

CS reviews roadmap to unlock Jammu’s full tourism potential

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, AUG 31

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today reviewed a comprehensive, multi-faceted roadmap presented by the Department of Tourism for accelerating tourism development and upgrading visitor infrastructure across the Jammu Division, with emphasis on religious circuits, border tourism, adventure destinations and eco-tourism.

The meeting, attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Tourism; Additional Chief Secretary, Finance; Additional Chief Secretary, Public Works Department; Divisional Commissioner, Jammu; Director, Tourism, Jammu and other senior officers, deliberated on a range of projects aimed at enhancing the visitor experience while unlocking the tourism potential of destinations across the region.

While reviewing the proposed interventions, the Chief Secretary called for expanding the roadmap to cover other high-potential destinations across the Jammu Division, particularly emerging tourism hubs such as Baderwah, Sanasar, Seven Lakes and other suitable destinations.

He stressed the need to adopt an integrated approach that combines infrastructure development with destination-specific experiences, ensuring that the benefits of tourism reach a wider geographical area and create new opportunities for local communities.

The Chief Secretary also called for optimum utilization of tourism assets already created in Jammu city, including the Tawi Riverfront and Jambu Zoo, besides exploring additional activities and attractions that can draw visitors throughout the year.

He emphasized that Jammu should not remain primarily a transit point for pilgrims, but evolve into a vibrant, diverse and all-season tourism destination, offering religious, cultural, recreational, ad-



venture and nature-based experiences to visitors.

On this occasion the ACS Finance, Shailendra Kumar, stressed the need to leverage the enormous pilgrim footfall at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine to expand the tourism economy of the wider Jammu region.

He suggested setting an ambitious objective of encouraging at least 20 per cent of pilgrims visiting the Shrine to stay in and around Jammu for additional tourism experiences.

He further advised the Tourism Department to package the region's local art, culture, music and cuisine as distinctive attractions and develop experiences in and around the districts surrounding Katra to encourage longer visitor stays.

Earlier the ACS, Tourism Department, Dr Ashish Chandra Verma highlighted the status and proposed interventions under a comprehensive development plan encompassing major religious, adventure, border and eco-tourism destinations across the Jammu region.

With respect to Purnamandal-Utterbehni Pilgrim Circuit, he divulged that a Detailed Project Report (DPR) amounting to ₹45.88 crore has been submitted to the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, under the PRASHAD Scheme. The proposed interventions include extensive landscaping, bathing ghats along the Devika River, pathway illumination, public conveniences and comprehensive solid waste management systems to strengthen the pilgrim circuit.

Regarding the Shivkhori Shrine the ACS revealed that a project costing ₹5 crore has been approved

under the Tourism Work Plan 2026-27 for comprehensive upgradation of the shrine along with major works for other areas too.

Giving out the detailed presentation the Director Tourism, Jammu, Dr. Vikas Gupta shared the major components of the proposal including construction of overhead shelter sheds along the track from Ram Mandir to Bhawan at a cost of ₹340.58 lakh, completion of a cafeteria and pre-fabricated rooms near the helipad, track repairs, additional water points and a dedicated waiting hall.

About the Aithem Mega Adventure Hub & Food Village, he highlighted that the project is being developed in two phases over 215 kanals of land. Construction of the Phase-I access road is underway with Phase II proposed to be explored through a Public-Private Partnership model for developing 16 major components, including bungee jumping, sky-cycling, skywalks, ethnic food stalls and cabin accommodation.

To strengthen border tourism infrastructure, a project costing ₹19.52 crore for Suchetgarh Border Outpost has also been given the administrative approval recently. The proposed upgradation will increase seating capacity from 1,400 to 3,000 persons and introduce a VIP lounge, fine-dine restaurant, museum and projector room with tendering to be carried out soon.

Moreover the Baradari River Rafting Destination in Reasi is also being prioritised under this renewed strategy. The first Phase of the White Water River Rafting destination has achieved 45 per cent physical progress under

the CAPEX budget and is targeted for completion by November 2026.

The project will provide computerized ticketing, open-terrace cafés and enhanced safety infrastructure. A ₹18 crore DPR for Phase-II has also been submitted for docking, launching and passenger dispersal facilities.

In addition to these the Basohli-Ranjit Sagar Lake is also given more attention for development here. The destination has been selected under the Government of India's Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme, a DPR with a tentative cost of ₹96.07 crore was submitted on August 10, 2026.

The integrated development plan comprises 13 major components, including a dual zipline from Chanchloo Mata Mandir to the Fort Area, architectural illumination of Atal Setu Bridge, a waterfront recreation hub at the Tourism Reception Centre with floating boarding decks, a heritage pedestrian corridor and a hop-on hop-off heritage bus service.

The comprehensive roadmap marks a concerted effort to diversify Jammu's tourism offerings by integrating its religious heritage, natural landscapes, border attractions, adventure potential, cultural assets and modern recreational infrastructure.

