

# CM Omar inaugurates conference on emerging technologies in Engineering at GCET Jammu

Says Govt to also set up auditorium, incubation centre at GCET Jammu

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
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Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today inaugurated the 11th National Conference and Exhibition on Emerging and Innovative Trends in Engineering Technology (NCEIETET) at Government College of Engineering and Technology (GCET), Jammu, underscoring the need to harmonize technological advancement with cultural heritage while fostering innovation-driven growth among youth.

The two-day event is being organised by CGET Jammu in technical collaboration with Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur and in association with World Consortium of Universities.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister also inaugurated the newly constructed School of Architecture (SoA) building at GCET, developed at a cost of ₹19.71 crore, and extended his best wishes to the faculty and students. Emphasizing the significance of architecture, he urged students to adopt a forward-looking approach while staying rooted in the region's cultural and historical identity.

"While it is important to embrace modernity, it is equally important to remember where we come from. Not every building needs to be made of glass and steel. Our structures must reflect our heritage and preserve our cultural ethos," he said, expressing concern over the declining focus on heritage conservation in both public and private construction across Jammu and Kashmir.

Highlighting the conference theme, the Chief Minister described it as relevant and thought-provoking, particularly for its focus on emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning. He termed the deliberations as an "eye-opener," especially in the context of tourism.

Reflecting on his experience as Tourism Minister,

he noted that leveraging AI could significantly enhance visitor experience, destination management and service delivery in Jammu and Kashmir. However, he cautioned that technological integration must be balanced with employment generation.

"In a region like ours, where unemployment remains a concern, we must ensure that technology complements human effort rather than replacing it. Tourism is not just an economic driver but also a major source of livelihood across regions and sectors," he said.

The Chief Minister emphasized that while attracting tourists to Jammu and Kashmir is not difficult, ensuring repeat visits requires delivering a consistently enriching experience. He cited diverse tourism segments including pilgrimage tourism such as Mata Vaishno Devi, border tourism at places like Suchetgarh, and leisure tourism across the Valley and other regions, stressing the need to enhance infrastructure and services across all segments.

Addressing infrastructure gaps at GCET, the Chief Minister announced that funds shall be provided this year for the construction of an auditorium to provide better facilities for students and academic events.

He also responded positively to a student's request for an incubation centre, assuring that the government

would make every effort to establish such a facility within the institution and for which work to be started from this year. He underscored the importance of nurturing a startup ecosystem and enabling youth to become job creators.

"We may not be able to provide jobs to everyone, but we can certainly create an environment where our youngsters become entrepreneurs and innovators. It is our responsibility to support those who dare to dream and execute," he said.

Reaffirming the government's commitment, he assured that all necessary steps would be taken to strengthen institutional infrastructure and support systems, ensuring that GCET continues to evolve as a premier institution.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister released the e-proceedings of the conference, comprising 28 short-listed research papers along with messages. He also visited various exhibition stalls showcasing innovative models and projects by students from engineering, technology and management institutions across Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of the country. Interacting with participants, he took keen interest in their ideas and even keenly observed demonstrations given by students.

He also visited exhibitions put up by power companies and toured various facilities of the institution, including the School of En-

gineering.

Speaking at the event, Minister for Education Sakeena Itoo emphasized the critical role of innovation and research in shaping the future of education. "Innovation today is not a luxury but a necessity. Our institutions must evolve as centres of excellence, research and innovation," she said.

She further stressed the need to empower students as job creators rather than job seekers. "We want our youth to become leaders, innovators and contributors to nation-building," she added, noting that the newly inaugurated School of Architecture would play a vital role in shaping not just infrastructure but communities and lifestyles.

MLA Nagrota Devyani Rana, Organizing Chairperson from Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur Prof. Raja Dutta, and Principal/Director GCET Sameru Sharma also addressed the gathering, highlighting the significance of collaborative research, academic excellence and innovation-driven growth.

Two alumni of GCET also shared their professional journeys, inspiring students to pursue innovation and perseverance in their careers. The conference brought together academicians, researchers, industry experts and students from across the country, serving as a platform for exchange of ideas on emerging trends and technologies shaping the future of engineering.

