

Horticulture Deptt organises Farmers' interaction session at Kisan Kendra

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, AUG 27

The Department of Horticulture Jammu organised an interaction session with farmers at Kisan Kendra, Talab Tillo, Jammu, with the objective of providing them a platform to highlight their issues, concerns and suggestions before the concerned authorities.

Minister for Agriculture Production Department and Panchayati Raj, Javid Ahmed Dar, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, while MLA Arvind Gupta was the Guest of Honour.

The programme was attended by Director Horticulture Jammu, Gul Syed; Director Rural Development, Shanaz Akhter; Joint Director Horticulture Jammu (Central), Mukesh Sharma; Chief Horticulture Officer Jammu, R. Kotwal; Chief Horticulture Officer Samba, Anil Gorkha; Chief Canning Instructor, Sanjeev Kumar Karlupia; NRO, Satish Kumar, besides other officers and officials of the Department of Horticulture and a large gathering of farmers.

During the interaction, farmers apprised the Minister and other dignitaries of various issues, challenges and requirements related to the horticulture sector. They also put forth suggestions for strengthening horticulture activities and improving their



livelihoods.

On the occasion, the Minister released the Handbook of the Department of Horticulture, prepared as a practical reference guide for farmers.

The handbook contains useful information regarding modern horticultural practices, departmental schemes and technologies.

Authority letters for different components under various horticulture schemes were also distributed among eligible beneficiaries, enabling farmers to avail themselves of the benefits of departmental schemes and undertake horticultural activities in a systematic manner.

As part of the farmer-oriented initiative, the Minister flagged off buses carrying farmers for an educational and exposure visit to Government Fruit Plant Nurseries in Jammu and Samba. The exposure tour is aimed at providing farmers with practical knowledge of modern nursery management, quality planting material, fruit crop production and other advanced horticultural practices.

During the exposure visit, the farmers will also gain practical knowledge through visits to Krishi Vigyan Kendra Samba, Krishi Vigyan Kendra Jammu, SKUAST-Jammu

and Chakroi Farm, where they will observe various technologies, demonstrations and field-level practices.

The initiative is intended to bridge the gap between technical knowledge and its practical application at the farmers' field level.

The programme highlighted the Department of Horticulture's continued commitment towards empowering farmers through awareness, capacity building, practical exposure and effective implementation of horticulture schemes, thereby promoting sustainable and modern horticulture across Jammu Province.

Bank Unions protest over PLI, 5-day banking

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Bank employees today held a massive demonstration at Bahu Plaza as part of the nationwide call given by the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU), regarding various issues concerning Bankers.

On 26 August 2026, The United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU), comprising AIBEA, AIBOC, NCBE, AIBOA, BEFI, INBEF and INBOC, has served a strike notice, raising concerns over the delay in implementation of 5-Day Banking, the unilateral and discriminatory PLI scheme introduced by Department of Financial Services (DFS), etc. UFBU has demanded immediate implementation of 5-Day Banking in accordance with the commitment recorded in the Settlement/Joint Note dated 8 March 2024. Despite the agreement and assurances, the matter remains pending for want of Government approval.

The Forum has also strongly opposed the re-



vised PLI scheme of DFS, which, according to UFBU, selectively benefits less than 5% of the workforce while excluding more than 95% of employees who collectively contribute to the growth and functioning of banks.

The unions have objected to replacing the mutually agreed bank-performance-based PLI with an individual-performance-based system and have demanded that the scheme be kept in abeyance and suitably modified through bilateral discussions with the unions.

UFBU has also pointed out that the bilateral PLI

scheme provides for a maximum incentive of 15 days' Basic Pay + DA, whereas the DFS-directed scheme provides for PLI of up to 365 days' Basic Pay, creating an discriminatory disparity within the workforce.

UFBU has appealed to the Government and the Indian Banks' Association to resolve the issues through meaningful bilateral dialogue and honour the commitments already made.

The Forum has reiterated that the struggle is aimed at safeguarding fairness, collective bargaining, industrial harmony and the legiti-

mate interests of the entire banking workforce.

The demonstration was attended by Mr. Rakesh (PNB), Mr. Puneet (Canara Bank), Mr. Naresh (BOB) besides a large number of bank employees and officers from various banks.

The gathering unanimously called upon the Government of India to clear all pending issues including according immediate approval for declaration of all Saturdays as holidays in the banking industry and implement the Five-Day Banking Week without further delay.

KVK Ganderbal organizes Capacity Building Workshop on Agrivoltaics

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, AUG 27

Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Ganderbal, SKUAST-K, organized a one-day Capacity Building Workshop on Agrivoltaics in collaboration with the Centre for Study of Science, Technology and Policy (CSTEP), Bengaluru, to create awareness and strengthen the technical capacity of farmers and other stakeholders on the emerging integration of agriculture with solar photovoltaic technology.

