

Sakeena Itoo reviews proposed interventions for transforming, strengthening ECCE in J&K

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, MAY 18

Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health & Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo today chaired a high-level review meeting to assess the interventions proposed for transforming and strengthening Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) by the Social Welfare department across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare department, Sarmad Hafeez; Commissioner Secretary Education, Ram Niwas Sharma; Mission Director ICDS, Sajad Hussain Ganai; Project Director Samagra, Bhawani Rakhwal; Director School Education Kashmir, Naseer Ahmad Wani; Director Health Services Kashmir, Director Finance/Director Planning of Health, Social Welfare, School Education and Higher Education departments, other senior officers, while as Director School Education Jammu, Director Health Services Jammu, Director Social Welfare Jammu, representatives of BISAG-N and other concerned officers attended the meeting through virtual mode.

During the meeting, the Minister undertook a comprehensive review of the ongoing Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) initiatives, infrastructural preparedness, teacher training modules, learning outcomes,



enrolment trends and convergence mechanisms aimed at ensuring quality foundational learning for children in the age group of 3 to 6 years.

Addressing the officers, Sakeena Itoo underscored the critical importance of ECCE in shaping the cognitive, emotional and social development of children. She stated that ECCE forms the bedrock of the education system and plays a pivotal role in nurturing young minds during their most formative years.

Stressing on the proper implementation of ECCE framework in coordination with School Education department, the Minister directed all concerned departments to work in close synergy to achieve measurable improvements in nutrition, school readiness and foundational learning outcomes.

She also directed the officers to remove duplicity if any regarding children registered in Anganwadi Centres and schools.

The Minister emphasized that the government is com-

mitted to building an inclusive, equitable and child-friendly ECCE framework. She directed the concerned authorities to ensure effective implementation of play-based and activity-oriented learning methodologies across all pre-primary institutions and Anganwadi centres.

Sakeena Itoo stressed the need for strengthening coordination between the School Education department and Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) to ensure seamless delivery of early learning and nutrition support. She further called for enhanced parental awareness and community participation to create a supportive ecosystem for young learners.

Highlighting the importance of trained educators, the Minister asked the concerned officers to intensify capacity-building programmes for ECCE teachers and Anganwadi workers to equip them with contemporary teaching techniques and child psychology-based learning approaches.

Reaffirming the government's commitment towards quality education and child welfare, Sakeena Itoo said that sustained efforts are being made to strengthen foundational literacy and numeracy while ensuring that every child in Jammu and Kashmir receives a nurturing, stimulating and safe learning environment.

The Minister also directed the concerned officers to strengthen Anameia checks-ups in AWCs so that maximum beneficiaries are covered.

During the meeting, Commissioner Secretary Social Welfare, Sarmad Hafeez gave a detailed on proposed interventions regarding ECCE. He informed that innovative mentorship models are being implemented to bridge Anganwadis and primary schools, with mentor teachers providing pedagogical support and on-site guidance.

He also said that that internship collaborations are being rolled out to strengthen service delivery at the grassroots.

Committees on Govt Assurances from Bihar, Jharkhand call on Speaker JKLA

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JAMMU, MAY 18

The delegates of Committee on Government Assurances of Legislative Council Bihar, Minority Welfare Committee of Committee of Legislative Assembly Bihar and Committee on Government Assurances of the Legislative Assembly Jharkhand, today visited the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly and called on the Speaker, J&K Legislative Assembly Abdul Rahim Rather.

The Speaker welcomed the committee members and highlighted the important role of the Committee on Government Assurances in ensuring accountability and transparency in governance.

He stated that engaging with the committees from



other states is essential to understand the diverse legislative landscapes across our country.

It is through this collaborative spirit that all assemblies can work together to uphold and strengthen the democratic values of the nation.

The high-level visit was focused on a bilateral exchange of knowledge, aiming to deepen the mutual understanding of legislative work cultures and the

specific procedural functions of their respective committees.

The visit also marks a significant step in fostering inter-state cooperation between the legislative bodies.

During the interaction, the delegates shared best practices and discussed the evolving mechanisms used to ensure government accountability through the assurance process.

