

SKUAST-K trains IFS Officers from 14 States in AI-led Forest & Wildlife Conservation



SRINAGAR, JULY 21: Thirty senior Indian Forest Service (IFS) officers from 14 states are undergoing a five-day national training program at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies for forest and wildlife conservation, reinforcing the University's growing role in technology-driven environmental governance.

The program, "Smart Conservation: Technological Solutions for Forest and Wildlife Protection," is being organized by the Division of Basic Sciences and Humanities, Faculty of Horticulture, SKUAST-K, in collaboration with the Research & Training Division of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India.

Held from July 20 to 24, it brings together senior forest administrators, including

Principal Chief Conservators of Forests (PCCFs), Conservators of Forests, Divisional Forest Officers (DFOs) and Assistant Conservators of Forests (ACFs), for training in AI, Remote Sensing, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), drones, satellite monitoring and other digital tools for sustainable forest governance.

The inaugural session was presided over by Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-K, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, while Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Head of Forest Force, Jammu & Kashmir, Sarvesh Rai, attended as the Guest of Honor.

Delivering the keynote address, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai stressed that conservation in the 21st century requires the convergence of forestry, agricultural sciences, climate science, data analytics and digital technologies. Highlighting SKUAST-K's strengths in Artificial Intelligence, Ma-

chine Learning, drone technology, precision agriculture and remote sensing, he said these innovations are transforming wildlife monitoring, habitat assessment, forest health surveillance, climate-risk prediction, forest fire management and ecosystem restoration.

Emphasizing the vulnerability of the Himalayan region, Prof. Ganai said mountain ecosystems require science-based, technology-enabled management and called for stronger collaboration among universities, forest departments, research institutions and policymakers to accelerate climate-resilient conservation.

Addressing the gathering, Sarvesh Rai, highlighted the Jammu & Kashmir Forest Department's use of geospatial mapping, smart forest surveillance systems, and community-based conservation models to protect forests and wildlife. He urged participants to ac-

tively engage in the practical sessions and replicate successful conservation practices in their respective states.

Course Director Prof. Javed Iqbal Ahmad Bhat said the program marks the third consecutive batch of IFS officers being trained at SKUAST-K under the aegis of the MoEFCC, reflecting the University's emergence as a national capacity-building partner in environmental governance. He said the program integrates advanced technologies with ecological principles and policy frameworks to address climate change, biodiversity loss and habitat degradation through technology-enabled conservation.

The program combines expert lectures, laboratory demonstrations and field-based learning. Participants will visit the Center for Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning (CAIML), SKUAST-K Innovation, Incubation and Entrepreneurship Center (SKIIE) and the Faculty of Forestry, besides undertaking field visits to Dachigam National Park and Wildlife Rescue Center, Wular Lake conservation projects, Gulmarg Biosphere Reserve and the protected forests of the Zabarwan Hills to gain first-hand exposure to ecosystem restoration, biodiversity management and smart conservation practices.

Sat Sharma meets Union MoS Defense, reviews J&K security



NEW DELHI, JULY 21: J&K BJP President and Rajya Sabha MP Sat Sharma met Union Minister of State for Defense Sanjay Seth in New Delhi and held detailed discussions on the security scenario in Jammu & Kashmir, the Centre's anti-terror strategy, and measures to further strengthen peace and normalcy in the Union Territory.

During the meeting, Sat Sharma appreciated Prime Minister Narendra Modi's decisive leadership and the Defense Ministry's focused approach towards safeguarding national security. Referring to Sanjay Seth's recent visit to Kashmir under the "12 Saal Bemisaal" outreach programme, he said the visit strengthened public confidence and reflected the Centre's unwavering commitment to the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

Sat Sharma said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi has replaced the politics of appeasement with a policy

of zero tolerance against terrorism. Today's India neither compromises on national security nor bows before forces that challenge the country's unity and integrity. Jammu & Kashmir is witnessing a new era of peace, development and public confidence because the nation now has a government that takes decisive action instead of making empty promises."

Sharma said the visible transformation in Jammu & Kashmir through improved security, record tourism, infrastructure development and increased public participation has frustrated those forces that cannot digest the return of peace and nor-

malcy. He asserted that such elements continue to make repeated attempts to disturb the atmosphere of peace and derail Jammu & Kashmir's journey towards development. The nation must remain united against every conspiracy aimed at destabilizing the region, he added.