The workshop focused on the potential of agrivoltaic systems to enable simultaneous crop production and renewable energy generation from the same land, thereby promoting efficient resource utilization, diversification of farm income and climate-resilient agri-



culture.

The session commenced with an introduction by Dr. Faiqa Syeed, Scientist, KVK Ganderbal. Dr. Ajaz Ahmad Malik, Senior Scientist and Head, KVK Ganderbal, emphasized the potential of agrivoltaics as a promising approach for sustainable

agriculture, renewable energy generation, and additional income opportunities for farmers, particularly amid rising energy demands, climate variability, and increasing pressure on agricultural land.

During the technical session, Sheikh Madiha Syed,

Senior Analyst, CSTEP, sensitized participants about solar panel configurations, crop selection, microclimate management, irrigation considerations, energy generation, land-use efficiency and economic opportunities associated with agrivoltaic systems.

Dr. Suja Nabi Qureshi, Scientist at KVK Ganderbal, highlighted the potential of agrivoltaics as a futuristic approach to high-density apple cultivation by improving resource management and enhancing crop resilience. Dr. Faiqa Syeed also presented on the synergistic potential of deploying solar arrays over open-water aquaculture sites.

An interactive session was subsequently held, during which participants engaged with the experts and discussed the technical and practical aspects of agrivoltaic systems.

Amit holds strategic meeting with Defence, CAPF, Agencies for Population Enumeration for Census

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, AUG 27

The Directorate of Census Operations, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh today convened a strategic coordination meeting with Nodal Officers of Defence, Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and other organisations to finalise preparations for Population Enumeration in Special Charges in the snow-bound areas of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

The Population Enumeration exercise in these areas is scheduled to be conducted from September 1 to 30, 2026, as part of Phase-II of Census 2027.

The meeting was chaired by Amit Sharma, IAS, Chief Principal Census Officer and Director Census Operations, J&K and Ladakh. The deliberations focused on ensuring complete, secure and accurate enumeration of all eligible personnel and members covered under Special Charges.

Representatives of CISF, ITBP, CRPF, Assam Rifles, Railway Board, Indian Air Force, BRO, BSF and SSB from Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh participated in the meeting. Their participation assumes particular significance as Special Charges comprise Defence and CAPF establishments, training centres, research establishments and other restricted-access locations where civilian Census functionaries may not have access. Addressing the participants, Amit Sharma emphasised that Census 2027 will be India's first Census to be conducted through digital means. He said the Population Enumeration in Special Charges has been structured to meet the security



and operational requirements of these establishments. The Chief Principal Census Officer said the objective of the Directorate is to ensure that every eligible person is counted accurately, irrespective of the nature or location of the establishment, while maintaining the highest standards of confidentiality and security.

He explained that Census Charge Officers, Enumerators and Supervisors for Special Charges will be appointed from among officers and personnel of the respective establishments. The concerned Nodal Officers of each force will coordinate with the Directorate for the appointment of functionaries, their training, provision of Census material and timely completion of the enumeration exercise.

The Population Enumeration schedule for Special Charges will cover questions relating to basic information, demographic and social characteristics, language and education, economic activity, migration, fertility and other particu-

lars. Certain responses relating to economic activity and migration will follow specific provisions applicable to Defence and CAPF personnel.

Detailed training will be imparted to Special Charge Officers, Enumerators and Supervisors to ensure uniform understanding of Census concepts, definitions and procedures.

Particular emphasis was laid on training and standardisation, with the training of Nodal Officers, Charge Officers, Enumerators and Supervisors of Special Charges in the snow-bound areas scheduled to be held shortly.

The Directorate will provide the required instruction manuals and Census material, while the respective Nodal Officers and Special Charge Officers will facilitate training and field arrangements in close coordination with Census authorities. The meeting also reviewed arrangements for supervision, data entry, secure handling and transfer of Census material, appointment of Census functionaries and coordination

mechanisms required for completing the exercise within the prescribed time-frame.

Amit Sharma stressed that the September enumeration is particularly important for the snow-bound areas of Jammu & Kashmir and the entire Union Territory of Ladakh, where Population Enumeration is being undertaken ahead of the main national enumeration schedule owing to the region's distinctive climatic and geographical conditions.

He said close coordination between the Directorate and Defence, CAPF and other specialised organisations would be critical to ensuring complete Census coverage.

