

IFFJK 2026 to showcase 135 Films from 41 Countries; Rs 96 Lakh Prize Purse Announced

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, AUG 27

Jammu & Kashmir is all set to screen 135 films from 41 countries in its inaugural edition of the International Film Festival bringing the world of cinema to the UT from September 7 to 10, 2026.

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today reviewed the final arrangements for the inaugural International Film Festival of Jammu & Kashmir (IFFJK 2026), directing all concerned departments and agencies to work in close coordination to ensure a seamless and memorable experience for filmmakers, artists, delegates and audiences.

The meeting reviewed the key features, participation, programming, venue arrangements, cultural presentations, publicity strategy and departmental responsibilities for the four-day festival, which is being positioned as a major international cultural and creative platform for Jammu & Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary, Home; Principal Secretary, Culture; Commissioner Secretary, General Administration Department; Divisional Commissioners, Jammu/Kashmir; IGP (POS); Commissioner Secretary, Floriculture; Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar; Director, Information; Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation; Director, Hospitality & Protocol; Director, Handicrafts & Handloom, Kashmir; Director, School Education, Kashmir; Director, Estates; Joint Director, Information Jammu/Kashmir; GM, NFDC and other senior officers of DIPR.

The Chief Secretary took detailed note of the arrangements being put in place for the successful conduct of the festival and directed the Divisional and District Administrations to remain fully geared up to ensure seamless, professional and glitch-free conduct of the marquee event.

He stressed the impor-



tance of close inter-departmental coordination and directed all concerned agencies to discharge their assigned responsibilities efficiently and in unison.

Emphasizing the significance of the inaugural edition, Atal Dulloo called upon the NFDC to make special efforts to bring a larger number of acclaimed filmmakers, actors and other prominent personalities from the film fraternity to Jammu & Kashmir.

In addition to that the detailed roles and responsibilities of the concerned departments and agencies were also discussed during the meeting. The Chief Secretary emphasized that the success of such a major international event would depend on seamless coordination, timely execution and a shared sense of ownership among all stakeholders.

The Chief Secretary directed all concerned departments to work in close coordination and ensure that every aspect of the festival from hospitality and protocol to venue management, security, civic amenities, transportation, cultural programming and public outreach is handled with professionalism and efficiency.

He underscored that the festival is envisaged as an annual international event from this year onwards, and therefore its inaugural edition should establish high standards of organisation, programming and audience engagement.

Giving a detailed presentation on the festival, Director Information & Public Relations, Shreya Singhal, highlighted the extensive international participation secured for IFFJK 2026. She highlighted that the inaugural

edition will showcase an expansive lineup of 135 films representing 41 countries, bringing together diverse cinematic traditions, storytelling formats and creative voices from across the world.

Adding that India leads the country-wise participation with 64 films, followed by France with 13 and Iran with 8. Argentina and Spain will contribute four films each, while Brazil, Germany, the Russian Federation and the United States will have three films each.

A further group of countries, including South Korea, Sweden, Taiwan, Qatar, Colombia and Türkiye, among others, will each contribute curated films, giving the festival a distinctly global character. A major attraction of the inaugural festival will be its proposed ₹96 lakh total prize purse, distributed across nine award categories to recognise excellence in filmmaking and cinematic craft.

The Best Film award carries the top prize of ₹25 lakh, while Best Director and Best Debut Film of a Director will carry ₹15 lakh each. Reflecting the festival's special focus on the region, the Best Film – J&K Select category carries a prize of ₹10 lakh.

The performance categories of Best Actor (Male) and Best Actor (Female) carry ₹8 lakh each, while the technical categories of Best Cinematography, Best Sound Design and Best Editing carry ₹5 lakh each.

The award structure, she said, has been designed to celebrate artistic excellence as well as the diverse creative and technical dimensions of filmmaking.

Adding a distinctive visual and experiential dimension to the festival, a

Floating Screen on the waters of Dal Lake near SKICC is also being installed as part of the festival experience.

The initiative is expected to provide an iconic setting for film screenings while showcasing the unique cultural and natural landscape of Jammu & Kashmir to visiting filmmakers, artists and delegates from across India and abroad.

The Director Information also elaborated on the festival's masterclass programme, which will provide aspiring filmmakers, students and cinema enthusiasts an opportunity to engage directly with leading professionals from the industry.

The three-day master class series will feature acclaimed director Vidhu Vinod Chopra celebrated editor Namrata Rao, Veteran sound designer Baylon Fonseca in addition to Chitranjan Tripathi from NSD, Supriyo Sen (IDPA), Anil Mehta and many others from the film industry. A workshop too by canon is planned where it will showcase latest camera gadgets and equipments to students and enthusiasts.

