align institutional support and schemes so that the benefits reach the farmers in a practical manner.

The Minister assured the delegations that the government is working to significantly expand the milk processing capacity in Jammu and Kashmir, from the current level of around 4 percent to 20 percent, through a

mega dairy infrastructure development initiative. The move is expected to improve the value addition and provide better returns to dairy farmers and cooperatives.

He assured the delegation that their issues will be addressed through coordinated action, with a clear focus on strengthening the dairy value chain in the region.

## BOPEE conducts Common Entrance Test for BSc Nursing, Paramedical, Technology

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
JAMMU, APR 26

The Jammu and Kashmir Board of Professional Entrance Examinations (BOPEE) conducted the Common Entrance Test (CET) for B.Sc. Nursing, B.Sc. Paramedical and B.Sc. Technology Courses-2026 for the academic session 2026-27 today at the designated centres within the Union Territory of

Jammu and Kashmir. The test was conducted in 48 examination centres across J&K with 37 in Kashmir and 11 in Jammu Division, wherein 25090 candidates appeared out of 26237 applicants making it a total of 95.6 percent attendance.

To ensure smooth conduct of the Entrance Test, adequate arrangements were made in collaboration with the respective institution/college adminis-

tration and law enforcement agencies, under the guidance of Chairperson, BOPEE, Professor Minu Mahajan.

The Chairperson, along with the Members, the Secretary, the Controller of Examinations and officials of the J&K BOPEE actively monitored the conduct of the Entrance Test at Srinagar and Jammu. They thanked the divisional and district administration, Director

General of Police for security cover to staff carrying sensitive material and frisking arrangements in and around the examination centres, staff members deputed by the General Administration Department, Members of the Monitoring Squad, Principals and staff members of the respective Institutions/Colleges for their support during the smooth conduct of the test.

## DC Kulgam inspects Mining Sites at Lassipora

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
JAMMU, APR 26

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, today conducted an on-site inspection of mining locations at Lassipora to assess ground conditions and ensure strict adherence to mining regulations.

During the inspection, the Deputy Commissioner reiterated the administration's zero-tolerance policy against illegal mining and directed concerned departments to take immediate action against any unauthorized extraction.

He emphasized that all vehicles and machinery, including tractors and JCBs involved in illegal activities, must be promptly identified, tracked, and stopped.

Focusing on preventive enforcement, the Deputy Commissioner directed officials to block access routes to vulnerable mining sites by constructing protection bunds and embankments, thereby physically restricting unauthorised entry and extraction. He stressed that such measures must be imple-



mented on priority to effectively curb illegal mining at the source.

The Deputy Commissioner further instructed for intensified surveillance and regular monitoring in the Lassipora area, with close coordination among

enforcement agencies and local stakeholders. He highlighted the importance of community participation in providing real-time inputs to identify violations and strengthen enforcement efforts.

Reaffirming the admin-

istration's commitment to environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources, the Deputy Commissioner warned that strict legal action will be taken against those found involved in illegal mining activities.

## JKEDI to host district-level startup facilitation meetings under D-BRAP

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
JAMMU, APR 26

In a significant step towards strengthening the entrepreneurial landscape of the Union Territory, the Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) is all set to organize district level credit facilitation meetings under the District Business Reform Action Plan (D-BRAP).

These meetings form a key component of implementation strategy of the Jammu & Kashmir Startup Policy 2024-27, which envisions building a vibrant, innovation-driven and inclusive startup ecosystem across J&K.

The Startup Policy 2024-27 has been designed to promote entrepreneurship by extending institutional support, financial assistance and capacity-building opportunities to the aspiring entrepreneurs and emerging startups.

With a focus on decentralization and grassroots outreach, the adoption of D-

BRAP aims to enhance the ease of doing business at the district level while ensuring that startup support mechanisms are accessible to all.

Under this framework, District Offices of JKEDI have been designated as District Startup Cells, serving as the first point of contact for the entrepreneurs. These cells play a pivotal role in identifying the potential startups, facilitating registrations, creating awareness about the policy benefits and ensuring that government-backed initiatives reach every corner of the Union Territory.

As part of this initiative, JKEDI will conduct a series of District-Level Credit Facilitation Meetings to directly connect the aspiring entrepreneurs, startups, self-help groups and youth with the banks, financial institutions and other stakeholders. These meetings are aimed at simplifying the access to credit, enhancing awareness about available financial schemes and fostering meaningful engagement between the entrepreneurs

and funding agencies.

Polished Version: The programme will be held on 27 April in Anantnag and Jammu and on 28 April in Udhampur and Shopian.

These meetings will provide a unique platform for the participants to explore various financial avenues, understand credit mechanisms and receive guidance on business planning and funding strategies. The initiative also aligns with the broader objective of strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem by enabling the startups to access timely financial support and scale their ventures.

The Startup Policy offers a comprehensive range of incentives, including seed funding support, innovation and prototype development grants, market access assistance and capital grants for the incubators. In addition, startups benefit from structured mentorship, capacity-building programmes and networking opportunities. Through the District Startup Cells, entrepreneurs are also supported in onboarding

onto the Startup JK Portal, a centralized platform for registration, mentorship and availing policy incentives.

JKEDI, as the nodal agency for implementing the Startup Policy, continues to facilitate regular mentorship sessions, bringing together domain experts, industry leaders and successful entrepreneurs to guide startups on critical aspects such as technology adoption, regulatory compliance and market expansion.

By taking these initiatives to the district level, the government aims to ensure that entrepreneurial opportunities are not confined to urban centers but are extended to grassroots innovators and aspiring business leaders across Jammu and Kashmir.

All interested youth, startups, self-help groups and prospective entrepreneurs are encouraged to participate in these meetings and take full advantage of the opportunities being created to empower entrepreneurship, enable growth and build a prosperous Jammu and Kashmir.