

Director Agriculture Jammu calls for crop diversification through makhana cultivation

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, JULY 29

The two-day Seminar on Makhana Cultivation concluded today at Baba Jitto Kissan Kendra, Talab Tillo, Jammu. Organised by the Joint Directorate of Agriculture (Extension), Jammu, the valedictory session was graced by Director Agriculture Jammu and Nodal Officer for Makhana Cultivation in Jammu and Kashmir Anil Gupta as Chief Guest.

Addressing the participants, Anil Gupta described the seminar as a significant initiative towards introducing makhana as a high-value crop in Jammu and Kashmir. He appreciated Principal Scientist and Head, ICAR–Research Centre for Makhana (RCM), Darbhanga, Bihar, Dr Indu Shekhar Singh for sharing his extensive technical expertise on scientific makhana cultivation, production technologies, processing and value addition.

The Director informed the participants that a successful demonstration trial of makhana has already been established at Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Bandipora, yielding encouraging results. He expressed confidence that, based on the experience gained, makhana cultivation would soon be initiated in suitable areas of Jammu Division. He said the Government of India has approved a Cen-



tral Sector Scheme for the Development of Makhana, reflecting the growing national emphasis on the crop. Anil Gupta observed that Jammu and Kashmir, particularly the Jammu Division, possesses considerable potential for makhana cultivation and expressed hope that farmers would readily adopt it as a profitable diversification option. He said organising seminars alone would not suffice for the successful promotion of makhana cultivation. The Department would soon organise exposure visits for farmers and departmental officers to established makhana-growing regions so that they could gain first-hand knowledge of scientific cultivation practices, processing tech-

nologies and modern production techniques, which could subsequently be replicated in Jammu Division for the benefit of the farming community.

During the interactive session, Diana Foter, a young woman agripreneur working on a start-up focused on the processing, branding and marketing of makhana, shared details of her venture and products with the Director. Appreciating her initiative, Anil Gupta assured her of the Department's full support and said young agripreneurs are the backbone of agricultural transformation. He said the Agriculture Department would extend every possible assistance to promote innovative agri-based start-ups and

entrepreneurship in the Union Territory.

Earlier, Joint Director Agriculture (Extension) Idrees Bashir Ahmed welcomed the participants and highlighted the importance of scientific knowledge dissemination and capacity building for the successful introduction of makhana cultivation in Jammu and Kashmir. He thanked the farmers from Jammu, Samba and Kathua districts for their enthusiastic participation on the second day of the seminar and encouraged them to use the knowledge gained to promote makhana cultivation in their respective areas.

The proceedings were conducted by Agricultural Extension Assistant (AEA) Veena Wazir.

JMC intensifies drive for scientific dairy waste management, promotes eco-friendly practices

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, JULY 29

The Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) intensified its efforts to promote scientific dairy waste management by organising an awareness drive on environmental management of dairies and gaushalas and the adoption of scientific dung disposal mechanisms.

The drive was conducted by the Veterinary Section of JMC under the supervision of Veterinary Assistant Surgeon (VAS) Dr Divya Sharma, along with departmental officials. The campaign covered dairy units in Janipur, Paloura, Roop Nagar, Muthi, Barnai and Patoli, where dairy owners were sensitised about environmentally responsible dairy management and scientific disposal and utilisation of cattle waste.

Dairy owners were encouraged to adopt sustainable waste management systems such as biogas plants, vermicompost units and compost pits. These



eco-friendly solutions ensure scientific disposal of cattle dung while converting waste into valuable resources such as clean energy and organic manure. The initiative aims to reduce environmental pollution, improve sanitation and promote a circular economy through efficient recycling of dairy waste.

Dr Divya Sharma said JMC has been implementing various measures to regulate dairies and gaushalas in accordance with the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) guidelines, the directions of the National

Green Tribunal (NGT) and the prescribed FSSAI norms.

She stated that 100 dairy units have already been registered by JMC after complying with the prescribed environmental standards, including the installation of scientific dung disposal systems such as biogas plants and vermicompost units. Registration and regulation of the remaining dairy units and gaushalas within JMC limits is being carried out in a phased and systematic manner to ensure complete compliance with environmental regulations.

Dr Sharma said such awareness programmes play a crucial role in motivating stakeholders to adopt sustainable waste management practices, comply with statutory guidelines and register their dairy units and gaushalas under JMC bylaws. She urged dairy owners to strictly adhere to CPCB guidelines issued in compliance with the directions of the NGT and to ensure that dairy waste is scientifically processed, recycled and utilised for generating renewable energy and high-quality organic manure.

DC Kishtwar chairs District-Level NCORD Committee meeting

KISHTWAR, JULY 29: Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma today chaired a meeting of the District-Level Narco Coordination Centre (NCORD) to review the district's response to drug abuse and deliberate on measures to strengthen anti-narcotics initiatives.

The meeting focused on reinforcing the institutional framework for drug de-addiction and reviewing progress under the Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign implemented as part of the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan.

At the outset, District Social Welfare Officer Kishtwar Tariq Parveez Qazi presented the Action Taken Report (ATR) on the decisions taken during the previous NCORD meeting.

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the preventive, rehabilitative and enforcement measures being undertaken by the departments concerned to curb drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

The Deputy Commissioner directed all Heads of Depart-



ments concerned to ensure the active participation of designated resource persons and officials in the IEC campaign under the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan every Monday, cautioning that any negligence or non-compliance would be viewed seriously.