The meeting was also briefed about the proposed participation of prominent national and international film personalities, jury members and members of the Steering Committee.

Details of live performances planned for the opening and closing ceremonies were also shared. The cultural programme will feature leading national and local artists, with performances designed to showcase the rich, diverse and vibrant cultural heritage of Jammu & Kashmir alongside contemporary artistic expression.

The meeting was further briefed about the publicity and branding strategy being undertaken through social media, national and local media platforms, as well as outdoor promotional campaigns, aimed at generating wider public engagement and building anticipation around the festival.

JKEDI conducts Startup Idea Challenge 2.0 Boot Camp at GCW Parade

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The Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) District Centre Jammu, in collaboration with the Skill Development Cell (SDC) and Institution's Innovation Council (IIC), Government College for Women (GCW) Parade, conducted a Startup Idea Challenge 2.0 Boot Camp on the Collage campus.

The boot camp was organised to promote entrepreneurship and innovation among students and aspiring entrepreneurs and to familiarise participants with the opportunities and support available under the J&K Startup Policy 2024–27. The programme also provided practical guidance on idea development, validation and effective pitching.

The programme was inaugurated by the College Principal Dr. Naveen Anand, who appreciated JKEDI for organising the initiative and encouraged students to identify real-world problems, develop innovative solutions and pursue their entrepreneurial ideas with confidence and perseverance.

In his welcome address, District Nodal Officer, JKEDI District Centre Jammu Rajesh Kotwal highlighted the importance of creating an enabling ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship and outlined JKEDI's efforts towards nurturing young entrepreneurial talent in Jammu and Kashmir.

A detailed session on the J&K Startup Policy 2024–27 was delivered by Rajesh Kotwal, covering key provisions, opportunities and support mechanisms available to aspiring entrepreneurs. Priya Sharma conducted a dedi-



cated session on startup idea pitching, explaining the essential components of an effective pitch and guiding participants on presenting their ideas before a jury in a clear and impactful manner.

The highlight of the programme was the Idea Pitching Session, wherein 17 students and aspiring entrepreneurs presented their startup ideas before the jury. Following assessment and evaluation, 10 promising ideas were shortlisted for the next level of Startup Idea Challenge 2.0.

The boot camp witnessed

enthusiastic participation from 130 students and aspiring and potential entrepreneurs, who gained exposure to entrepreneurship, startup opportunities, government support mechanisms, idea development and validation and pitching techniques.

The programme concluded with the shortlisting of promising startup ideas, reaffirming JKEDI's commitment to fostering innovation, nurturing entrepreneurial talent and strengthening the startup ecosystem in Jammu and Kashmir.

20-day jute bag making training course underway at Battal block Majalta

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To promote women self-reliance and eco-friendly practices, a twenty-day skill development training course on Jute Bag making is going on at Battal block Majalta under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme.

Sankalp Hub, Mission Shakti under Social Welfare Department, in collaboration with SBI RSETI, hosted the training programme.

During the 20-day course, the trainees were imparted hands-on training in jute bag cutting, stitching, designing, printing and quality packaging.



They were also sensitized to marketing, branding, bank linkages and various government schemes for women entrepreneurs.

During the programme, the HEW team delivered

expert lectures and practical demonstrations. The participants expressed gratitude to the department of social welfare and SBI RSETI for organizing the skill training and

showed keen interest in starting their own units.

Later, the Department of Social Welfare, Mission Shakti distributed small tool kits among all the trainees.

CM addresses valedictory function of Quaternary Healthcare & Research Summit

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 27: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today called for a balanced and integrated healthcare strategy that combines the development of advanced quaternary care with strengthening of primary and secondary healthcare services across Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing the valedictory function of the Quaternary Healthcare & Research Summit: 4th J&K Medical Conference-2026 at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC), the Chief Minister said that while scaling tertiary healthcare into the fourth tier would enhance the capacity to provide highly specialised treatment, it must be accompanied by focused efforts to strengthen healthcare delivery at the grassroots.

The three-day summit, held from August 25 to 27, was organised by the Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), Soura, under the aegis of NITI Aayog, Government of India, in strategic collaboration with AIIMS New Delhi and PGIMER Chandigarh, along with AIIMS Jammu and AIIMS Awantipora. The conference was themed "Scaling Tertiary into Quaternary Healthcare: A National Strategy for Advanced Care."

The Chief Minister said



providing quality healthcare to citizens was one of the fundamental obligations of the government, adding that the medical profession was characterised by continuous learning, innovation and advancement.

Referring to the concept of quaternary healthcare discussed during the summit, Omar Abdullah said the fourth tier could play an important role in decongesting tertiary care institutions. However, he cautioned that merely creating a higher tier would not adequately address the pressures confronting premier healthcare institutions unless the underlying gaps in the primary and secondary healthcare system were addressed.