The initiative is aimed at positioning Jammu as a premier all-season tourist and pilgrim destination, while generating greater local economic opportunities through increased visitor footfall, longer stays, stronger destination circuits and wider participation of local communities in the tourism economy.

KVK-Anantnag organises Capacity Building Workshop on Agrivoltaics for Farmers

ANANTNAG, AUGUST 31: Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK)-Anantnag, SKUAST-Kashmir, in collaboration with the Centre for Study of Science, Technology and Policy (CSTEP), Bengaluru, today organized a Capacity Building Workshop on Agrivoltaics for Farmers entitled “Integrating Agriculture with Solar Energy for a Climate-Resilient Future” at KVK-Anantnag.

The workshop aimed to sensitise farmers and other stakeholders about the emerging concept of agrivoltaics, which integrates agricultural production with solar photovoltaic energy generation on the same land. The programme highlighted the potential of agrivoltaic systems to enhance farm income, promote renewable energy adoption, improve resource-use efficiency and contribute towards climate-resilient agriculture.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Ishitiyaq A. Khan, Senior Scientist & Head, KVK-Anantnag, emphasized that agrivoltaics represents a promising opportunity for the farming community of Jammu & Kashmir, particularly in the context of rising energy requirements, climate variability and the



need for sustainable agricultural practices. He stressed the importance of generating location-specific technologies and demonstrating suitable agrivoltaic models under the agro-climatic conditions of the region.

Umer Majeed, Analyst, CSTEP, Bengaluru, shared technical insights on different agrivoltaic configurations, opportunities for integrating crops with solar energy systems, resource optimization, economic considerations and the potential role of farmers in the emerging renewable-energy-based agricultural economy.

The participants were also sensitized about the importance of selecting suitable crops and designing solar structures in a manner that maintains agricultural productivity while enabling efficient solar power generation.

During the technical deliberations, KVK scientists discussed various aspects of agrivoltaics, including site suitability, crop selection, solar-panel configurations, irrigation requirements, land-use efficiency, energy generation, investment requirements, economics and long-term sustainability.

The scientists emphasized that agrivoltaic sys-

tems need to be designed according to the specific farm conditions, cropping systems and energy requirements of individual farmers.

As a key outcome of the workshop, it was desired that interested farmers may prepare Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for establishment of suitable agrivoltaic systems on their respective farms, taking into consideration the available land, existing cropping pattern, irrigation facilities, power requirements, investment potential and technical feasibility.

KVK-Anantnag and the collaborating experts expressed their willingness to facilitate farmers in understanding the technical requirements and developing appropriate models based on site-specific conditions.

The workshop also provided an interactive platform for farmers, Krishi Shakis and other stakeholders to discuss their concerns, opportunities and practical experiences related to solar energy and agriculture.

The technical sessions focused on creating awareness about the potential benefits, challenges and future scope of agrivoltaics in the region.

Div Com Jammu hails KPs for thriving in diverse fields

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Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar today attended the ‘1st Community Cash Award Function’ organized by the Saraswathi Educational, Cultural Charitable Trust in association with Helpline Humanity, here at Abhinav Theatre.

The Divisional Commissioner was the Chief Guest, while the former Director General of Police Dr. Ashok Bhan attended the function as the Special Guest and Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (M), Arvind Karwani as the Guest of Honour.

Among others present on the occasion included former Secretary to the Governor of Tamil Nadu and Managing Trustee, Saraswathi Educational, Cultural Charitable Trust, Dr. C.K. Garyali; Board Member Helpline Humanity, Prof. Indu Kilam; Deputy Commissioner, Excise J&K, Sanjay Bhat and Founder, Helpline Humanity, M.K. Bhat, besides other prominent members of the community who were also present on the occasion in big numbers.

The programme was organized to recognize and honour individuals who have made significant contributions to society and brought distinction to the Kashmiri Pandit community in their respective fields.

Addressing the gathering,



the Divisional Commissioner highlighted the rich historical and cultural legacy of Kashmir, describing it as a land of knowledge, intellectual excellence, art and culture. He said that members of the Kashmiri community have made their mark in diverse fields across the country and the world.

He appreciated the initiative of the Saraswathi Educational, Cultural Charitable Trust in recognizing achievers from within the community, terming such recognition an important step towards encouraging excellence, preserving cultural identity and bringing the community together.

The Divisional Commissioner also acknowledged the difficult circumstances faced by the Kashmiri community following the events of the 1990s, stating that despite being displaced from their homeland, members

of the community continued to excel in different fields and made significant contributions in India and abroad.

He appreciated the efforts of the Trust and Helpline Humanity for bringing the community together and recognizing individuals who have made outstanding contributions. He said that such initiatives help reconnect the younger generation with their rich heritage and inspire them to contribute towards society and nation-building.

Later, the Chief Guest presented cash awards of different categories to the distinguished Kashmiri Pandit personalities.

