

LG calls agriculture next big frontier for youth entrepreneurship

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Highlighting India's changing employment aspirations & asserting that no entrepreneurship revolution can be complete without equal participation of women, LG Manoj Sinha today called agriculture the next big frontier for youth entrepreneurship.

"Today, there are startups worldwide continuously exploring new possibilities in agriculture and allied sectors. The biggest message from these startups and new innovations is that agriculture and allied sectors themselves are the next big frontier for innovation," he said in his address after inaugurating a series of new infrastructure facilities at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences & Technology (SKUAST), Jammu.

The LG also addressed the launch of the Startup Outreach Programme under JKCIP. The event brought together the researchers, innovators, young entrepreneurs and farmers from across the Jammu division.

The newly inaugurated facilities included Unnati Girls Hostel, Centre for AI and ML in Agriculture, Centre for Mushroom Research and Innovation, Advanced Sericulture Laboratory and Centre for Digital Media and Publication.

Sinha described the additions as more than physical infrastructure, calling them a commitment to the region's innovators, entrepreneurs, researchers and farming families.

He also drew attention to global examples of technology-driven agriculture, from a dairy innovation hub in the Netherlands that brings together scientists, companies and farmers on AI-based nutrition and animal health solutions, to Israel's integration of data and smart management across agriculture and dairy, New Zealand's digital push in animal husbandry, and a Brazilian irrigation startup that turned a farmer's everyday problem into a scalable solution.



The message from these examples, the LG said, was that agriculture and allied sectors represent the next major frontier for innovation worldwide.

However, the LG cautioned the youth of Jammu & Kashmir against simply replicating foreign models, urging them instead to study their own fields, farmers, climate and local challenges, and to build solutions suited to the region's specific needs.

"You must understand your own fields, farmers, climate, and local problems to prepare your next solution, and customise those models in your own way wherever appropriate. I believe that different countries have innovated for their own problems, and now it is time for Jammu Kashmir to innovate for its own questions and challenges," he said.

The LG also highlighted India's changing employment aspirations and said that today's youth in Jammu & Kashmir were increasingly looking to create jobs rather than wait in line for them. "Such shift in aspiration is central to the vision of a Self-Reliant Jammu & Kashmir," he said.

"I want to tell all students that your degree is not your destination; rather, it is like a runway for your flight of success. SKUAST-Jammu will give you knowledge, but your curiosity will give you new thoughts and ideas. Your courage will turn that idea into a startup, and if you continue to advance that startup with patience, honesty, and consistent hard work, one day that same startup will provide employment and dignity to someone who today is sitting exactly where you

are. That is why I often say that the truest meaning of a Self-Reliant Jammu Kashmir is a region where every young citizen becomes an employer in some form, according to their ability and talent," he added.

The LG also spoke at length about diversifying beyond traditional farming activities, encouraging young and progressive farmers to explore cold chains, grading and packaging units, regional branding, and digital marketplaces that could connect Jammu Kashmir's produce with markets in Delhi, Dubai and beyond.

He also said that women's participation in the entrepreneurship ecosystem should be the key priority.

"No entrepreneurship revolution can be complete without the equal and active participation of women. And no economy can truly become strong until women are equal partners in it. I do not just want to see women present in enterprises; I want to see enterprises led by women. You must support those Self-Help Groups and Farmer Producer Organizations that gain equal access to finance, technology, and markets. Support such women through your research and innovation who start their own businesses and then, through those same businesses, create employment opportunities for other women," he said.

On the Startup Outreach Programme, he noted its focus on reaching farmers and youth in villages who may have had no prior exposure to concepts such as incubation, mentoring or venture capital.

He said the most useful solutions to farmers'

problems were often conceived by those who had lived those problems firsthand.

The LG said that SKUAST-Jammu had so far selected more than 150 students for idea incubation and supported 56 promising startups, while extending its outreach to remote parts of the Jammu region.

Calling this a commendable beginning, he urged the SKUAST-Jammu to multiply these numbers and evolve into a genuine bridge between laboratories and markets, scientists and farmers, and technology and ground-level needs.

"Real success of SKUAST-Jammu will not be measured only by how many students graduate from here, but the success of this campus will be measured by how many new ideas were born here, how many solutions to problems were developed here, how many enterprises were established here, and how many farming families' lives were positively changed by those enterprises," he said.

He called upon students to ask four questions every day during their time on campus – 1) What problem can I solve? 2) What enterprise can I build. 3) What value can I add to agriculture? and 4) How many families can benefit from my idea?

"If these four questions keep troubling your mind continuously, then no one can stop you from finding the purpose of your career," he said.

He said Jammu & Kashmir would increasingly be recognised for innovation, agricultural entrepreneurship and youth leadership in the years ahead.

CM Omar Abdullah felicitates J&K's four NEET toppers

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Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today felicitated four outstanding NEET achievers from Jammu and Kashmir, recognising their exceptional performance in the country's premier medical entrance examination.

The four toppers—Hadiya Nisar, Zaidan Wani, Aarav Gupta and Maleeha Ajaz—were felicitated by the Chief Minister with a cash prize of ₹1 lakh each, a tablet and a certificate of appreciation in recognition of their remarkable achievement.

Congratulating the students on their success, the Chief Minister appreciated their hard work, dedication and perseverance, and commended their parents and teachers for the support and guidance extended to them in their academic journey.



He said the achievement of these four students was a matter of pride for Jammu and Kashmir and would inspire other young students to pursue excellence through dedication and sustained effort.

