

Education Minister congratulates people on J&K being declared fully literate UT

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
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Minister for School Education, Higher Education, Health & Medical Education and Social Welfare, Sakeena Masood Itoo, has congratulated the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the Union Territory being declared a fully literate UT under ULLAS–Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram.

In her message on Teachers' Day celebrated at SKICC Srinagar, the Minister said the declaration of J&K as Fully Literate UT, with over 95 per cent literacy, treated as 100 per cent as per Government of India norms, is a moment of immense pride. She said J&K has emerged as the biggest State/UT till date to achieve this milestone and has secured 10th position nationally.

The Minister said, "This achievement is not merely a number or a statistic; it represents thousands of lives transformed through the power of education.



ULLAS has demonstrated that when government commitment is strengthened by community participation, every citizen can be brought within the fold of learning, dignity and empowerment."

Sakeena Itoo lauded the dedicated efforts of teachers, volunteers, learners, field functionaries, educational institutions and district administrations, whose collective spirit of Jan Bhagidari made this possible.

She said from 2023 to 2026, the School Education Department identified 7.58 lakh non-literates

through door-to-door surveys and 5.53 lakh learners qualified the FLNAT, including 3,16,883 in 2025-26 alone.

The Minister reiterated that the government remains committed to ensure that the gains of literacy translate into lifelong learning, digital literacy, vocational skills and financial awareness for sustainable empowerment.

On the occasion, the Minister also inaugurated major educational initiatives under Samagra Shiksha including 460 civil works worth Rs. 38 crore for strengthening school

infrastructure, 2,403 Vocational Labs in High and Higher Secondary Schools to equip students with employable skills and Vidya Samiksha Kendra (VSK), Srinagar for real-time, data-driven monitoring of learning outcomes in line with NEP-2020.

The event was attended by Director Samagra Shiksha J&K Bhawani Rakwal, Director School Education Jammu Naseem Javid Choudhary, Director School Education Kashmir Naseer Ahmad Wani, senior officers of the Department and a large gathering of teachers and students.

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Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, today chaired a meeting to review various issues and bottlenecks affecting the execution of works under River Jhelum National Waterway-49 aimed at facilitating water transport.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, RTO Kashmir, Chief Engineers of KPDC, KPCL and I&FC, SE UEED, besides officers from the Departments of Tourism, R&B, Traffic, Forest and ULB.

During the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner took a detailed review of the issues associated with the project, including removal of trees and widening of the road at Gund Parang, construction of Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) for water treatment,



shifting of KPDC and KPCL utilities, and relocation of houseboats.

Taking note of the issues raised by the concerned departments, the Divisional Commissioner directed all stakeholders to incorporate

the required construction and utility-shifting works in their respective departmental plans to ensure co-ordinated and timely execution.

He further directed officials of the Inland Water-

ways Authority of India (IWAI) to conduct a comprehensive joint survey of the proposed works at Gund Parang in coordination with the concerned officers and identify the nature of land required for execution of the project.

The IWAI officials were also directed to undertake a detailed assessment of existing utilities at the site, identify modalities of their exact locations and coordinate with the concerned departments for timely shifting wherever required.

The Divisional Commissioner stressed the need for close inter-departmental coordination and directed IWAI officials to adhere strictly to prescribed timelines for resolution of issues. He also called for regular coordination with field teams to ensure that identified bottlenecks are addressed promptly and the project progresses as per schedule.

SWD Shopain organises Awareness Programme to Empower Senior Citizens

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Continuing its efforts towards building an inclusive and compassionate society, Social Welfare Department (SWD) Shopain, today organised a Sensitization and Awareness Programme at Wachi, Zainapora, focusing on the welfare and empowerment of senior citizens and constructive engagement of youth.

The programme was organised under Atal VAYO Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY), the National Action Plan for Senior Citizens, with the objective of creating awareness among senior citizens and youth about various welfare initiatives, legal provisions and support mechanisms available for the elderly.