Ravi Garyali Cash Award was presented to Dr. Agni Shekhar and Vikram Koul. The Indra Garyali Cash Award was presented to Sandhya Dhar and Dr. Adividvadani Kaul. The Ravi Misri Cash Award was con-

ferred to Pandit (Dr.) Abhay Rustum Sopori and Ankur Bagati. The awardees were felicitated in recognition of their achievements and valuable contributions in their respective fields.

The programme also featured cultural performances by students and cultural groups, showcasing the rich cultural heritage and artistic traditions of the community.

The Divisional Commissioner congratulated all the awardees and extended his best wishes to them for their continued success. He appreciated their valuable contributions to society and expressed hope that their achievements would continue to inspire the younger generation.

Earlier, Dr. C K Garyali highlighted the objectives of the program and Saraswathi Educational, Cultural Charitable Trust.

DC Ganderbal visits Food Outlet run by JKRLM Self Help Group at District Hospital

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As part of the ongoing initiatives for promotion of sustainable livelihoods and women-led entrepreneurship under the Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM), the Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal today visited “Umed Ka Zaika”, an SHG run Food Outlet established at District Hospital Ganderbal.

The food outlet, being managed and operated by members of a Self-Help Group (SHG), is providing hygienic, nutritious and affordable food and refreshments to patients, attendants and hospital staff, while simultaneously creating a sustainable source of livelihood and income for the SHG members.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner interacted with the SHG members and enquired about the functioning of the food outlet, the facilities being provided and the challenges, if any, being faced by them. He appreciated the initiative and lauded the



SHG members for taking up the enterprise with commitment and dedication.

The Deputy Commissioner encouraged the members to further strengthen and expand their enterprise, maintain high standards of hygiene and quality, and ensure that food and refreshments are made available at reasonable and affordable rates to patients, attendants and hospital staff. He emphasized that such SHG led enterprises are an important component of livelihood promotion under JKRLM and have significant poten-

tial to empower women economically by providing them with sustainable income opportunities and greater financial independence.

The Deputy Commissioner further observed that successful SHG enterprises can serve as an inspiration for other members associated with NRLM to come forward, identify locally viable livelihood opportunities and take up sustainable entrepreneurial activities.

He stressed the importance of strengthening the SHG ecosystem in the district through continued

handholding, capacity building and facilitation of viable livelihood activities, so that more women can become economically self-reliant and contribute meaningfully to the socio-economic development of their families and communities.

The DC reiterated the commitment of the District Administration towards promoting women-led enterprises, encouraging self-employment and facilitating sustainable livelihood opportunities for SHG members across the district.

DLRC/DLCC meeting held at Kupwara

KUPWARA, AUGUST 31: Following the instructions of Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Kupwara, Gulzar Ahmad Khan today chaired the District Level Review Committee (DLRC) and District Level Consultative Committee (DCC) meeting to review the performance of banks and line departments under the District Credit Plan (DCP) for the 1st Quarter of current financial year 2026-27.

During the meeting, the ADC undertook a comprehensive review of bank-wise and sector-wise achievements under the District Credit Plan and assessed the progress made in the implementation of various government-sponsored credit-linked schemes. The overall performance of fi-

nancial institutions in extending credit to agriculture, allied activities, education, self-employment and other priority sectors was also reviewed.

On the occasion, Lead District Manager Kupwara, Manzoor Ahmad Sheikh informed the chair about the progress and achievements made by the banks during the first quarter.

He informed that banking sector in the district has demonstrated a strong credit led performance during Q1 of FY 2026-27. As on 30 June 2026, the banks collectively reported total deposits of Rs 4349.67cr, while total advances of Rs 5290.55cr with Credit-Deposit (CD) ratio of approximately 121.63%.

Under the District Credit Plan the banks have demonstrated encouraging

performance of Rs 313.98 Cr in the sector, reflecting continuous focus on the sector critical to the inclusive and sustainable development of the district. Meanwhile the non-priority sector showed performance of Rs 418.72 Cr, and the overall DCP performance stands at Rs 732.70 Cr against the annual target of Rs 2272.18 Cr.

Expressing concern over the unsatisfactory performance of some banks in achieving their District Credit Plan targets, the Additional Deputy Commissioner instructed them to improve credit flow and accord greater priority to lending under key sectors like agriculture, education and housing. He emphasized that enhanced priority sector lending is essential for promoting

entrepreneurship, employment generation and overall socio-economic development in the district.

Emphasizing the importance of inclusive and sustainable economic growth, the Chair stressed the need for creating mass awareness about government welfare and credit-linked schemes so that eligible beneficiaries can avail themselves of institutional financial support. He directed banks and line departments to strengthen public outreach through awareness camps and coordinated field-level initiatives.

The ADC laid special emphasis on education loans and directed banks to proactively facilitate eligible students in accessing financial assistance for higher education.