

SKUAST-K holds 73rd BoM Meeting

Approves new Centres, Officer Appointment

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, SEP 18

Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) held its 73rd Meeting of the Board of Management (BoM) at the VC Secretariat, SKUAST-K, with Vice-Chancellor Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai chairing the meeting.

The meeting was attended by Prof. B.N. Tripathi, Vice-Chancellor, SKUAST-Jammu; Dr. Rajbir Singh, Deputy Director General, Agricultural Extension, ICAR; Dr. Cherukamulli Srinivasa Rao, Director, ICAR-IARI; representatives from Director General, Codes; Special Secretary, Agriculture Production; Special Secretary, Planning and Monitoring; Director Extension, SKUAST-K; Dean, Faculty of Forestry; officers of the university; and a progressive farmer, among others.

During the meeting, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai presented the University's progress report, outlining institutional developments and the roadmap for its next phase of transformation.

In his address, Prof. Ganai said SKUAST-K has achieved the goal set in 2022 of moving from 'Local to National' and is now repositioning its goalpost from 'National to Global'. He said the next phase of transformation would focus on six key pillars: student diversity, faculty diversity, curriculum transformation, research and innovation, world-class infrastructure, and financial sustainability.

Outlining the University's 2030 roadmap, he identified targets including raising international student enrolment to 5 percent and the share of students from other States and Union Territories to 35 percent. He also set targets of

expanding the University's intellectual property rights (IPR) portfolio to over 250, taking its H-index to 250-plus, and attracting more than 50 faculty members from outside the Union Territory, including Professors of Practice and Adjunct Faculty, to strengthen faculty diversity.

Among the major decisions, the Board approved the establishment of the Centre for Faculty Training and Pedagogy Research (CFTPR) under the Centre for Quality Education, along with the Centre for Quality Plant Material Discipline and Certification (CQPMDC). As part of academic restructuring, the Board approved the renaming of several divisions. The Division of Floriculture and Landscaping was renamed the Division of Floriculture, Ornamental Breeding and Landscaping Innovation. The Division of Fruit Sciences was renamed the Division of

Fruit Breeding, Technology and Innovation, while the Division of Vegetable Sciences was renamed the Division of Vegetable Breeding, Technology and Innovation. On the recommendations of the Selection Committee, the Board approved the appointment of Deans and Directors in various academic and administrative positions, including Education, Research, Planning and Monitoring, Students Welfare, Faculty of Agriculture, Horticulture, Veterinary Sciences and Fisheries.

The Board also approved direct appointments of Associate Professors and Professors across 14 departments, along with Career Advancement Scheme (CAS) promotions of Associate Professors and Professors in 31 disciplines.

The Board also approved select recommendations of the Academic Council and considered matters related to statutory amendments.

DC Budgam stresses speedy, quality execution of developmental projects in Chadoora

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Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, today conducted an extensive tour of Chadoora and reviewed various ongoing and proposed development projects.

Among other projects, the Deputy Commissioner inspected New Bus Stand, New Bus stand shopping complex, main bridge, new footbridge and planned Revenue Complex having SDM Office and Tehsil Office.

During inspection of New Bus Stand, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the facilities available for the public. He also inspected the New Bus Stand Shopping Complex and reviewed the progress of the ongoing work.

During tour, the Deputy Commissioner also visited the Main Bridge and reviewed the repair works being carried out there. He also inspected the new footbridge and took stock of its progress. He directed the concerned departments to ensure timely completion and proper quality of works.

The Deputy Commissioner also inspected the



site of the new planned Revenue Complex, which will house the SDM Office and Tehsil Office. He directed the concerned officers to take necessary steps for early execution of the project.

The Deputy Commissioner also took serious note of illegal mining in Nallah Doodhganga and directed the District Mineral Officer

to intensify monitoring and take strict action against violations.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner interacted with local people and delegations and heard their issues and demands. He assured that genuine issues would be examined for necessary redressal.

He directed all concerned officers to closely monitor

the works and ensure their timely completion.

The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by SDM Chadoora, Joint Director Planning Budgam, Tehsildar, Executive Engineer R&B Division Chadoora, Executive Engineer Irrigation, ARTO Budgam, Executive Officer MC Chadoora and other concerned officers.

Cluster University Srinagar signs MoU with NIELIT for NSQF-aligned skill programmes

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, SEP 18

Cluster University of Srinagar (CUS) signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT) J&K for National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF)-aligned skill development for a period of three years.



sain Rizvi, in presence of the Vice Chancellor Prof. Mohammed Mobin, signed for the university and Ashaq Hussain Dar, Director NIELIT, signed for the Institute. Controller Examinations, Prof. Khurshid Ahmad Mir and PS to Vice Chancellor Dr. Ubaid Siddique, besides Senior representatives from both organisations witnessed the signing ceremony.