# NHPC ED inaugurates Dr BR Ambedkar Library, Computer Centre at Guru Ravidass Gurudwara

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A Library-cum-Computer Centre dedicated to the poor and marginalized sections of society was inaugurated at Guru Ravidass Gurudwara, Krishna Nagar, Jammu, in a well-attended programme organized by All J&K Shree Guru Ravidass Sabha.

The centre was inaugurated by Ram Swaroop, Executive Director, NHPC who attended as Chief Guest, while Rajesh Kumar, Director KVIC was the Guest of Honour and Sanjay Kumar Bhasin graced the occasion as Special Guest.

The facility has been established under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) support from NHPC Limited, aiming to provide free access to library and computer services for underprivileged sections. It was also announced that Buddha Ambedkar Jayanti will be celebrated on May 3 with a blood donation camp and the launch of free dispensary services.

Welcoming the dignitaries, Prof. Sanjay Kumar Bhasin informed that NHPC had approved the first installment of funds for the project. He also highlighted the efforts of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission under Rajesh Kumar in promoting schemes for micro and small business ventures. He extended best wishes to Ram Swaroop on his superannuation, scheduled for April 30.

Rajesh Kumar appreciated the social initiatives undertaken under the leadership of Ram Swaroop and encouraged people to take advantage of KVIC schemes for entrepreneurship, assuring hassle-free services to the needy. He also praised the work of the Sabha in uplifting marginalized communities.

In his address, Ram Swaroop said that the consistent social work of the Sabha in-

spired NHPC to extend financial support for the centre. He reiterated that NHPC, as a Navratna company, remains committed to contributing to education and healthcare sectors under CSR. He thanked the Sabha for the felicitation and assured continued association with social initiatives even after retirement.

Earlier, Er. R.C. Bhasin, President of the Sabha, expressed gratitude to NHPC for funding the project and acknowledged the contributions of Rajesh Kumar and Dr. Sanjay Bhasin in facilitating the initiative. He urged the community to adopt a positive outlook and support constructive efforts.

The proceedings were conducted by General Secretary Tarsem Loach, General Secretary of the Sabha. Prominent members present on the occasion included Prof. G.L Thapa, Prof. C.L Shivgotra, Er. Madan Basson, D.K Kalsootra, K.K Gorkha, Sewa Dass Dagra, C.L Banal, Tulsi Lungeh, Sham Basson, Sunita Bangotra, Tara Chand, Surjeet Heer, Kuldeep Fougi, Vikas Kalsi, Sham Kalsi and Bodh Raj Kalsi, among others.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks, marking a significant step towards empowering marginalized communities through education and digital access.

# DC Srinagar leads plantation drive under ongoing 100-day intensive Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan

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Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo on Monday led a plantation drive at Lasjan-Panthachowk integrating environmental conservation with social reform and reinforcing the message of a cleaner, greener and drug-free society under ongoing 100-day intensive Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan.

The plantation drive was organized by the District Administration Srinagar in collaboration with the Urban Forestry Division, signifying a collective responsibility towards environmental sustainability and a shared commitment to achieving the objectives of a drug-free society.

The event witnessed the participation of Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiaz Ul Aziz; Additional Deputy Commissioner, Aadil Fareed; Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad

Dar; District Social Welfare Officer, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad; DFO Urban, Dr. Mehraj Ud Din Sheikh; other senior Officers from the District Administration and Forest Department, as well as enthusiastic College and School students.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner planted a deodar sapling and highlighted the importance of such initiatives in increasing green cover, mitigating the effects of climate

change and fostering environmental awareness among citizens.

The DC emphasized that the plantation drive reflects the administration's sustained commitment to realizing the objectives of the Nasha Mukta Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan, while also reaffirming its shared responsibility towards fostering greener surroundings and enhancing the overall well-being of society. He further stated that the initiative promotes environmental sustainability and reinforces continued efforts towards achieving the goals of the 100-day Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan.