"While there are certain aspects of quality care that can certainly be improved by upgrading SKIMS to a quaternary healthcare institution, the fact is that it will not resolve the pressures that SKIMS finds itself under. These pressures

are not because of a top-down vacuum; they are because of a weakness at the foundation level," he said.

The Chief Minister observed that institutions such as SKIMS were essentially referral hospitals meant to cater to patients requiring highly specialised treatment. However, gaps at the primary and secondary levels often resulted in premier tertiary institutions having to undertake procedures and treatments that should ideally be available at lower levels of healthcare.

He cited routine surgical procedures such as gallbladder and appendicitis surgeries as examples of the burden being placed on tertiary institutions because of deficiencies in the lower tiers of the healthcare system.

"This defeats the purpose of the entire three-tier model of tertiary, secondary and primary healthcare," he said, stressing that strengthening the foundation of the health-

care system was essential for the successful functioning of both tertiary and quaternary institutions.

Omar Abdullah welcomed the conference held under the aegis of NITI Aayog and described the participation of leading institutions such as AIIMS New Delhi, PGIMER Chandigarh and J&K's own institutions as an important opportunity for meaningful collaboration.

He expressed hope that the engagement would translate into sustained co-operation, knowledge-sharing and institutional partnerships, particularly as J&K works towards strengthening its advanced healthcare ecosystem in line with the vision of a developed India by 2047.

The Chief Minister said the government would have to remain equally focused on ensuring access to good-quality basic healthcare beyond the two major urban centres of Jammu and Srinagar.

"We need to ensure good quality healthcare in rural J&K. I am not saying that we can either target or expect to provide SKIMS quality care in rural J&K. That is not the aim. But what we need to be able to ensure is that we can provide good quality basic healthcare beyond the two twin capital cities of J&K," he said.

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Jammu Smart City Limited (JSCL) today signed an agreement with PMI Electro Mobility Solutions Private Limited for the addition of 25 electric buses to Jammu's existing electric public transport fleet under the Government of India's PM e-Bus Sewa Scheme.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar was also present on the occasion.

The agreement was signed by Chief Executive Officer, Jammu Smart City Limited Dr. Devansh Yadav on behalf of the Housing and Urban Development Department, Government of Jammu & Kashmir and COO – SPV Operations, PMI Electro Mobility Solutions Private Limited Chandra Kant Goyal.

The agreement marks an important milestone in scaling up Jammu's existing electric mobility ecosystem. Jammu Smart City Limited is already operating 100 electric buses in the city, and the addition of 25 more buses will further strengthen the public transport network and expand access to clean and sustainable mobility.

The initiative represents



a continued commitment to transforming Jammu into a cleaner, greener and future-ready city, where modern public transport keeps pace with the city's growth and evolving mobility needs.

As part of the programme, PMI Electro Mobility Solutions Private Limited made a detailed presentation before the Chairman, JSCL and Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar, showcasing its electric bus products and appraising the senior leadership of the key features and passenger-oriented aspects of its mobility solutions.

Dr. Devansh Yadav, CEO, JSCL, also briefed the Chairman, JSCL and Divisional Commissioner on the PM e-Bus Sewa project, the proposed fleet augmentation and the current status

of the associated infrastructure, including the development of the Bhagwati Nagar Depot.

The new electric buses will be operated from the Bhagwati Nagar Depot, which is currently being developed by Jammu Smart City Limited as a dedicated electric bus and mobility facility.

The Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir laid the foundation stone for the Bhagwati Nagar Depot earlier this month, marking the beginning of another important piece of mobility infrastructure for Jammu.

The development of the depot, together with the expansion of the electric bus fleet, reflects JSCL's integrated approach towards building the next generation of public transport infrastructure in Jammu. The

facility will provide the supporting ecosystem required for the growing electric bus network and will play an important role in strengthening public transportation in the city.

While speaking on the occasion, the Divisional Commissioner said that the expansion of electric public transport is an important step in supporting Jammu's rapid growth and improving the quality of urban mobility for its citizens. The addition of these buses, along with the development of the Bhagwati Nagar Depot, will strengthen the city's public transport infrastructure and contribute to a cleaner and more sustainable Jammu. We must continue to focus on mobility solutions that are efficient, accessible and aligned with the future needs of the city, he added.

Dr. Devansh Yadav said "Jammu has already embarked on its journey towards electric mobility. Today's agreement takes that journey further by adding 25 more electric buses to our existing fleet.

With the development of the Bhagwati Nagar Depot, we are also creating the infrastructure required to support the next generation of public transport in Jammu.