

LG attended Valedictory Session of National Seminar on Environment, Climate and Sustainability at KU

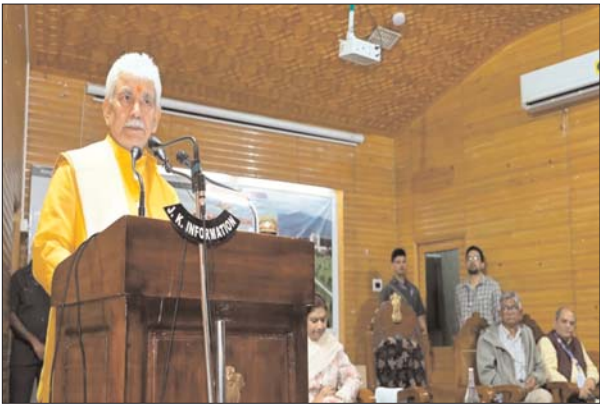
HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, SEP 17

The Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha today attended the Valedictory Session of National Seminar on “Environment, Climate and Sustainability: Science, Policy and Pathways”, held at Kashmir University. The three-day conference brought together ecologists, hydrologists, soil experts, policy makers, and researchers from across the country to deliberate on pressing environmental challenges.

In his address, the Lieutenant Governor lauded the national-level seminar for creating a shared language among diverse disciplines to collectively address the climate crisis. He underscored that climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution are not isolated phenomena but interconnected dimensions of the triple planetary crisis. Recognizing the finite and interlinked nature of Earth's systems, he emphasised the need for holistic approaches that transcend departmental silos in governance.

“Although government machinery has separate departments. One department formulates water policy, another forest policy, and yet another climate policy. But, I strongly believe such national seminars remind us that there is a deep connection among all these, and acknowledging it is the first step toward solving these problems,” he said.

Highlighting the role of technology, the Lieutenant Governor described



Geospatial Intelligence, including GIS, remote sensing, UAVs, as the lifeline connecting science and governance. He stressed that anticipatory governance must replace reactive responses, enabling real-time decisions through tools such as Climate Sensitivity Maps and Spatial Decision Support Systems.

“We must create systems that do not merely record what has already happened to a glacier, forest, or river valley, but can also tell us with full confidence what is going to happen next. And we must be able to deliver that information to those who today need to decide what should be built, where it should be built, and what should be conserved. I believe the role of scientists and environment experts is no longer just to describe change. They must become co-creators of early warning systems. The time when we waited five years for a report on a subject is gone. Now we must make real-time decisions,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor made a strong appeal to bridge the gap between science and policy. He said while data and models are abundant, institutional

mechanisms to integrate scientific conclusions into district development plans, water distribution, and disaster management remain inadequate. He called for trust, collaboration, and shared language between scientists and policymakers to ensure timely and effective action.

“If we can bridge the distance between what science knows and what policy delivers in line with that knowledge, then even the biggest challenges related to climate change can be addressed. Today, we do not lack data on climate change. With the help of Artificial Intelligence, we also do not lack tools and models. What we lack is the institutional system and the institutional arrangements that can take conclusions emerging from a lab or satellite record and deliver them in time to a district's development plan,” he said. The Lieutenant Governor reminded the researchers and policymakers that development must be accompanied by responsibility, conservation, and duty. He urged young experts to think beyond disciplinary boundaries and policymakers to listen to the language of science.

“Development must

mean establishing a relationship with the Earth in which use is accompanied by responsibility, progress by conservation, and rights by duties. Another important takeaway you will carry from this conference is that technological skills alone are not enough. We must prepare young researchers and scientists who can think beyond disciplinary boundaries, and we need policy makers who can listen to the language of science,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

Looking ahead to the vision of a Developed India by 2047, the Lieutenant Governor stressed that development must be climate-resilient and inclusive. He expressed hope that the dialogue initiated during the national seminar would continue beyond its conclusion, permeating laboratories, universities, districts, and policies, ultimately benefiting the people. He reaffirmed India's commitment to sustainable development and climate resilience through science-policy integration, technological innovation, and cultural sensitivity.

Prof. Nilofer Khan, Vice Chancellor, University of Kashmir; Prof. Talat Ahmad, former Vice Chancellor, University of Kashmir; Dr. Rasik Ravindra, former Director, National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR); Prof. Shariefuddin Pirzada, Dean Academic Affairs, University of Kashmir; experts, policy makers, and researchers from across the country; senior officials, faculty and students attended the valedictory session.

