

LG Manoj Sinha Felicitates J&K Bank for Support to Shri Amarnathji Yatra 2026

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, AUG 31

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today felicitated J&K Bank, represented by its MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee, in recognition of the Bank's significant support towards the successful conduct of Shri Amarnathji Yatra 2026.

The felicitation took place during a Post-Yatra Felicitation Event chaired by the Lieutenant Governor at Lok Bhawan Auditorium, Srinagar.

Expressing gratitude, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee thanked the Lieutenant Governor and Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board for the recognition and dedicated the honour to the Bank's staff for their commitment and ef-



orts during the pilgrimage.

He said that as the premier financial institution of Jammu and Kashmir, J&K Bank remains committed to facilitating pilgrim registration through its designated branches across the country, besides providing convenient and uninterrupted banking services during the pilgrimage period.

The recognition reflects the Bank's continued commitment towards supporting the smooth and successful conduct of the annual Shri Amarnathji Yatra and facilitating pilgrims through accessible financial services.

Div Com Kashmir urges fruit growers to leverage railway freight services for economical transportation

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In a significant move aimed at facilitating the economical and hassle-free transportation of horticulture produce, particularly apples, to various domestic mandis and international destinations, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg today urged fruit growers, traders and other stakeholders to make greater use of railway goods and freight services.

The Divisional Commissioner was chairing a meeting convened to review the utilization of railway freight services for the transportation of horticulture produce from Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by IGP Traffic, Kashmir, M. Soleman Choudhary; Deputy Commissioners, Director Horticulture Planning & Marketing, Ghulam Jeelani Zargar; officers of Northern Railway, Industries & Commerce and Information Departments, besides representatives of various fruit associations.

During the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner directed all Deputy Commissioners and the Director Horticulture Planning & Marketing to hold consultations with fruit growers, traders, associations and aggregators to encour-



age wider and more economical utilization of railway freight services.

He stressed that railway transportation should be increasingly utilized for long-distance destinations, as it can provide a cost-effective and efficient alternative for transporting large quantities of horticulture produce. He also directed the Director Horticulture Planning & Marketing to ensure effective coordination among fruit growers, traders, associations and railway authorities for the smooth movement of produce.

The Div Com laid special emphasis on maximizing transportation of horticulture produce from Jablipora Mandi Anantnag. He further directed all Deputy Commissioners to explore and facilitate the transportation of a certain percentage of fruit consignments through railway services from their respective districts.

Discussing the Roll-on/Roll-off (Ro-Ro) service, the Divisional Commissioner directed Northern Railway officials to share an informational video with fruit associations highlighting the prescribed technical parameters for trucks, including permissible load height and other requirements, to facilitate its effective utilization.

With regard to transportation of fruit by road, both Divisional Commis-

sioner Kashmir and IGP Traffic Kashmir directed fruit associations to undertake extensive sensitization of truck drivers regarding adherence to the permissible load limits on the National Highway.

They emphasized that overloading not only violates prescribed norms but also poses serious risks to road safety and traffic management. The officers cautioned that strict punitive action would be taken against vehicles found violating the prescribed load limits.

Representatives of various fruit associations put forth their suggestions and sought long-term solutions for strengthening the transportation infrastructure for the horticulture sector, including improved connectivity of fruit mandis with the railway network.

The representatives also expressed appreciation to the administration for its continued support and facilitation of the fruit industry.

Earlier, the Director Horticulture Planning & Marketing made a detailed presentation on apple production in Kashmir, existing transportation arrangements and the economic advantages of utilizing railway goods and freight services for the movement of horticulture produce.

Director AYUSH reviews AYUSH healthcare facilities, Services in Jammu, Samba

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Director AYUSH J&K Dr. Ajay Kumar Tikoo today undertook a comprehensive review of AYUSH healthcare services and infrastructure in Jammu and Samba districts, with a focus on strengthening service delivery, expediting the operationalization of newly established healthcare facilities and ensuring effective implementation of AYUSH programmes at the grassroots level.