The Excise and Taxation Department Kishtwar was directed to intensify enforcement against the illegal cultivation of cannabis and ensure destruction of all identified cannabis crops across the district in accordance with the prescribed legal provisions and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs); all SDMs and

BDOs to convene meetings with Youth Clubs and Mahila Nigrani Samitis to sensitise them and obtain their inputs for strengthening community participation; and the ADC Kishtwar to convene meetings with courier service operators and postal service providers and hold regular interactions with courier operators to ensure proper maintenance of records and prevent the transportation of unauthorised Schedule H drug consignments.

The CMO Kishtwar was directed to provide additional Rapid Drug Testing Kits to the departments concerned; the

School Education Department to declare all remaining educational institutions as Tobacco-Free Educational Institutions in strict compliance with the TOFEI guidelines; all Sub-Divisional Magistrates and Tehsildars to expedite the declaration of Panchayats as "Nasha Mukht" in accordance with the prescribed SOPs, with due verification and active community participation; and all remaining Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs) to furnish Drug-Free Office Certificates after obtaining duly certified self-declaration forms from all government employees.

MY Bharat Kendra Kishtwar organises 'Nasha Mukht Yuva for Viksit Bharat' campaign at GDC Kishtwar

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, JULY 29

MY Bharat Kendra Kishtwar organised "Nasha Mukht Yuva for Viksit Bharat" awareness programme at the Government Degree College Auditorium, Kishtwar today. The programme aimed to sensitise youth about the harmful effects of substance abuse and inspire them to contribute towards building a healthy, drug-free and developed India.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADDC) Kishtwar Vinod Kumar Behnal attended as Chief Guest.

District Youth Officer MY Bharat Kishtwar Sandeep Sharma highlighted the initiatives being undertaken by MY Bharat to create awareness against substance abuse among youth. He appealed to young people to stay away from drugs, spread awareness within their communities and become active partners in building a drug-free society, adding that the vision of Viksit Bharat can only be realised through a healthy, responsible and empowered youth.

Addressing the gathering, the ADCD said youth have a



pivotal role in achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat. He said substance abuse poses a serious challenge to the future and aspirations of young people and urged students to stay away from drugs, adopt healthy lifestyles and channel their energy towards education, sports and nation-building. He appealed to parents, teachers, civil society organisations and all stakeholders to work collectively to-

wards eliminating the menace of drug abuse.

As part of the campaign, several competitions, including Music (Folk Songs), Dance, Nukkad Natak/MIME Acts, Painting, Debate/Elocution, Slogan Writing and Poetry, were organised to encourage youth participation through creative expression. Participants conveyed powerful messages highlighting the harmful effects

of drug abuse and the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The winners and participants were felicitated with awards and certificates in recognition of their performances and participation. Among those present were CEO Kishtwar Sanjay Dogra; the Principal, Government Degree College Kishtwar; faculty members; students and other district officers.

ACHR Udheywalla hosts 1-day training programme on orchard and nursery development

JAMMU, JULY 29: A one-day training programme on Fruit Plant Orchard and Nursery Development was organised at the Advanced Centre for Horticulture Research (ACHR), Udheywalla, to enhance the technical knowledge and practical skills of trainees of the Mega Fruit Plant Nursery, Chakroi.

The programme was chaired by Chief Horticulture Officer Jammu Rakesh Kotwal, who underlined the importance of quality planting material, scientific nursery management and



modern orchard development for increasing fruit production and improving

farmers' income. He encouraged the trainees to adopt innovative technolo-

gies and best horticultural practices for sustainable development of the sector.

Among those present were District Training Officer (DTO) Chakroi Virinder Kumar; District Level Subject Matter Specialists (DLSMS) Jammu Vishal Magotra and Rakesh Kumar Bhagat; MCC Shreshtha Gaur; and staff members of the department.

Technical sessions were delivered by experts from SKUAST-J, including Dr Deepji Bhat (Fruit Science), Dr Reena (Entomology), Dr Vikas Abrol and Dr Piyush (Soil Science).

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, JULY 29

Director Agriculture Jammu Anil Gupta today conducted an extensive on-the-spot inspection of various sectoral offices functioning under the Directorate of Agriculture, Jammu, to review their operational efficiency, office management, staff attendance and delivery of public services.

Accompanied by Deputy Director Agriculture (Central) Sanjeev Rai Gupta, the Director visited different sectoral offices and took stock of their day-to-day functioning. He reviewed office records, disposal of official work, implementation of departmental programmes and the status of ongoing activities and interacted with officers and officials to assess the progress of various assignments and discuss measures to improve efficiency and service delivery. The Director reviewed the attendance of of-



ficers and officials and issued strict instructions that all employees must adhere to office timings and maintain regular attendance, warning that unwarranted absence, habitual late attendance and negligence in official duties will be viewed seriously and invite disciplinary action under the relevant service rules.

The Director directed all

Sectoral Heads to ensure timely disposal of official work, proper maintenance of records and strict adherence to Government guidelines. He underlined the importance of a citizen-centric work culture and instructed the officers to provide prompt, efficient and farmer-friendly services to all stakeholders visiting the offices. The Director also re-

viewed the implementation of key agricultural schemes and developmental programmes being executed by the respective sectoral offices. He called upon the officers to strengthen inter-departmental coordination, intensify field monitoring and ensure effective implementation of departmental initiatives for the benefit of the farming community.