

Satish Sharma felicitates Kathua achievers in DIPR J&K competitions

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, AUG 16

Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Science & Technology, IT, Youth Services & Sports and ARI & Trainings, Satish Sharma, today felicitated the winners from Kathua district in various competitions organised by the Department of Information and Public Relations, J&K, during the Independence Day celebrations at Sports Stadium, Kathua.

In the Painting Competition, Kanwalnain Kaur secured the first position followed by Abhinav Sharma and Veenakshi at second and third positions respectively.

In the National Anthem Competition (13–18 years, Individual Category), Sanchit Dalotra, Sidarath Sangral and Simran Rajwal secured first, second and third positions respectively.

In the National Anthem Competition (Above 18 years, Individual Category), Neelam Kumari bagged the first position, while Dheeraj Kumar and Prianka secured second and third positions.



In the National Anthem Competition (Group Category), Vikram of Santosh Music & Dance Coaching Institute, Kathua, clinched the first position followed by Learning Temple High School at second position and Manu Shiksha Kendra Higher Secondary School, Rajbagh at third position.

In the Essay Writing Competition, Avasyu Gupta secured first position, Chahat Devi second and Mehul Jasrotha got the third place.

The Minister congratulated all the winners and appreciated their talent, creativity and patriotic spirit, encouraging them to

continue excelling in their respective fields and contributing positively to society.

MLA Kathua Dr Bharat Bhushan, Deputy Commissioner Kathua, Rajesh Sharma and SSP Kathua Mohita Sharma was also present during the Felicitation.

CS directs faster execution of MHA-approved Rs 1,579 Cr disaster recovery package in J&K

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Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, reviewed the implementation of the Recovery & Reconstruction (R&R) Plan–2025 and utilization of the disaster recovery assistance sanctioned for Jammu & Kashmir by GoI directing departments to accelerate project formulation and execution while ensuring that every reconstructed asset is made more resilient to future disasters.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Finance; Additional Chief Secretary, PWD; Principal Secretary, DMRR&R; Director, CD & SDRF; Administrative Secretaries, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu/Kashmir; and other senior officers. Deputy Commissioners from all 20 districts participated virtually.

The Chief Secretary took detailed stock of the ₹1,579.09 crore recovery package approved by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) under the NDRF/SDRF R&R Funding Window. The same was approved through MHA for Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) for damages caused by floods, cloudbursts, landslides and other disasters to the tune of ₹1,534.58 crore, besides ₹44.52 crore for the dedicated Ramban District recovery plan following the April 2025 cloudburst and flash floods.

Reviewing the progress, the Chief Secretary noted that departments have so far prepared costed action plans amounting to ₹1,225.78 crore, leaving a balance of ₹353.31 crore to be operationalized by the Jal Shakti and Agriculture sectors.

Emphasizing that disaster recovery should not merely restore damaged infrastructure to its pre-dis-



aster condition, the Chief Secretary directed all executing agencies to strictly follow the 'Build Back Better' (BBB) approach.

Dulloo also called for strict cross-verification of beneficiary lists and project proposals with major ongoing schemes, including PMAY-G, Jal Jeevan Mission, AMRUT, SASCI, NABARD, PMGSY and Samagra Shiksha, to eliminate any possibility of duplication and ensure optimal use of public resources.

He called for reconstructed assets to incorporate appropriate disaster-resilient features, including compliance with Seismic Zone IV/V requirements, elevated plinths and slope stabilization measures, wherever applicable. The departments were also asked to optimally utilize both norm-based and flexible assistance available under the approved recovery framework to meet incremental resilience requirements.

The Chief Secretary further directed that all projects be geo-tagged forthwith and uploaded on the BEAMS digital platform, creating a unified digital record for monitoring progress, financial utilization and physical outcomes.

Giving the sector-wise review, the Principal Secretary, DMRR&R, Chandraker Bharti revealed that significant progress has been achieved in several components of the recovery programme. In the Social Sector, he highlighted against an approved allocation of ₹289.40 crore, de-

partments have formulated plans amounting to ₹262.11 crore.

Similarly in the Housing component 100 per cent commitment of its ₹193.19 crore allocation, covering 9,083 households, including 5,227 fully and 3,856 severely damaged houses has been achieved.

With respect to the Roads & Bridges component, it has emerged as one of the strongest performing infrastructure segments, with its entire ₹461.64 crore allocation planned for restoration of approximately 1,230.7 km of roads and 4,494.5 metres of bridges.

Additionally, the Power sector has planned utilization of ₹70.08 crore against ₹72.97 crore, targeting restoration of more than 21,000 poles, 1,100 circuit kilometres of conductors and 800 transformers, benefiting around 1.45 lakh consumers.

The meeting was apprised that the Drinking Water & Sanitation has so far formulated plans for ₹59.02 crore against ₹139.65 crore, while Irrigation & Flood Control has planned ₹93.01 crore against ₹199.79 crore and are in a process of utilizing the full kitty of funds available.

In the productive sectors, Agriculture has formulated plans worth ₹168.36 crore against ₹223.67 crore, covering 45 packages relating to crop inputs, land reclamation and restoration of research infrastructure at SKUAST-Jammu. Animal Husbandry & Livestock has planned ₹8.86 crore

against ₹10.28 crore, while Horticulture has fully utilized its ₹3.87 crore allocation to support 3,493 farmers.

The Chief Secretary also reviewed the dedicated ₹44.52 crore Ramban recovery plan prepared in response to the cloudburst and flash floods of April 19–20, 2025. The plan includes ₹23.24 crore for Roads & Bridges, ₹3.34 crore for Irrigation & Flood Control, ₹1.78 crore for Education and ₹1.48 crore for Animal Husbandry & Livestock, with approved and proposed allocations fully reconciled in these components.