Slamming mainstream political parties of J&K, Sharma said that they have failed to wholeheartedly support the ongoing peace initiatives.

"Instead of strengthening the hands of the security forces and encouraging an atmosphere of stability, they often indulge in divisive and opportunistic pol-

itics for petty political gains. Jammu & Kashmir needs responsible leadership that stands with the nation, not politics that weakens public confidence and serves narrow political interests," he said.

Sharma reiterated that 'Nation First' is the BJP's guiding principle and every BJP worker stands shoulder to shoulder with the Armed Forces and security agencies in safeguarding India's unity and sovereignty. He also invited Sanjay Seth to visit Jammu & Kashmir again to review the ongoing developmental and security initiatives.

Sanjay Seth appreciated the BJP organization's efforts in strengthening public outreach and reaffirmed that the Modi Government remains fully committed to ensuring lasting peace, robust national security and inclusive development in Jammu & Kashmir. On the occasion, he presented a couple of books to Sat Sharma as a gesture of goodwill.

District Admin Bandipora releases Coffee Table Book, screens documentary on culmination of 100 Days NMBA Campaign

District Admin Bandipora participates in UT-level valedictory function of 100 Days NMJKA Campaign

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, JULY 21

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, along with SSP Bandipora, Ajaz Ahmad Zargar, and senior officers from the civil and police administration on Monday participated virtually in the UT-level valedictory function of the 100 Days Nasha Mukh Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyan (NMJKA), presided over by the Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha at SKICC Srinagar.

The UT-level function marked the successful culmination of the 100-day campaign launched across Jammu and Kashmir to strengthen awareness, prevention and community participation against drug abuse.

Speaking after the culmination of the UT level event, the DC said that the Nasha Mukh Bharat Ab-



hiyan has emerged as a strong platform for promoting awareness and mobilising communities against the menace of drug abuse. She said sustained awareness, active public participation and coordinated efforts of all stakeholders are essential to achieve the vision of a drug-free society.

The DC appreciated the

efforts of all departments, Police, educational institutions, Panchayati Raj Institutions, volunteers and civil society organisations for their contribution towards the successful implementation of the campaign in the district. She reiterated the commitment of the District Administration to continue working in coordination

with all stakeholders to sustain the momentum generated under the campaign.

On the occasion, all participants renewed their pledge to continue working collectively towards realising the vision of a Drug-Free Bandipora and contributing to the larger objective of a Nasha Mukh J&K.

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, JULY 21

District Administration Bandipora on Monday organised a function at the Mini Secretariat, Bandipora to mark the culmination of the 100 Days Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA) Campaign, during which a Coffee Table Book documenting the district's achievements under the campaign was released and a documentary showcasing its impact was screened.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, along with Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Bandipora, Ajaz Ahmad Zargar, presided over the function.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner released the Coffee Table Book prepared by the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), Bandipora, highlighting the major activities, achievements and milestones recorded during the 100-day campaign through the coordinated efforts of various departments and stakeholders across the district.

A documentary titled "Andheroon Se Ujalon Tak (From Darkness to



Light"), also produced by the DIPR, Bandipora, was screened during the programme. The documentary showcased the collective efforts and achievements of the District Administration, Police Administration, law enforcement agencies, educational institutions and other stakeholders in generating mass awareness against drug abuse and advancing the vision of a drug-free society.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner appreciated the ef-

forts of the Department of Information and Public Relations for effectively documenting the campaign through the Coffee Table Book and documentary. She also commended the dedicated contribution of Police, civil administration, educational institutions, PRIs, volunteers and civil society organisations in ensuring the successful implementation of the campaign across the district.

She said the campaign had witnessed encouraging public participation and significantly strengthened

awareness and community engagement against drug abuse. Reiterating that the fight against the menace is a continuous process, she called for sustained awareness, coordinated enforcement and rehabilitation initiatives to carry forward the momentum generated during the campaign.

Among others, the function was attended by senior officers from the civil and police administration, district and sectoral officers, officials and representatives of various departments.

87 drug peddlers arrested, Rs 1.5 Crore property attached, 6 illegal assets demolished, around million awareness-cum- outreach activities held during 100-Day Nasha Mukh Abhiyan in Budgam

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, JULY 21

District Administration Budgam and Police has achieved significant success under the 100-Day Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan, intensifying its crackdown on drug peddlers and strengthening preventive, enforcement and rehabilitation measures across the district.