By studying the work cul-

ture and functioning of their counterparts, the committees aim to implement more robust frameworks for tracking and fulfilling government promises made on the floor of the House.

The visiting delegations appreciated the functioning of the J&K Legislative Assembly and expressed satisfaction over the exchange of knowledge and best practices during the visit.

National Commission for Women to hold 'Rashtriya Mahila Aayog Aapke Dwar' initiative

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JAMMU, MAY 18

The National Commission for Women is conducting a series of Mahila Jan Sunwai sessions at Srinagar on May 19, 2026, at Banquet Hall M A Road Srinagar as part of its flagship outreach programme "Rashtriya Mahila Aayog Aapke Dwar" aimed at hearing women's grievances and ensuring their prompt redressal.

The initiative is being organized under the nationwide Mahila Jan Sunwai programme to provide a direct platform for women of Srinagar District to voice their concerns and seek resolution of issues related to their rights, welfare and safety.

The programme aimed to strengthen outreach mechanisms and facilitate direct interaction between women and the Commis-

sion so that grievances can be addressed in an effective and time-bound manner. The initiative also aims to enhance awareness among women regarding their legal rights and the institutional support available for redressal of complaints.

Through the "Rashtriya Mahila Aayog Aapke Dwar" initiative, the Commission is reaching out to women at the grassroots level to ensure their voices are heard

and their concerns are addressed through coordinated institutional intervention.

Women from Srinagar District can attend the session at the Banquet Hall Conference Complex on May 19, 2026 at 9:30 AM and directly interact with the Chairperson of the Women Commission to raise issues concerning their welfare, safety, and rights.

DC Budgam chairs interdepartmental meeting on mining and mineral extraction

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, MAY 18

An Inter-Departmental District Level meeting was today convened under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Amir Khan to review, assess, and strengthen the regulatory and monitoring mechanisms for mineral extraction and transportation in the district.

During the meeting, a review of the existing enforcement framework was undertaken and the functioning of various departments involved in mineral regulation was assessed in detail.

The DC directed the Irrigation and Flood Control Department, Budgam, to maintain strict vigil over Nallah Sukhnag, Doodhganga, and Shaliganga and other nallahs of the District to ensure that no illegal extraction of minerals takes place from these water bodies.

The District Mineral Officer (DMO), Budgam, was directed to further strengthen the vigilance and ensure real-time monitoring across district.

The Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO),



Budgam, was instructed to initiate strict action against vehicles and machinery, found involved in illegal mineral extraction and transportation activities.

The DC stressed that illegal mining and unauthorized transportation of minerals shall not be tolerated under any circumstances and reiterated that a zero-tolerance policy shall be adopted against all violators.

All Sub-Divisional Magistrates (SDMs) were directed to closely monitor incidents of illegal mining within their jurisdictions and ensure prompt legal action against offenders.

The R&B Department was directed to closely

monitor road infrastructure affected by the movement of overloaded vehicles and to ensure the installation of proper checkpoints and barricades at vulnerable locations.

The department was further instructed to coordinate with enforcement agencies to prevent damage to public infrastructure caused by illegal mineral transportation.

The DC also directed all concerned departments to ensure time-bound implementation of the decisions taken during the meeting and to submit regular progress reports for review. He further emphasized that coordinated en-

forcement drives shall be conducted jointly by all stakeholder departments and accountability shall be fixed in cases of negligence or lapses in enforcement.

The DC stated that these measures are aimed at strengthening governance, ensuring regulatory compliance, and protecting the natural resources of the district.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Budgam, Vivek Agarwal; ADC Budgam, ACR Budgam, all SDMs, Divisional Forest Officer, Executive Engineer I&FC, District Mineral Officer, ARTO, representatives of R&B department and other concerned officers.

Jammu, Srinagar mark International Museum Day with 'Museums Uniting a Divided World' exhibitions

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The J&K Department of Archives, Archaeology & Museums today celebrated the International Museum Day under the theme "Museums Uniting a Divided World" in conjunction with Mission Gyan Bharatam.