As part of the visit, the Director AYUSH inspected the 10-bedded Integrated AYUSH Hospital at Gari Garh-Jammu, where he interacted with the hospital staff and obtained detailed feedback regarding the functioning of the facility and issues affecting service delivery. He assured the staff that the issues brought to his notice would be addressed on priority and directed them to adopt a systematic and result-oriented approach to ensure that IPD services are made functional at the earliest, thereby enhancing the availability and scope of AYUSH healthcare services in the area.

Later, Dr. Tikoo visited the under-construction 50-



bedded Integrated AYUSH Hospital at Nonath, Ghagwal-Samba, where he reviewed the pace and quality of the ongoing construction work. He emphasised strict adherence to prescribed standards and directed the concerned officers to ensure the early completion of the project and timely operationalization of hospital services.

Later, the Director held a meeting to review the functioning of the AYUSH sector in District Samba, with emphasis on programme implementation, service delivery, institutional performance and operational challenges. The review commenced with a briefing by Dr. Renu Dass, supported by a detailed presentation highlighting the status of AYUSH services, key achievements, progress under various programmes and issues requiring attention.

Dr. Tikoo directed the concerned officers to ensure effective and timely implementation of all AYUSH health programmes, strengthen service delivery mechanisms and introduce innovative and outcome-oriented measures to enhance patient footfall and public outreach.

The Director further stressed the need for the implementation of AHMIS across the district to strengthen digital health records, improve monitoring mechanisms and enhance the overall management of AYUSH healthcare services.

The Director was accompanied by Assistant Director Ayurveda Dr. Rakesh Raina; Dr. Renu Dass and officials from the Planning Section and National AYUSH Mission (NAM).

DC Samba reviews anti-drug measures at NCORD meeting

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Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan today chaired a meeting of the District-Level Narcotics Coordination Centre (NCORD) Committee to take stock of drug and narcotic control measures in the district.

The meeting focused on reviewing the Action Taken Report on the decisions of the previous NCORD meeting and assessing the progress made by the stakeholder departments in implementing anti-drug measures.

Stressing de-addiction and rehabilitation measures, the DC stressed the need to strengthen the functioning of the Addiction Treatment Facility (ATF) at District Hospital. She directed the concerned authorities to ensure that counselling, treatment and rehabilitation services remain accessible to individuals affected by substance abuse.

The DC also emphasized strengthening preventive measures in educational institutions. She called for capacity-building initiatives for teachers to enable them to identify early signs of vulnerability among students, provide appropriate guidance and impart awareness about the adverse impact of drug abuse.

Underscoring the importance of community involvement, the Deputy Commissioner directed the departments to expand IEC activities, awareness drives and outreach programmes across the district. She further called for greater youth engagement through sports, orientation programmes and other constructive activities aimed at promoting healthy and positive lifestyles.

Senior officers and representatives from the health, education, enforcement and other concerned



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J&K eyes Rs 1,000-1,200 cr under Khelo India 2026-31 programme

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Jammu and Kashmir has drawn up an ambitious five-year roadmap to maximise Central assistance under the Khelo India programme, with the Union Territory aspiring to secure around ₹1,000-1,200 Cr during 2026-31 for strengthening sports infrastructure, nurturing talent and building a comprehensive sports ecosystem across the UT.

The roadmap was presented today before the UT Level Coordination Committee (UTLCC) in its first meeting chaired by Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, who called for a focused, district-driven approach to leverage the national programme for creating high-quality sports infrastructure and facilities across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by ACS, PWD; Commissioner Secretary, Youth Services & Sports Department; Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare; Commissioner Secretary, Education; DG, Youth Services & Sports; DG, Budget; representatives of Planning, Rural Development Department and other concerned departments. Deputy Commissioners participated through video conferencing

from their respective offices.

Chairing the meeting, the Chief Secretary directed all Deputy Commissioners to leverage the rechristened Khelo India 2026-31 scheme to create the best possible sports infrastructure and facilities in their respective districts, while ensuring optimal utilisation of existing assets. He called for prompt preparation of comprehensive district sports plans and directed the districts to submit the requisite plans by September 15, 2026.

