

2-day capacity building programme on plant clinic approach, farmer and digital advisory

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
JAMMU, JULY 31

A two-day Capacity Building Programme on "Plant Clinic Approach, Farmer Advisory and Digital Advisory Tools" concluded today at the Sub-Divisional Agriculture Office, Udhampur. Held on 30 and 31 July 2026, it was jointly organised by the Department of Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare with CABI International under the PlantwisePlus initiative.

Joint Director Agriculture (Inputs) Jammu Sanjay Anand was the Chief Guest. Among those present were Chief Agriculture Officer Udhampur Vikas Padha, SMS-RL Ashwani Kumar, CABI Crop Health Advisor Dr Manju Thakur, District and Extension Officers, Krishi Udyamis, Agro Dealers and other stakeholders. Technical sessions were conducted by Arun Khajuria (SMS Resource Person), Rajeev Singh, Manmohan Sharma, Shishupal Bomatora, Vikal Gupta, Dr



Vandana Bhau and Dr Monika Pathania.

The programme sought to strengthen the technical and advisory skills of Extension Officers, Krishi Udyamis and Agro Dealers through the Plant Clinic Approach, scientific crop diagnosis, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and digital advisory tools. Participants were trained on early pest and disease diagnosis, plant health advisory and digital

platforms for knowledge sharing and decision-making. Sanjay Anand called for strengthening e-Plant Health Clinics, promoting IPM and building the capacities of Krishi Udyamis for better extension services and employment generation. He informed that nearly 2,000 hectares in Udhampur are under organic farming and sought the development of Katalwa, Chenani, Latti and

Dudu as model areas for organic and IPM-based agriculture.

Vikas Padha highlighted the role of continuous capacity building in equipping field functionaries with scientific knowledge and digital tools, while Dr Manju Thakur underlined the significance of the Plantwise-Plus initiative in strengthening plant health services and reducing pesticide risks.

DC Kishtwar reviews progress of LADP, CSR, R&R works of Hydroelectric Projects

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Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma today chaired a review meeting on the progress of works under the Local Area Development Programme (LADP), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) Plans of various Hydroelectric Projects, including Pakal Dul, Kiru, Kwar and Ratle at the New DC Office Complex, Kishtwar.

The DC reviewed the physical and financial progress of ongoing and completed works, including a Community Hall at Kishtwar; a 63 MVA, 33/11 KV Receiving Station with a 33 KV line at Hasti; a Veterinary Complex with residential accommodation at Kukerwas, Drabshalla; individual high-density orchards; additional water lifting schemes; and upgradation of HS Kwar. Officers



from RDD, Education, Health, Youth Services and Sports, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Municipal Committee, PWD, Jal Shakti, REWRDD, Fire and Emergency Services, JPDCL and other allied departments presented updates on the works allotted to them.

The DC directed the Tehsildar Kishtwar to identify land for the Community

Hall and for a Health and Wellness Centre at Kwar and the ExEn PWD R&B Paddar to complete the upgradation of HS Kwar within one month.

He directed all executing agencies to accelerate pending works while maintaining quality and transparency, submit weekly Action Taken Reports and begin work immediately wherever it has been allotted.

Among those present were CMO Kishtwar Dr Sanjay Bhat, CHO Kishtwar Sajid Mustafa, the AD Fire and Emergency Services Kishtwar, DYSSO Kishtwar Jaffer Haider Sheikh, ExEn JPDCL Kishtwar Abdul Hamid, ExEn PWD R&B Kishtwar Shamis Din, ExEn PWD R&B Paddar Er Gurjeet Singh, the ExEn PWD R&B Marwah and other officers concerned.

SKUAST-K signs MoA with Naqash Royal Arts to advance Handmade Pashmina Knitwear Innovation

SRINAGAR, JULY 31:

In a significant step towards strengthening industry-academia collaboration and promoting value addition in Kashmir's iconic pashmina sector, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) on Friday signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with Naqash Royal Arts, a leading business firm with decades of experience in domestic and international pashmina markets.

The agreement, signed through the Division of Livestock Products Technology, Faculty of Veterinary Sciences & Animal Husbandry, Shuhama, will leverage the University's scientific expertise to develop high-value pashmina products with enhanced quality, durability and commercial appeal.

The agreement was signed in the presence of Vice-Chancellor Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Director Education Prof. Mohammad Altaf Bhat, Director Extension Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth, Registrar Prof. Az-



mat Alam, Dean, Faculty of Veterinary Sciences & Animal Husbandry Prof. Riaz Ahmad Shah, industry partners and faculty members.

Addressing the gathering, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai said pashmina is one of Kashmir's most valuable heritage products and holds immense potential for diversification through research-driven innovation. He emphasized that the collaboration will focus on extensive research and development to create premium handmade pashmina knitwear that is organic,

durable and globally competitive.

"Through this partnership, we aim to develop products that can carry Kashmir's craftsmanship to global markets while creating new economic opportunities for the sector," Prof. Ganai said.

Welcoming the participants, Dr. Asif Sofi, Head, Division of Livestock Products Technology, said the partnership reflects the Division's continued commitment to strengthening industry linkages through knowledge exchange, resource

sharing and technology transfer. He noted that the Division has signed 10 collaborations in the past two years, taking its total number of MoUs to 12, with partners including ICMR, ICAR-CIRCOT, NIFT, artisans and other stakeholders.