Specially curated exhibitions of artifacts and rare manuscript collections were organized at the Dogra Art Museum, Jammu and the SPS Museum, Lalmandi, Srinagar, with free entry for all the visitors.

At the Dogra Art Museum Jammu, the exhibition was inaugurated by Yudhvir Sethi, MLA, Jammu East.

At the SPS Museum, Srinagar, the event was inau-



gurated by Brij Mohan Sharma, Principal Secretary, Department of Culture in presence of Kuldeep Krishan Sidha, Director, Archives, Archaeology & Museums and Parvez Ahmad, Special Secretary, Department of Culture.

The exhibitions featured unique manuscripts and artifacts, including the 5th-century Gilgit Manuscript

on birch bark, Tafseer-i-Kabeer, Shah Nama-i-Firdousi, a bronze sculpture of Bodhisattva Padmapani, 3rd-century terracotta tiles, Shah Jahan's gold-plated bow, the Royal Armoury, Basohli paintings, Sudhama paintings and gold coins from the Kushan period.

To make the event inclusive and accessible, refreshments and gifts were

arranged for over 1,000 visitors across both the museums, including students, ex-servicemen, scholars, authors and tourists. On the occasion, wheelchairs and helpers were also provided for the persons with disabilities.

The visitors expressed appreciation for the department's initiative, calling it a first-of-its-kind, well-facilitated exhibition.

Budgam witnesses widespread awareness activities under NMBA

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A series of awareness programmes, rallies, workshops, cleanliness drives and cultural activities were organised across district Budgam under the Nasha Mukh Bharat Campaign (NMBA) to promote the message of a healthy and drug-free society.

Government Degree College (GDC) Magam organised a workshop under NMBA aimed at sensitising participants about the harmful effects of substance abuse and the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles. Speakers highlighted the role of youth and educational institutions in combating the menace of drug addiction through awareness and collective responsibility.

Similarly, GDC Budgam conducted a Mega Cleanliness Drive under the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan with active participation of students and volunteers. The



drive focused on promoting cleanliness, social responsibility and the vision of a healthy and drug-free society.

Agriculture Department Budgam also organised an awareness programme and rally in Khanshaib Sub Division under NMBA. Participants spread awareness regarding the harmful effects of drug abuse and encouraged people to contribute towards building a safe and

addiction-free community.

At Higher Secondary School (HSS) Chadoora and HSS BK Pora, various awareness activities were organised under the campaign. Students actively participated in awareness programmes and pledged to stay away from substance abuse while spreading the message of healthy living among the community. Meanwhile, Doodhganga Forest Range of Pir

Panjral Forest Division Budgam, in collaboration with Government Middle School Ranger Chadoora, organised a plantation drive, pledge ceremony, awareness programme and NMBA rally. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, teachers and officials who reaffirmed their commitment towards a cleaner, greener and drug-free society.

Shopian youth unites against drug abuse, Mega sports activities kick off under '100 Day Campaign'

SHOPIAN, MAY 18: In a major push to promote a drug-free society and foster a vibrant sports culture, the Department of Youth Services and Sports (DYSS), District Shopian organized a massive series of sports and awareness activities across multiple zones.

The events are part of the ongoing "Nasha Mukh Abhiyan" (100 Day Campaign), aimed at engaging youth in healthy competition, physical fitness, discipline and spreading critical awareness regarding the harmful effects of substance abuse.



The District Level Inter-School Basketball Tournament for under-17 (U/17) and under-19 (U/19) Girls commenced with great enthusiasm at the YSS Play Field, Sindo Shirmal, Shopian.

Multi-disciplinary events including Volleyball, Yoga, and Kho-Kho were organized across various institutions to instill a healthy and disciplined lifestyle among students. Yoga and Badminton ac-

tivities were conducted at different institutional levels to advocate for a healthy body and mind, completely free from the menace of drugs.

Inter-School Zonal Level Chess competitions for Boys (U/14 and U/17 age groups) were hosted at High School (HS) Homehuna and NIPS Zainapora.

The Pledge for a drug-free society to reinforce the core mission of the campaign was solemnly administered to participants, highlighting the collective responsibility to build a drug-free society.