The plantation drive witnessed overwhelming support from the local community, environmental volunteers and social activists, who joined hands with officials at the venue, adding a spirit of collective responsibility and public enthusiasm to achieve the objectives of a Nasha Mukta J&K Abhiyan.

# DC Srinagar, SSP review Anti-Drug measures; Call for intensified crackdown on Drug Networks

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Monthly District Level Committee on Narco Coordination Centre (NCORD) was held today, under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo here at the Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex to assess the effectiveness of ongoing enforcement and preventive strategies being implemented in the district.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Dr. Sandeep Chakravarthy was also present in the meeting.

During the meeting, it was emphasized that intensified enforcement actions must be taken against drug peddlers and their networks. The participants called for strengthened inter-agency coordination among enforcement, regulatory, and health departments to ensure sustained action against drug-related activities.

At the outset, the Committee conducted a comprehensive review of ongoing enforcement measures particularly under the ongoing 100 days campaign of Jammu and Kashmir Nasha Mukta Abhiyan.

The Committee emphasized intensified enforcement actions against drug peddlers and their networks calling for a sustained crackdown on drug

peddling and its networks. It also stressed stringent enforcement, stronger strategy to combat narcotics trafficking in Srinagar district, besides more NDPS-linked confiscations to crush the drug networks.

The Committee strongly emphasized the need to intensify Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities, particularly in educational institutions and coaching centres, to effectively sensitize youth about the severe and far-reaching consequences of drug and narcotic substance abuse. It further called for a sustained

awareness drive to build resilience among young people against drug addiction.

Directions were also issued to actively promote sports and recreational activities among youth, especially in identified drug-sensitive and hotspot areas, as a proactive preventive strategy to channelize their energy in constructive pursuits and safeguard them from the menace of substance abuse.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need to further strengthen inter-agency coordination among enforcement, regu-

latory, health departments and other stakeholders to ensure sustained, coordinated and effective action against drug-related activities in the district. He highlighted the critical need to systematically dismantle the logistical and support networks facilitating drug peddling operations.

The DC also directed the RTO, Drug Controller and Police authorities to continue strict and resolute action against the persons found involved in drug trafficking or facilitating drug peddling, making it clear that no leniency would be tolerated. He further called for the comprehensive approach comprising focused enforcement, preventive awareness campaigns, and robust rehabilitation interventions to effectively address and eradicate the drug menace in Srinagar district.

He stated that the District Administration is fully committed to safeguarding society, particularly the youth from the adverse impact of drug abuse.

The SSP Srinagar on the occasion, asserted that stringent action against identified drug hotspots will be further intensified and that drug peddlers will be dealt with firmly through criminal prosecution and all other punitive measures available under law, with zero tolerance and no leniency.

# GCW Nawakadal organizes Awareness Rally, Marathon under Nasha Mukta Abhiyan

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Under the banner of Nasha Mukta Abhiyan, an Awareness Rally and Marathon were organised today by the College Well-being and Anti-Substance Cell (CWASC) in collaboration with the College Sports Committee and NCC Unit of Government Degree College for Women (GCW), Nawakadal, Srinagar.

The programme commenced with an awareness rally from the college campus to Safakadal Chowk, aiming to disseminate a strong message against drug abuse and promote a healthy, drug-free lifestyle among the youth.

This was followed by a marathon in which students and faculty members participated with great enthusiasm, showcasing their collective commitment to the cause.

The event was attended by Nodal Officer CWASC,

Dr. Nuzhat Jan; Convenor College Sports Committee, Rukhsana Shawl; NCC Officer, Prof. Humeera Yousuf, along with faculty members from CWASC and the Sports Committee.

On the occasion, the Principal, Prof. (Dr.) Huda Galzai, appreciated the ef-

forts of the organisers and participants. In her message, she underscored the importance of collective responsibility in combating drug abuse and encouraged students to act as ambassadors of a drug-free society. She further highlighted that such initiatives

play a vital role in building awareness and fostering a culture of health, discipline, and social responsibility among the youth.

The event concluded with participants taking a pledge to support and uphold the vision of a drug-free society.