On the occasion, Minister for Education Sakina Itoo, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam

Wani, Director School Education Kashmir Naseer Ahmed Wani, ZEOs, CEOs, principals of several schools, students and the proud parents of the achievers were present.

An interactive session was also held during the felicitation programme, providing students, educators and parents an opportunity to share their suggestions and feedback with the Chief Minister on various aspects of education and student welfare.

The Chief Minister listened to the suggestions and assured the participants that the issues and recommendations raised during the interaction would be considered.

Speaker visits Buzgoo, Nilnag; emphasizes faster tourism development, improved connectivity

BUDGAM, AUGUST 21: Speaker, Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly and Member Legislative Assembly (MLA) Charar-i-Sharief, Abdul Rahim Rather, today visited Buzgoo and Nilnag areas of the Charar-i-Sharief Assembly Constituency in Budgam district and interacted with the local residents to take stock of their developmental needs and concerns.

The development of Nilnag Lake was also discussed, with emphasis on developing the destination on the latest and sustainable model of tourism.

The Speaker stressed for adequate tourist facilities and related infrastructure so as to make Nilnag an attractive destination for the visitors while also benefiting the local population. He said that the region has immense potential to emerge as a major tourist destination and a source of sustainable livelihood and income generation for the local population.

He said that an amount of Rs 71 lakh is proposed to be spent during the current year for creation of tourism-related infrastructure, including parks, fencing, gates and walkways. The proposed works are



aimed at improving the overall infrastructure and visitor experience in the area, he added.

The Speaker said that efforts would be made to improve the connectivity between prominent tourist destinations, including through the development of the Barinibal Road connecting Yusmarg and Nilnag, enabling the tourists to conveniently visit and enjoy both destinations.

He said that a comprehensive development plan would be pursued for Nilnag and the entire adjoining tourism belt to ensure planned infrastructure development and enhanced facilities for the visitors.

The closure of tourist destinations, including Yusmarg, Doodhpathri and Tosamaidan, was highlighted as having an adverse impact on the local economy.

The Speaker asked the concerned authorities to review the decision in the larger public interest, keeping in view its impact on tourism-related activities, livelihoods and the local economy.

The Speaker added that Bamilbal –Yusmarg and Dobal –Yusmarg roads shall also be explored on public demand, with a view to improve the connectivity and facilitate hassle-free movement of local residents as well as visitors to the area.

Rather said that Maharaja Road has been projected for development at an estimated cost of Rs 12 crore. The proposed development is expected to improve road connectivity and provide better access to the concerned areas. The macadamisation of the Nagam–Nilnag road shall be taken up shortly, with the work scheduled to commence within the stipulated timeframe. He directed that the concerned agency shall ensure early completion of the work so that the road is made traffic-worthy at the earliest.

The Speaker emphasized that link roads of Buzgoo shall be macadamised to facilitate hassle-free movement of residents and improve connectivity within the area. Priority shall be accorded to roads requiring immediate attention, he added.

The Speaker also said that an amount of Rs 30 lakh has been provided for construction of a wall around the High School, with the work to be taken up on priority so as to provide a secure and suitable environment for students and staff.

Interacting with the local residents, Rather assured them that necessary facilities and infrastructure, particularly in the sectors of road connectivity, drinking water supply and tourism infrastructure, would be strengthened.

2-day Integrated Communication, Outreach Programme concludes at Tikri

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The two-day Integrated Communication and Outreach Programme on Nasha Mukht Bharat, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and flagship programmes of the Government of India, organised by the Field Office of the Central Bureau of Communication, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, concluded, here at Tikri.

Naib Tehsildar, Tikri, Surinder Kumar Sharma, was the Chief Guest, while Monika Karlupia served as the Chairperson of the valedictory function.

The chief guest inspected a photo exhibition on Nasha Mukht Bharat and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The event featured a series of information, education and communication activities, including expert lectures, a painting competition, theme-based cultural programmes, an open quiz, a pledge on Nasha Mukht



Bharat, a tour of the photo exhibition and a question-and-answer session.

The chief guest called for collective efforts to protect youth from the harmful effects of drug addiction. He commended the Central Bureau of Communication for organising outreach programmes at the grass-

roots level, adding that widespread awareness plays a vital role in curbing drug abuse.

The resource person from the judiciary, Advocate Akhil Dubey, delivered a keynote address on the three new criminal laws, noting that their implementation has made access

to justice simpler and more direct. The Probationary Sub-Inspector, Sumit, delivered a lecture on drug addiction, stressing the need for concerted public action to address the challenge. The In-charge of the Field Office, Udhampur, Gurnam Singh, presented the vote of thanks.

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The second-day sub-district-level training programme for Population Enumeration (PE) under Phase-II of Census-2027 was held today at the Community Hall Bhadarwah, under the overall supervision and guidance of Deputy Commissioner Doda Krishan Lal, who is also the Principal Census Officer of the district. The programme was held under the guidance of Additional Deputy Commissioner Sunil Kumar Bhutyal, who is also the Sub Divisional Census Officer. The session was conducted by experienced District Master Trainers Dr Yunus Rasheed and Dr Bharat Singh, Event Manager Arif Rana and census staff members, who provided detailed guidelines on population enumeration procedures. The training programme was organised to equip the officers and officials with the requisite



knowledge, technical know-how and operational skills for the smooth, coordinated and effective conduct of Population Enumeration under Phase-II of

Census-2027, particularly in the snow-bound areas of the Sub Division.