The partnership will facilitate courses in Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Cyber Security and Cloud Computing. Other areas include Internet of Things, Blockchain, AR and VR, semiconductor technologies and digital governance. The collaboration also covers electronics, information technology and other emerging technology domains. Students, faculty, staff, profes-

sionals and eligible learners may benefit from these programmes. Credit transfer and academic integration will follow applicable institutional and regulatory norms.

The NIELIT platform provides learning management, digital content and virtual laboratory facilities. It also supports artificial intelligence enabled learning, learner analytics and online assessments.

SKUAST-K study links 'Hen and Chicken' disorder in Sahebi grape to poor pollination

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JAMMU, SEP 18

A study conducted at the Division of Fruit Sciences, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K), Shalimar, has confirmed that Sahebi is a functionally female grape cultivar, providing a scientific explanation for the frequent occurrence of the "Hen and Chicken" disorder in the variety.

The disorder is characterised by bunches carrying a mix of normal-sized berries and numerous small, underdeveloped berries, resulting in reduced marketable yield and quality. Around 70–80 percent of Sahebi grapes are reported to be affected by the disorder in Kashmir.

Grape cultivation has considerable

potential in the region, with Ganderbal accounting for around 206 hectares under grapes and producing about 1,385 metric tonnes. Sahebi constitutes 54.42 percent of the district's grape cultivation, followed by Hussaini at 35.20 percent.

During the 2025–26 research season, floral morphology and pollen characteristics of nine grape cultivars were studied under Kashmir's temperate conditions. The research was undertaken by Raksha under the mentorship of Dr. Aroosa Khalil and Dr. A.H. Pandit, Head, Division of Fruit Breeding, Technology and Innovation.

The study found that Sahebi has reflexed stamens and non-functional pollen, confirming its functional female nature and dependence on pollen from a compatible cultivar for

effective fertilisation and fruit set. The findings indicate that inadequate pollination in vineyards without a suitable pollinizer may contribute to poor berry development and uneven bunches. The researchers have recommended planting compatible pollen-producing cultivars such as Hussaini, Thompson Seedless, Fantasy Seedless, Pusa Navrang and Manjari Naveen alongside Sahebi while establishing new vineyards. Timely pruning, balanced nutrient management and other appropriate vineyard practices can further support fruit development and bunch uniformity.

The study provides a practical basis for improving pollination management in Sahebi vineyards and reducing losses associated with the "Hen and Chicken" disorder.

Additional Secretary RDD&PR undertakes tour of Machil Block, inspects Development Works

KUPWARA, SEPTEMBER 18: Additional Secretary, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj (RDD&PR), Waseem Raja, undertook a tour of Machil Block in Kupwara district and inspected various ongoing development works being executed under different schemes.

During the visit, he reviewed the progress of works on the ground and stressed upon timely completion, quality execution and effective

monitoring, particularly in view of the approaching winter. The visit provided an opportunity to assess the implementation of rural development initiatives in the challenging border and hilly terrain of Machil valley and to identify areas requiring focused intervention.

He also interacted with local residents in villages close to the Line of Control (LoC) and listened to their concerns and developmental needs.

During the visit, emphasis was laid on timely completion, quality execution and effective monitoring of works, particularly in view of the approaching winter.

Additional Secretary appreciated the innovative approach adopted for the implementation of VB-GRAM G at Malik Bela, the last village close to the Line of Control (LoC). He also inspected the geotagged PMAY-G houses and interacted with

the beneficiaries.

The Additional Secretary further inspected the playground at Machil, constructed under MGNREGA, and reviewed the ongoing flood-protection crate works aimed at safeguarding the area from flood-related damage. The Additional Secretary was accompanied by ACD Kupwara, Abdul Rashid, BDO Machil, Mohammad Rafiq Poswal, and other officers.

Capacity Development Workshop on Accounting Issues, Pension Adalat held at GDC Uri

BARAMULLA, SEPTEMBER 18: A Capacity Development Workshop on accounting-related issues and Pension Adalat was today organised at Government Degree College (GDC) Uri to create awareness among DDOs, Treasury Officers, pensioners and other stakeholders regarding accounting procedures and pension-related matters.

The workshop was presided over by Principal Accountant General (A&E), Jammu & Kashmir, Jay Prakash Narayan Singh; Deputy Accountant General (Pension), Mukesh Kumar

Bramhane; Sub-Divisional Magistrate Uri, Prince Kumar; Principal Government Degree College Uri, Prof. Ab. Majeed Chalkoo; District Treasury Officer, Parvaiz Ahmad Sheikh, and Accounts Officer to DC Office Baramulla, Ilka Hassan, besides DDOs, pensioners and other participants, attended the programme.

The workshop focused on strengthening the quality of accounts being rendered to the Accountant General's office and ensuring speedy disposal of pension and family pension cases.

As part of the Pension Adalat, pen-

sioners were provided an opportunity for one-on-one interaction with the concerned officers, enabling them to present their individual pension-related grievances and seek clarification on various issues. The officers heard their concerns and provided necessary guidance for timely resolution.