Dr. Sofi said the collaboration seeks to combine traditional craftsmanship with scientific intervention to develop handmade pashmina knitwear that meets evolving market expectations while preserving the authenticity of Kashmir's centuries-old craft.

Film Submission Deadline for 1st IFFJK Extended till August 1

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The Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) has extended the film submission deadline for the inaugural International Film Festival of Jammu and Kashmir (IFFJK) 2026 till August 1, 2026 (11:59 PM), offering filmmakers a final opportunity to register their entries for the prestigious event.

Scheduled to be held from September 7 to 10, 2026, the four-day festival aims to position Jammu and Kashmir as a vibrant destination for cinema, creativity and cultural exchange while providing a global platform for filmmakers to showcase their work.

The festival has already received an overwhelming response, with over 900 entries from nearly 50 countries, reflecting growing confidence among national and international filmmakers in Jammu and Kashmir as an emerging



hub for film production, cinematic excellence and creative collaboration.

The inaugural edition of IFFJK will feature screenings of selected films, masterclasses, interactive sessions, panel discussions and cultural engagements. These activities are expected to bring together filmmakers, industry experts, students and cinema enthusiasts, creating op-

portunities for networking, knowledge sharing and collaboration.

Apart from celebrating cinematic excellence, the festival also seeks to promote the rich culture, heritage and artistic traditions of Jammu and Kashmir through the medium of cinema while encouraging innovation and cross-cultural exchange.

The DIPR is planning a

wide range of activities to ensure active participation from filmmakers, artists, producers and other stakeholders.

It may be recalled that the curtain-raiser ceremony for the festival was held on July 17, 2026, formally inviting filmmakers and cinema enthusiasts from across the globe to participate in the landmark event.

BIS holds 'Manak Manthan & National Seminar on hand tools' at Jalandhar

JALANDHAR, JULY 30:

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), Jammu & Kashmir Branch Office, in collaboration with the Production & General Engineering Department and the Department of Industrial & Production Engineering at Dr. B.R. Ambedkar National Institute of Technology (NIT), Jalandhar, organised "Manak Manthan & National Seminar on Hand Tools" to promote standardisation, quality assurance, and regulatory compliance in the hand tools sector.

The seminar was inaugurated by Prof. Binod Kumar Kanauiya, Director, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar NIT Jalandhar, in the presence of Dr. Raman Bedi, Dean Academic Affairs, Shri Gulshan Kumar, Director/Scientist-E, BIS, Shri Sanjeev Katoch, Chairman, PGD-34 (Hand Tools Sectional Committee), BIS, Shri Rakesh Sharma, Head, Department of Industrial & Production Engineering, NIT Jalandhar, Dr. Narendra Kumar, Assistant Professor, Department of Industrial & Production Engineering, NIT Jalandhar, and senior officials of the Bureau of Indian Standards.

Welcoming the participants, Sh. V. Avinash Babu, Joint Director/Scientist-D, BIS Jammu & Kashmir



Branch Office, highlighted the vital role of standardisation in ensuring product quality, safety, and consumer confidence. The speakers underlined the importance of Indian Standards in enhancing the competitiveness of the country's hand tools industry, fostering innovation, and supporting the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

The seminar featured technical sessions covering advances in heat treatment technologies for hand tools, Indian Standards governing the sector, and testing methodologies for hand tool products. A detailed presentation on Quality Control Orders (QCOs), BIS

Conformity Assessment Schemes, certification procedures, and compliance requirements was delivered by Sh. Kundan Giri, Joint Director/Scientist-D, and Shri Nikhil N. Chandrate, Deputy Director/Scientist-C, BIS. They highlighted the importance of compliance with Indian Standards and the advantages of BIS certification for manufacturers.

An interactive panel discussion involving Sh. B.J. Gowthan, Joint Director/Scientist-D, BIS, along with representatives from industry and academia, provided a platform to deliberate on the challenges and opportunities in the hand tools sector. Particip-

pants also shared valuable suggestions on issues related to the implementation of Indian Standards under the Quality Control Orders.

The seminar concluded with a valedictory session, vote of thanks, and networking among stakeholders. It witnessed enthusiastic participation from representatives of the hand tools industry, academia, testing laboratories, and BIS officials.

The event reinforced BIS's commitment to promoting quality, standardisation, consumer safety, and building a Quality Bharat through effective implementation of Indian Standards.

Meeting on Supreme Court directions for child protection, anti-human trafficking

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Under the chairpersonship of the Principal District and Sessions Judge Udhampur, a meeting was convened today in the office chamber to discuss implementation of the directions issued by the Supreme Court of India in G.Ganesh v. State of Tamil Nadu and Others (SLP (Criminal) No. 11263/2025).

The meeting focused on strengthening the institutional framework for addressing missing children, child trafficking, child rescue, restoration, rehabilitation and inter-agency coordination. The action points approved by the Supreme Court were deliberated in



detail to ensure effective implementation at the district level.

Among those present were representatives of the Anti Human Trafficking Unit, Special Juvenile Police Unit, District Child Protection Unit, Child Welfare Committee and the Department of Women and Child

Development.

During the deliberations, emphasis was laid on enhancing coordination among all stakeholder departments, ensuring prompt response in cases involving missing and trafficked children, improving rehabilitation mechanisms for victims and adopting a

child-centric approach in accordance with the Supreme Court's directions.

The Principal District and Sessions Judge directed all departments concerned to implement the approved action points in close collaboration for safeguarding the rights and welfare of children.