The Chief Secretary directed that household relief under the recovery programme be disbursed strictly in accordance with the 30:40:30 progressive-linked Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) pattern, ensuring that payments remain aligned with actual progress of reconstruction.

He further directed block, sub-divisional and district-level Nodal Officers to ensure complete resolution of E-Samadhan and CPGRAMS grievances within 15 days, making grievance redressal an integral part of the recovery monitoring mechanism.

The Chief Secretary underscored that the recovery programme should result not only in timely restoration of damaged assets but also in a more resilient and disaster-ready Jammu & Kashmir, with every rupee sanctioned translating into durable public infrastructure and tangible relief for affected communities.

SKUAST-Kashmir celebrates 80th Independence Day with Patriotic Fervour

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Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) celebrated the 80th Independence Day with great patriotic fervour and enthusiasm at its Shalimar Campus today.

The National Flag was ceremonially hoisted by Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-K, in the presence of University officers, Deans, Directors, faculty members, staff and students. The ceremony was followed by the singing of the National Anthem.

Addressing the gathering, the Vice Chancellor, reaffirmed SKUAST-Kashmir's commitment to advancing agricultural development, empowering farmers and contributing to the national vision of Viksit Bharat. He emphasised that agricultural universities have a vital role in strengthening food and nutritional security, promoting sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture, fostering innovation and taking scientific knowledge



and technologies to farming communities.

He also called upon the students to become responsible citizens and active contributors to nation-building. Emphasising the importance of holistic education, he encouraged students to broaden their intellectual horizons by engaging with the history, literature and diverse knowledge traditions of the country alongside their professional studies.

The enthusiastic partici-

pation of students added vibrancy and pride to the celebrations, reflecting their spirit of patriotism, unity and national commitment. Their participation made the occasion a memorable expression of love for the nation and hope for its future.

Independence Day celebrations were also held across the University's faculties, colleges, Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) and research stations. Deans, Associate Deans, Heads of

KVKs and Heads of Research Stations led the flag-hoisting ceremonies at their respective campuses and stations, with faculty, staff and students participating enthusiastically.

The celebrations reaffirmed SKUAST-Kashmir's commitment to excellence in education, research, innovation and extension, and its continued endeavour to contribute to the development of a self-reliant agricultural sector and a prosperous Viksit Bharat.

Javed Rana reviews construction of EMRS, Irrigation Department building at Bhera

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, AUG 16

Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today inspected the ongoing construction work of the Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS) at Bhera, Mendhar and reviewed the infrastructural requirements of the institution.

During the visit, the Minister interacted with the students of EMRS and gave a patient hearing to their issues, demands and requirements. He assured the students that all necessary measures would be taken to ensure that the institution is provided with adequate infrastructure and facilities conducive to quality education and residential learning.

The Minister took detailed feedback on the progress of various works and stressed the need for timely completion of the critical infrastructure. He directed the concerned departments to accord top priority to the completion of the hostel building and expedite the remaining works on an urgent basis.

He specifically directed that the hostel work be completed at the earliest so that the EMRS is able to facilitate the admission process and conduct the requisite examinations for students seeking admission for the academic session 2026–27. He emphasized that there should be no avoidable delay in com-



pleting the essential infrastructure required for the smooth functioning of the institution.

Rana underscored the importance of EMRS institutions in providing quality education and residential facilities to students, particularly those belonging to tribal communities. He called for close coordination among the concerned departments to ensure that all necessary facilities are put in place in a time-bound manner.

While interacting with the staff, Javed Rana enquired about the performance of the students and asked the staff to provide full assistance to the students to prepare them for competitive examinations. He also instructed the administration of the schools to organise seminars, debates and other co-curricular activities for the overall development of the students. He said that teachers should make op-

timum use of their time and resources for the benefit of the student community.

Later, the Minister inspected the ongoing construction of the official building of the Irrigation Department at Bhera.

Taking stock of the progress of the construction work, he directed the concerned authorities to accelerate the pace of execution and complete the building on a double-shift basis. He stressed that the Irrigation Department requires a proper and functional office building to facilitate effective discharge of its responsibilities and improve service delivery. He directed the department to ensure that the remaining work is completed expeditiously so that the building is made available for official use at the earliest.

Rana reiterated that timely completion of public infrastructure projects re-

mains a priority of the government and directed all concerned agencies to maintain close monitoring of ongoing works, adhere to prescribed timelines and ensure quality in work execution.

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Gurdwara Singh Sabha Bala Palpora anniversary celebrated with religious fervour

KULGAM, AUGUST

16: The anniversary of Gurdwara Singh Sabha Bala Palpora Mirbazar was celebrated today in Kulgam district with religious fervour, devotion and enthusiasm. The programme was attended by Deputy Commissioner Kulgam Shahzad Alam and Mahant Manjeet Singh of Jammu and Kashmir, besides members of the Sikh community and local residents.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner paid obeisance at the Gurdwara and participated in the Bhajan Kirtan. He interacted with members of the Sikh community and the Gurdwara management and highlighted the importance of the teachings of communal harmony, brotherhood, peace and social justice.

The Deputy Commissioner also listened to the issues and concerns raised by members of the local



Sikh community and assured them that their genuine problems would be examined and addressed on priority, as per the established procedures.

Mahant Manjeet Singh also participated in the religious proceedings and con-

veyed his greetings to the Sikh community on the auspicious occasion.

The celebrations witnessed the participation of a large number of members of the Sikh community and other local residents, who joined the religious pro-

ceedings and prayed for peace, prosperity and communal harmony.

Among others, Chief Planning Officer (CPO) Malik Suheel and other district officers accompanied the Deputy Commissioner during the visit.