The programme also facilitated interaction between DDOs, Treasury Officers and other stakeholders on accounting-related issues, with emphasis on smooth and timely processing of pension and family pension cases.

Jammu Expo 2026 commences at Gole Market-Gandhi Nagar

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 18: Jammu Expo 2026 – A Celebration of Craft, Culture & Cuisine commenced today at Gole Market, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu, providing a vibrant platform to local entrepreneurs, artisans, MSMEs, women-led enterprises, startups and businesses to showcase their products and connect directly with consumers and wider markets.



cently concluded Kashmir Expo 2026, organised by JKTPO at Zabarwan Park, Srinagar, from September 11 - 13, which brought together artisans, entrepreneurs, businesses and other stakeholders to showcase Kashmir's products, craftsmanship and cultural heritage. Together, the two initiatives reflect JKTPO's efforts to create regular, market-oriented platforms across Jammu and Kashmir for promoting local enterprises and connecting them with consumers and wider markets.

A key attraction of the Expo is the dedicated "Taste of Jammu" Food Corner, showcasing traditional and

popular local cuisines, snacks, beverages and value-added food products. Cultural Evenings featuring local cultural performances will further enhance the visitor experience and celebrate Jammu's rich cultural heritage.

The exhibition also provides dedicated space for ODOP and local-product showcases, participation by rural women Self-Help Groups, startups and emerging enterprises, along with branded exhibition stalls and opportunities for direct consumer interaction, networking and market exposure.

The event took off in presence of

Managing Director JKTPO Sudarshan Kumar; Director Handicrafts and Handloom Jammu Mr. Mohammad Nazir Sheikh; Managing Director, J&K Handicrafts and Handloom Corporation Pradeep Singh Manhas.

The Managing Director informed that the Jammu Expo has been designed as a consumer-oriented and experience-driven platform combining enterprise promotion with Jammu's cultural and culinary heritage. "JKTPO remains committed to organising regular editions of such exhibitions across Jammu and Kashmir to strengthen market linkages, promote local brands and provide our entrepreneurs, artisans and emerging enterprises greater opportunities to connect with consumers, buyers and markets," he added.

The JKTPO has invited the people of Jammu and visitors to come, explore and experience Jammu Expo 2026, support local entrepreneurs and artisans, discover unique local products and savour the rich flavours and cultural heritage of Jammu.

The Expo will remain open to the general public from 11:00 AM to 8:00 PM on all three days.

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DC Kathua chairs DSC meet on Green India Mission

KATHUA, SEP 18: A meeting of the District Steering Committee for implementation and monitoring of activities under the Green India Mission (GIM) was held today under the chairmanship of the District Development Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma here at DC Office complex.

The meeting focused on deliberations and approval/ recommendation of the Green India Mission Micro Plans for the years 2026–27 and 2027–28 for Kathua District.

While deliberating on the modalities of the plan, the DC emphasized the need of co-ordinated implementation across the Forest Divisions of Kathua, Billawar and Basholi.

The concerned Divisional Forest Officers and Social Forestry Division made detailed presentations on the objectives of the Green India Mission, the landscapes allotted to the respective divisions and the progress of advance and creation works undertaken since 2023–24. The Committee also reviewed the progress of eco-restoration of degraded open forests. Giving details of achievements, the meeting was informed that ₹15.37 lakh were spent on restoration of 20 hectare forest area at Koli Kopper falling in the Kathua Forest Division.

Billawar Forest Division reported works covering 75 hectares with a financial achievement of ₹6.11 lakh, while Basholi Forest Division reported works covering 6

hectares with a financial achievement of ₹2.88 lakh.

The Committee examined the resolutions of the Village Forest Committees (VFCs) from across Kathua, Billawar and Basholi Forest Divisions, besides plantation works along NH-44 and the railway track proposed by the Social Forestry Division, which were placed before it for consideration.

After detailed deliberations, the Committee recommended around ₹4.55 crore (₹454.78 Lakh) Micro Plans for 2026–27 and 2027–28 for submission to UT level Steering Committee for further consideration. The proposal comprises ₹167.90 lakh for advance works during 2026–27 and ₹286.88 lakh for creation works during 2027–28. The meeting concluded with directions for coordinated follow-up and timely submission of the recommended Micro Plans to the UT Steering Committee for further necessary action.

The meeting was attended by the District Programme Officer, ICDS/Nodal Officer, Tribal Affairs, Kathua; Divisional Forest Officer, Kathua, who is also the Member Secretary of the District Steering Committee, along with the DFO, Billawar; DFO, Social Forestry Division, Kathua; DFO, Basholi; ACD, DPO; Chief Agriculture Officer, Kathua; District Officer, JAKEDA, Kathua and Representative of the Conservator of Forests, East Circle, Jammu.