DC Udhampur reviews progress of NABARD-RIDF projects

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Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Minga Sherpa today chaired a review meeting with officers of various line departments to assess the progress of projects being executed in the district under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund NABARD.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer Uttam Singh, DDM NABARD Dr. Sidharth and officers from the concerned line departments.

At the outset, DDM NABARD Dr. Sidharth delivered a detailed PowerPoint presentation, highlighting the physical and financial progress of ongoing



ing RIDF projects being implemented across different sectors in the district.

While reviewing the progress of the projects, the DC directed the executing agencies to ensure timely completion of all works within the timelines prescribed by NABARD.

He stressed the need to expedite slow-moving projects, address bottlenecks and take all necessary measures to achieve the desired targets within the stipulated timelines. The DC further directed the executing

agencies to maintain close coordination with the concerned line departments, keep them regularly updated on the status of the projects and ensure effective monitoring at all levels for their smooth, timely and quality execution.

ADC reviews arrangements at ongoing Mela Patt

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Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Bhaderwah Sunil Kumar Bhutyal today visited Khakhal Mohalla and adjoining areas to review the arrangements for the ongoing three day Mela Patt which started on September 16.

During the visit, the ADC took stock of various arrangements put in place for the smooth and peaceful conduct of the mela. He reviewed arrangements related to security, repair and maintenance of lanes, drains and municipal paths, uninterrupted power and water supply,



medical facilities and ambulance services, sanitation and cleanliness, traffic management and fire and emergency prepared-

ness. Executive Engineer, PWD (R&B); SDPO; Assistant Engineer, PDD; BMO; Naib Tehsildars; traffic of-

ficials and representatives of Fire & Emergency Services and PHE department were present on the occasion.

Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Mela organised in Ganderbal

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Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore, today participated in the Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Mela (PMNAM) organised at the Multipurpose Hall, Boys Higher Secondary School, Ganderbal, with the objective of creating greater awareness among youth about apprenticeship opportunities and connecting them with participating establishments.

Addressing the students, pass-outs and other participants, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted the importance of apprenticeship in providing practical exposure, industry-oriented skills and valuable work experience.

He called upon the youth to actively participate in the programme and make full use of the opportunities available under the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS).

The DC emphasised that apprenticeship provides an important platform for young people to bridge the gap between formal education and employment by



gaining hands-on experience in relevant trades and sectors.

He urged eligible students and pass-outs to register on the NAPS portal, explore available apprenticeship opportunities and take advantage of the scheme for enhancing their employability.

The Deputy Commissioner also called upon participating establishments, departments, PSUs, corporations and other organisations to make greater use of the apprenticeship framework by registering their

establishments and offering suitable opportunities to local youth in accordance with their workforce requirements.

He stressed the need for close coordination between educational institutions, government departments, and industries to ensure wider outreach and effective implementation of the scheme in the district.

The DC further directed the concerned officers to continue awareness and facilitation efforts so that maximum eligible youth

are registered and connected with suitable apprenticeship opportunities. He emphasised that sustained efforts under NAPS can provide local youth with industry relevant skills and practical experience, thereby strengthening their preparedness for employment and future career opportunities.

The programme witnessed participation of students, pass outs, educational institutions, government departments and representatives of participating establishments.

DG Rural Sanitation launches UT-wide Swachhata HiSeva-2026 Campaign

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Director General Rural Sanitation, J&K, Anoo Malhotra today launched the UT-wide Swachhata Hi Seva (SHS) 2026 campaign at Block Khonmoh, Srinagar, calling for collective efforts to transform cleanliness from a time-bound campaign into a sustained habit and an integral part of everyday life.

Addressing students, officials and community members at the launch programme, the DG Rural Sanitation said the objective of Swachhata Hi Seva is to inculcate responsible behaviour and build a sustained people's movement towards cleanliness and environmental protection.

She stressed that Swachhata Hi Seva should not have a defined beginning or end, but must become part of people's daily habits and behaviour.

She also highlighted the importance of four-stream waste segregation at source, urging students and schools to take the message of responsible waste management to their homes and communities.

The DG encouraged



schools to organise more awareness and creative programmes on cleanliness and urged students to actively participate in the campaign and share their initiatives to inspire wider community participation.