During the 100 day campaign, launched by Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha across Jammu and Kashmir on April 11 this year, as many as 87 drug peddlers were arrested, while nine notorious offenders were detained under the PIT-NDPS Act.

During the crackdown, six properties both movable and immovable worth Rs 1.50 crore belonging to drug peddlers were attached, while six illegally constructed properties were demolished. During the campaign, 89 cases under the NDPS Act were registered against drug peddlers in the district.

Deputy Commissioner

Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan said the fight against the drug mafia will continue with full vigour. He appealed to parents, educational institutions, community leaders and society at large to actively contribute towards making Budgam a drug-free district.

He said that the campaign received massive public participation, with rigorous, a million awareness cum outreach activities including seminars, essay, painting competition, interactive sessions, door to door campaigning, debates, plantation, cleanliness drives, sports events etc, were conducted by various departments across the district on day basis during the 100-day programme.

The Pad Yatra organised on May 5 further re-energised the anti-drug campaign and reinforced the message of collective responsibility.

The campaign launched under the leadership of the Lieutenant Governor, witnessed massive public participation across Budgam District, with people from different walks of

life volunteering to contribute to curb the drug menace in the society.

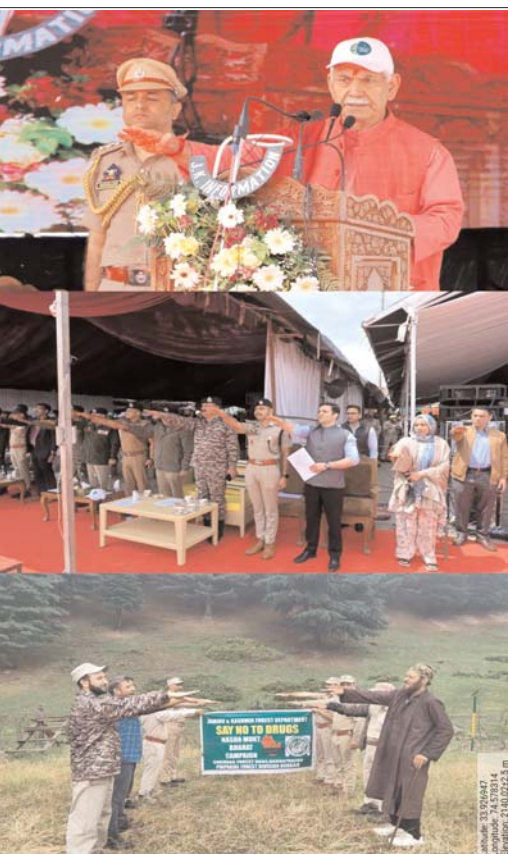
Among other strict administrative measures taken during the campaign, 136 Aadhaar

numbers were recommended for flagging, two passports were recommended for cancellation, one arms licence and one driving licence were suspended, while 20 vehicle registrations were suspended or blacklisted.

To curb the illegal sale of narcotic substances through medical outlets, 47 pharmacy licences were suspended, 30 unlicensed medical shops were sealed, and three drug licences were cancelled. Besides, four FIRs were registered for serious violations of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

In its drive against illegal cultivation of narcotic crops, the administration registered six FIRs against poppy cultivators and destroyed illegal poppy and cannabis cultivation spread over more than 56 kanals of land across the district.

On the rehabilitation front, the Deputy Commissioner said 48 patients are currently undergoing treatment through OPD and IPD services at the Drug De-addiction Centre, while 12 recovered individuals have been rehabilitated under vari-



ous self-employment schemes during the campaign. At the Addiction Treatment Facility, 93 patients were registered, and 3,450 psychological and clinical follow-up sessions were conducted.

The Deputy Commissioner further said that nearly 100 CCTV cameras have been installed at identified drug hotspots jointly by the civil administration and police to strengthen surveillance. Intensive awareness campaigns were also conducted through eight Nasha Mukh Panchayats, five Urban Local Bodies, 296 Youth Clubs and 285 Mahila Samitis, ensuring widespread community participation in the movement against drug abuse.

The Deputy Commissioner reiterated that the administration, in close coordination with the police and all stakeholders, will continue its sustained and uncompromising campaign against drug trafficking while simultaneously focusing on awareness, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation to build a drug-free Budgam.