The programme also served as a platform for intergenerational dialogue, with emphasis on strengthening family and community bonds, recognising the valuable experience and wisdom of senior citizens and encouraging youth to contribute towards their care and well-being.

A large number of senior citizens from Wachi and adjoining areas participated enthusiastically in the programme and appreciated the proactive outreach of the Department. Youth volunteers from NSS/NSKY also played an important role, demonstrating their commitment to social service and community support.

The Tehsil Social Welfare Officer, Shopain, provided detailed information



about the scheme and its various components and addressed queries raised by the participants.

Officials from Lead Bank also sensitised the participants about various social security schemes, along with digital and financial literacy.

The Department reiterated its commitment to ensuring the dignity, healthcare, welfare and social security of senior citizens and taking such initiatives to reach beneficiaries across every corner of district Shopain.

BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 06: Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, today conducted an extensive visit to the far-flung Upper Kudara and adjoining areas to inspect the progress of various ongoing developmental projects.

The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by officers and engineers of the concerned departments during the visit.

During the inspection, the Executive Engineer, PMGSY, apprised the DC of the progress of two major road projects being executed in the area.

It was informed that, the first project, Renewal Coat/Macadamization of the road from Chuntimulla to Kudara, being executed under Package No. JK03-125, has a total length of 7.50 km and an estimated cost of Rs. 264.16 lakh. The Executive Engineer informed that approximately 3.5 km of BT (Renewal Coat) has been executed so far, while the remaining work is targeted for completion within the next few weeks.

The second project, Construction and Maintenance of road from L022 (Link Road) Kudara to Kudara Bala under Waste Plastic Technology, being executed under Package No. JK15-4003, has a total length of 2.90 km and has been taken up under



PMGSY-IV, Batch-I (2025-26) at an estimated cost of Rs. 590 lakh. The Executive Engineer informed that approximately 500 metres of earthwork has been completed, while protection works are presently in progress.

Taking stock of the progress, the DC directed the concerned executing agencies to accelerate the pace of work while ensuring adherence to prescribed quality standards and technical specifications. She stressed that the works should be completed within the stipulated timelines, keeping in view the difficulties faced by the residents of these far-flung areas. She also directed the officers to maintain close field-level monitoring and ensure timely resolution of any bottlenecks affecting

execution.

The DC further instructed the concerned departments and executing agencies to exercise due care and caution while undertaking construction and road works in residential areas and ensure that households and private properties are not unnecessarily affected. She directed that all necessary measures be taken to prevent any damage or loss to residential structures, boundary walls, utilities or other private property during execution, and that any unavoidable impact be dealt with strictly as per the applicable rules and procedures.

The DC subsequently inspected the ongoing Kudara Bridge project being executed by the R&B Department. The Executive Engineer, R&B, informed

that the bridge is a 1x20 metre span truss girder bridge, sanctioned under NABARD RIDF-XXVIII at an estimated cost of Rs. 2.69 crore. The abutment foundation works are presently in progress, and the project is targeted for completion by March 2027.

The DC directed the R&B Department to ensure regular monitoring of the bridge construction and adherence to the approved timeline, besides maintaining strict quality control at every stage of execution. She also stressed that all requisite clearances, coordination and technical requirements be addressed proactively to avoid any delay in completion.

Later, the DC visited Aragam village to inspect the near-completion Bridge project.

Bhader Singh Lecturer in Economics, Conferred with Best Teacher Award at SKICC Srinagar

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Bhader Singh, Lecturer in Economics at Government Higher Secondary School Dablehar, R.S. Pura, Jammu, was conferred with the prestigious Best Teacher Award at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC), Srinagar, by the Hon'ble Education Minister of Jammu & Kashmir on the occasion of Teachers' Day. The award recognises his sustained contribution to innovative and experiential teaching, student mentoring, educational leadership, community outreach and promotion of innovation and sustainability in school education.