The launch programme featured vibrant student-led performances, with participating schools presenting creative skits on different aspects of Swachhata. Sheikh Ali Mission School, Khonmoh, presented a skit on the Swachhata Hi Seva theme, while Higher Secondary School, Khonmoh, showcased a creative performance highlighting the importance of cleanliness.

Samaa Public School, Balhama, and Radiant Model School, Khonmoh, also presented skits centred on cleanliness and environmental responsibility.

Northland Public School performed a skit highlighting the importance of waste segregation and maintaining a clean environment.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Director Rural Sanitation, Kashmir, Shabir Ahmad Hakak, said Swachhata Hi Seva represents a collective movement for cleanliness and responsible citizenship.

He said cleanliness holds an important place across faiths and traditions and emphasised that the campaign must evolve into a permanent habit.

He explained the major pillars of SHS 2026, including identification and cleaning of Cleanliness Target Units (CTUs), cleanliness of public places, and greater involvement of youth and students. He called upon students to become active participants

and ambassadors of the campaign.

Joint Director, RDD, Mantasha Binti Rashid, said the success of the campaign ultimately depends on how individuals contribute through simple actions in their daily lives. She encouraged students to practise home composting of vegetable and kitchen waste, explaining that biodegradable waste can be converted into manure while reducing the amount of waste entering the environment.

She observed that nature functions through a circular system, while excessive use of plastic has disturbed this balance. She urged students to encourage their families to adopt composting and other sustainable practices, emphasising that such measures help fulfil collective responsibility towards nature.

ACP Srinagar, Bashir Ahmad Padder, said cleanliness campaigns can be transformed into a lifestyle through meaningful participation by individuals and communities. He expressed hope that the programme would inspire everyone to contribute towards cleaner and healthier surroundings.

EPFO Wage Ceiling Increased from Rs 15,000 to Rs 25,000; Workers Across Manufacturing, Education, Hospitality and Contractual Employment to Benefit

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The Union Cabinet has approved the enhancement of the wage ceiling for mandatory coverage under the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) from Rs 15,000 to Rs 25,000 per month.

The EPFO wage ceiling remained unchanged throughout the decade from 2004 to 2014, before being substantially enhanced to Rs.15,000 in September

2014. The present decision carries forward this approach by further raising the ceiling to Rs.25,000 to reflect the sustained wage growth, rising incomes and a continued expansion of formal employment over the intervening years.

At present, a fresh employee joining employment at a wage above Rs.15,000 per month is not automatically covered under the EPF framework and may remain outside mandatory provident fund, pension and associated insurance protection.

Raising the ceiling to Rs.25,000 will bring a substantial segment of employees in the Rs.15,000-Rs.25,000 wage band within the statutory social security framework.

EPFO today operates one of the world's largest social security systems, administering the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF), Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS) and Employees' Deposit Linked Insurance Scheme (EDLI). RO Jammu has around 1.60 lakhs contributing members across

about 3950 contributing establishments.

The decision is expected to bring large number of employees under mandatory EPFO coverage, thereby expanding access to social security benefits particularly in the districts of Jammu, Samba and Kathua. Employees covered under the EPF framework will have access to Provident Fund savings, pension benefits under the Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS) and insurance protection under the Employees' Deposit Linked

Insurance Scheme (EDLI), as per applicable provisions.

The enhancement of the wage ceiling is aimed at widening social security coverage and giving further impetus to formalisation of employment, worker retention and long-term retirement security.

In addition, Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PMVBRY) is being implemented to promote employment generation and formalisation of employment. PM-VBRY represents the Gov-

ernment's commitment to creating an enabling ecosystem for employment-led growth. With incentives for both first-time employees and employers, the scheme is designed to facilitate the creation of quality formal employment opportunities.

Part A employee gets benefits up to Rs. 15000/- paid in 2 instalments upon completion of one year and Part B beneficiary gets up to Rs. 3000/- per employee per month for 4 years in

manufacturing sector and 2 years in other sectors.

Under PMVBRY, more than 2,450 establishments have registered, while more than 19,500 new joiners under Part A and more than 29,500 re-joiners under Part B have registered under the scheme in the jurisdiction of RO Jammu

These measures further strengthen the social security framework and support the expansion of formal employment towards the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047.