The Chief Principal Census Officer expressed confidence that the coordination established with the participating organisations would facilitate smooth, secure and comprehensive Population Enumeration in all Special Charges, contributing significantly to the successful conduct of Phase-II of Census 2027 in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

SKUAST-K trains Ladakh Veterinarians in Future-Ready Livestock Farming

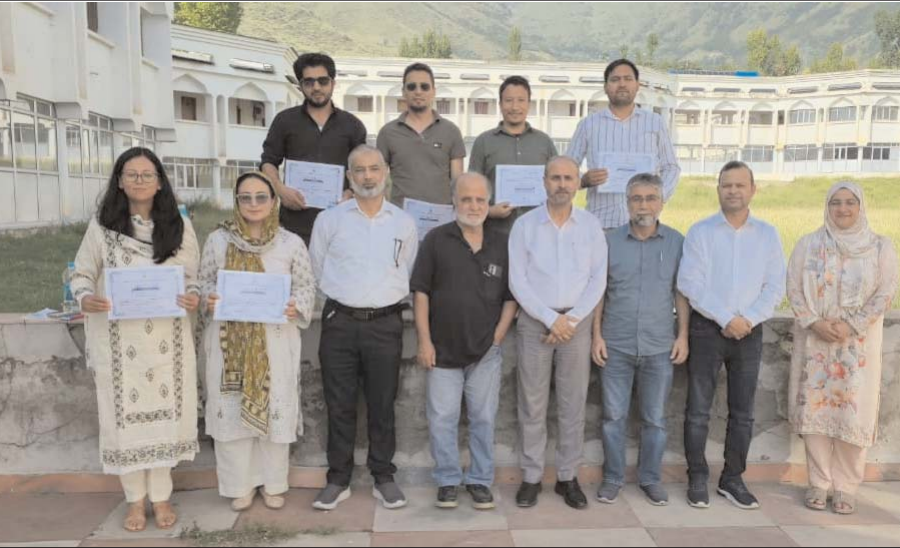
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Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) has concluded a two-week capacity-building training programme for veterinary officers from Ladakh, equipping them with next-generation knowledge, skills and technology-driven approaches to livestock farming suited to the region's challenging agro-climatic conditions.

The training programme on "Future-Ready Livestock Farming" was organized by the Division of Livestock Production and Management (LPM) at the Faculty of Veterinary Sciences and Animal Husbandry, SKUAST-Kashmir, Shuhama. The initiative aimed to strengthen the technical and professional capacities of field-level veterinary officers and to familiarize them with emerging technologies and modern approaches to livestock development.

Speaking at the valedictory function, Prof. Riaz Ahmad Shah, Dean, Faculty of Veterinary Sciences and Animal Husbandry, SKUAST-Kashmir, who was the chief guest on the occasion, appreciated the efforts of the Division of LPM in organizing the programme and emphasized the importance of continuous capacity building of veterinary professionals working at the field level.

Prof. Hilal Musadiq Khan, Head, Division of LPM, said the programme had been designed to provide participants with a holistic understanding of



modern livestock production and management practices. Prof. Masood Saleem Mir, Associate Director Extension, highlighted the importance of taking scientific innovations and modern livestock management practices from the University to the field. Prof. M. T. Banday, Senior Professor, Division of LPM and former Dean, Faculty of Veterinary Sciences and Animal Husbandry, emphasized the need to integrate scientific knowledge with locally suitable livestock production

practices to address emerging challenges in the sector.

Prof. I. U. Sheikh, Professor, Division of LPM, expressed hope that the knowledge and skills acquired during the programme would translate into practical interventions in the field and contribute towards making livestock farming in Ladakh more productive, sustainable and technology-driven.

The programme concluded with the distribution of certificates among the participating veterinary officers.

JKEDI organises Capacity Building Programme on MSME Health Clinic

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 27: Under the leadership of Mohammad Younis Malik, Director, JKEDI, a one-day Capacity Building Programme was organized on MSME Health Clinics at its Sempora, Pampore campus today, aimed at enhancing the capacity of field-level officials to assess the overall health, sustainability and potential stress factors affecting Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The programme brought together Industry Promotion Officers (IPOs) from the District Industries Centres (DICs), Small Business Development

Unit (SBDU) officials from Mission YUVA, and District Nodal Officers (DNOs) of JKEDI.

The sessions provided participants with a practical understanding of the MSME Health Clinic framework and equipped them with tools and techniques to identify early warning signs of financial, operational and other forms of business stress. The programme highlighted the importance of timely assessment and intervention in ensuring the long-term sustainability of MSMEs.

A key component of the programme

was the introduction to a data-driven approach for assessing the health of enterprises. Participants were familiarised with various indicators, including GST turnover and filing patterns, EPFO compliance, electricity consumption and payment trends, Udyam-related data and key financial parameters. The sessions stressed that individual indicators should not be viewed in isolation; rather, multiple parameters need to be analysed together to identify patterns and understand the underlying causes of enterprise stress.