The honour adds another significant distinction to Bhader Singh's professional journey. He was earlier awarded the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Commendation Card for his distinguished services and commitment to society. His latest recognition reflects his continued efforts to take education beyond conventional classroom teaching and to create learning experiences that are engaging, activity-based and connected with real-life situations.

As a teacher of Economics, Bhader Singh has consistently encouraged students to learn through participation, experimentation and practical engage-

ment. His approach places emphasis on developing curiosity, creativity, confidence and problem-solving abilities among students while motivating them to participate in innovation activities, competitions, awareness campaigns and national-level educational initiatives.

As a Nodal Officer for several educational and school-development initiatives, Bhader Singh has played an important role in motivating students and mobilising the school community. His efforts, along with the collective contribution of the teaching staff, students, parents and school administration, have contributed to Government Higher Secondary School Dablehar earning recognition at various prestigious platforms.

Government Higher Secondary School Dablehar emerged as the only school from the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir to receive national-level recognition under the Swachh Evam Harit Vidyalaya/Swachh Harit Vidyalaya initiative, securing an impressive All India Rank of 58 after fulfilling the prescribed parameters. The school also received national-level recognition under the Tobacco-Free Educational Institutions Challenge, emerging as the only school from Jammu & Kashmir UT to achieve the distinction. Under the Viksit Bharat Buildathon, student innovations and



prototypes from the school were submitted for national evaluation in the District Category, providing students with an opportunity to showcase their ideas at a national platform. The school also received recognition through the National Green School Award for its environmental and sustainability-oriented initiatives.

Another notable achievement came through the Young Creator League, under which students mentored through the initiative were selected for the National Prototype Exhibition at Plaksha University, Mohali, Punjab.

The opportunity enabled young innovators from the school to present their ideas on a wider platform and interact with a broader innovation ecosystem.

Bhader Singh's contribution extends well beyond academic instruction. His educational approach includes student mentoring, parent engagement, community outreach, environmental awareness, cleanliness and sustainability initiatives, tobacco-free education, drug-abuse prevention, innovation and entrepreneurship activities, attendance and enrolment drives and experiential learning. Through these

initiatives, he has sought to create a more inclusive, vibrant and participatory learning environment in which students are encouraged not merely to study but also to think, create and contribute.

The recognition is therefore being viewed as more than an individual achievement. It also reflects the collective efforts of the students, teachers, parents, school administration and the wider education community associated with Government Higher Secondary School Dablehar. The school's growing presence on State, UT and national platforms demonstrates the impact that committed teachers and motivated students can create when educational initiatives are translated into meaningful participation at the grassroots level.

Expressing gratitude on receiving the award, Bhader Singh said, "I am deeply humbled and grateful to receive the prestigious Best Teacher Award. I consider this recognition not merely my personal achievement, but a reflection of the collective efforts of my students, colleagues, parents, education department and everyone who has supported me throughout this journey."

He expressed heartfelt gratitude to his parents, family members, students, colleagues, well-wishers and the School Education Department for

their constant encouragement, trust and support. He said that his students remain a continuous source of inspiration and added that their enthusiasm, creativity and determination motivate him to keep exploring innovative approaches to teaching and learning. Reflecting on his earlier COAS Commendation Card and the Best Teacher Award, Bhader Singh said that both honours were a source of great pride but also carried a greater sense of responsibility. He reaffirmed his commitment to serving education with sincerity and dedication, creating engaging classrooms, nurturing innovation among students and ensuring that every student gets an opportunity to discover and realise his or her potential.

Bhader Singh dedicated the honour to his parents, family, students, colleagues, well-wishers and the entire education community, reaffirming his resolve to continue working for the holistic development of students and strengthening the quality of school education in Jammu & Kashmir.

The achievement has brought further recognition to Government Higher Secondary School Dablehar, R.S. Pura, highlighting its continuing efforts towards innovation, sustainability, experiential learning, student participation and excellence in school education.