Dulloo observed that Jammu and Kashmir has consistently demonstrated remarkable sporting talent and stressed the need to provide young athletes with the right platforms, facilities, coaching and exposure to hone their abilities and compete at the highest levels.

He called upon the departments and districts to aspire for maximum admissible funding under the Khelo India programme, with particular emphasis on developing Centres of Excellence and strengthening the sports ecosystem from the grassroots to the elite level.

Presenting the roadmap, Commissioner Secretary, Youth Services & Sports, Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, outlined J&K's strategy to tap the various



funding windows under the Khelo India programme and build a coordinated sports development architecture for the next five years.

He reiterated that the roadmap seeks to address the sporting requirements of athletes from grassroots participation in schools to preparation of elite sportspersons capable of contributing to India's medal tally at the Olympic and international level.

He urged Deputy Commissioners and concerned departments to be proactive and prompt in preparing district-level plans so that Jammu and Kashmir can make optimal use of the national funding opportunities available under the programme.

Dwtailing it out further, he added that the national Khelo India programme carries a total financial outlay of ₹28,489 Cr for 2026-31, including administrative expenses, with the annual allocation rising progressively from ₹3,173 Cr in 2026-27 to ₹9,198 Cr in 2030-31. The roadmap prepared by the Youth Services & Sports Department seeks to position J&K to secure the maximum admissible share from these national funding windows.

The meeting was apprised that the national outlay is structured across key intervention areas covering the entire sports development continuum. The largest window is Khelo India Training Facilities, with an allocation of ₹10,586 Cr, accounting for 37.2 per cent of the total outlay.

This is followed by Strengthening Strategic Sports Assets with ₹4,963 Cr, Sports Infrastructure for Medal Strategy with ₹4,866 Cr, Talent Identification and Development with ₹2,407 Cr, and Sports Competitions and Leagues with ₹2,358 Cr.

Other important windows include State Action Plan for Sports Infrastructure Development (Central Share) with ₹1,400 Cr, Coach and Support Staff Development with ₹748 Cr, Sports Technology with ₹302 Cr, and the Fit India Movement with ₹300 Cr. An additional ₹559 Cr has been earmarked for administrative expenses under this programme.

The funding architecture, comprising both recurring and non-recurring components, provides opportunities ranging

from creation and upgradation of sports infrastructure and training facilities to talent identification, competitions, coaching, technology and promotion of fitness.

A major thrust of the new roadmap is on grassroots talent identification and athlete development, with J&K targeting a ten-fold increase in the number of supported athletes.

The strategy envisages deployment of Khel SETU as an integrated platform for mapping and identifying sporting talent across schools and universities, while addressing the existing gap in Physical Education Teachers in government schools by enhancing their capacity through trainings and other courses.

The roadmap also proposes a common four-level coaching framework, systematic skilling of local trainers, community coaches and PETs through E-Khel Paathshala, and focused development of women coaches at local, national and international levels.

Under the proposed Khelo India Training Facilities framework, the roadmap envisages development of Olympic Training Centres at the elite level, upgradation of existing facilities into National Centres of Excel-

lence, and greater participation of accredited private academies through the PPP mode.

It also proposes expansion of Khelo India Centres, introduction of Khelo India Utkarsha Vidyalayas and Feeder Schools, and strengthening of specialised training facilities to create a structured pathway from grassroots participation to elite performance.

Three major technology interventions have been identified in collaboration with local premier technical institutions. These include an AI-based Sports Talent Identification and Athlete Performance Analytics Platform and an AI-enabled Sports Infrastructure and Youth Services Delivery Management System through NIT Srinagar, besides a Digital Youth Health Screening and Preventive Care System through IIT Jammu.

The roadmap envisages a co-ordinated transformation of Jammu and Kashmir's sports landscape by combining existing infrastructure, new investments, grassroots talent identification, professional coaching, sports science and technology, with the larger objective of creating a sustainable pipeline of athletes capable of representing the UT and the country at national and international sporting arenas.