

KC Public School students attend Military History Seminar in Dehradun

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, OCT 15

K.C. Public School participated in a two-day Military History Seminar hosted by Welham Boys' School, Dehradun, on October 9 and 10, focusing on the 1971 Indo-Pak War, particularly the Western Sector, and key lessons in military strategy and leadership.

The seminar commenced with an inaugural ceremony attended by Chief Guest Lt. Gen. Anil Chauhan (Retd.), followed by sessions on 'Western Theatre - Geography, Grand Plans and Strategy', Discussions highlighted the Battles of Chamb, Basantar and Longewala, along with military operations in Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and Rajasthan.

The second day featured a session on Indian Air Force, Naval and Para Operations, followed by discussions on the Chachro Raid, Operation Trident, Operation Falcon and Air Force operations. A military-themed art exhibition showcased students'



KCEANS with Air Marshal Vinod Bhatia(Retd)

creative interpretations of India's military heritage.

The seminar witnessed the participation of 33 schools from across the country, including K.C. Public School, Welham Boys' School, Welham Girls' School, Sunbeam School and Delhi Public School (DPS), Pathankot, among others. The two-day gathering brought together distinguished military commanders, veterans, scholars, mem-

bers of the press and civil society, along with over 350 students, providing a valuable platform to explore India's military history and its lessons for the present and future.

Representing K.C. Public School were Samragyee Rukwal, Riddhi Sambyal, Ojaswi Sambyal, Veer Vikrant Singh Chib, Pearl Dutta, Akash Banotra, Vedanshi Tickoo and Maanya Chibber, under the guidance and supervi-

sion of Ms. Inderjeet Kaur.

The seminar concluded with a session titled 'Lessons and Learning for the Future', attended by Chief Guest Lt. Gen. A.K. Singh (Retd.).

The event provided valuable insights into India's military history, strategic thinking, courage and sacrifice, fostering a deeper appreciation of the Indian Armed Forces among students.

J&K Bank Holds Customer Interaction Meet at Lassipora

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, OCT 15

Jammu and Kashmir Bank organised a customer interaction and felicitation meet at the Industrial Growth Centre (IGC), Lassipora, under the theme "Our Customer—Our Privilege", bringing together over 50 representatives from controlled-atmosphere (CA) storage units, fruit trade and other industrial sectors. The programme was chaired by Chief General Manager (Credit) Ashutosh Sareen in the presence of senior bank officials and representatives of industrial and horticulture associations.

Reaffirming the Bank's commitment to supporting agriculture, horticulture and industrial growth, Sareen said that strengthening businesses at Lassipora would help growers, improve the apple value chain and sustain employment. He assured participants that their concerns and suggestions would be addressed within the Bank's



guidelines and regulatory framework. President of Industrial Estate Lassipora Mukhtar Ahmad Khan highlighted the estate's economic importance, stating that it houses around 950 industrial units employing nearly 20,000 people. He raised concerns regarding rising input costs, working capital requirements, delays in credit disbursement and collateral-free credit guarantee schemes.

JKPICCA President Bashir Ahmad Naik called for a dedicated mechanism to facilitate regular discussions between industry representatives and the Bank

on sector-specific banking issues.

In his welcome address, General Manager and Divisional Head (Kashmir) Arshad Qadri said the Bank was committed to empowering growers, traders and stakeholders associated with horticulture. He emphasised the need to bridge the gap between apple production and storage capacity, particularly for small and marginal farmers.

Qadri added that J&K Bank had financed over 80 per cent of the CA storage facilities in the Valley, with an exposure of around Rs 2,000 crore to the sector.

General Manager Suresh Kumar Chowdhary responded to the concerns raised by participants, assuring them of practical solutions and timely banking support within the applicable norms.

The interaction was held in a cordial atmosphere, with the Bank's leadership listening to customer concerns and responding to their queries. Senior officials also felicitated the participants and reiterated the Bank's commitment to addressing their issues and strengthening its partnership with the industrial and horticulture sectors.

RDD Kishtwar organises Youth Empowerment Programme at Inderwal, Mughalmaidan

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, OCT 15

The Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj today organised awareness camps on Youth Empowerment Programme (YEP) at Block Inderwal and Block Mughalmaidan.

The programmes witnessed the participation of scores of youth, reflecting growing awareness and interest among young people in government-led empowerment initiatives.

The programmes were presided over by BDO Kishtwar Ravi Kumar, who highlighted the significance of the Youth Empowerment Programme and its six pillars, emphasising the role of youth in nation-building and rural development. He urged the participants to register on the designated portal to access over 200 government schemes across nearly 20 departments, offering a wide range of opportunities for personal growth, skill enhancement and economic independence.

During the camps, detailed awareness was imparted regarding livelihood generation, self-employment opportunities, leadership development and



various initiatives available under the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj. The participants were encouraged to actively participate in these initiatives and make optimal use of government-supported programmes to become self-reliant and contribute towards the so-

cio-economic development of their communities.

BDO Mughal Maidan Bhushan Sen and BDO Inderwal Zahid Rashid also attended the programmes along with the field staff and extended support in mobilising and sensitising the youth. PO VB-G RAM-G Raja Saleem Kichloo also

attended the event.

The initiative reaffirmed the department's commitment to connecting rural youth with government schemes, promoting entrepreneurship and creating avenues for sustainable livelihoods through effective awareness and grassroots engagement.

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 15: Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Ramesh Kumar, on Tuesday conducted a comprehensive review of schemes and programmes being implemented by the Department across Jammu and Kashmir.

The review was focused on physical progress, financial discipline, timely utilisation of funds and strengthening the service delivery in rural areas.

The meeting was attended by Secretary in RDD Rachna Sharma; Mission Director, NRLM, Shubhra Sharma; COO, Himayat, Rifat Kohli; Director, RDD Jammu, Shahnaz Akhtar; Director Finance, Umar Khan; CEO, IWMP, Rajnish Kumar; Joint Director Planning, Kamal Kumar Sharma; Additional Secretary, RDD, Waseem Raja; Joint Director, RDD, Mantasha Binti Rashid; Deputy Director Rural Sanitation, Kashmir, Shabir Ahmed Hakak and other officers.

The Secretary reviewed the progress under major programmes, including Viksit Bharat—Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-GRAM-G), Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana—Gramin (PMAY-G), Swachh Bharat Mission—Gramin (SBM-G), Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM), Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA), Himayat and the Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP).

Reviewing VB-GRAM-G, the Secretary assessed employment generation, implementation of works and financial progress under the programme. He was informed that 3.21 lakh persons had availed employment, generating 59.19 lakh person-days.

The Secretary emphasised financial



discipline, timely processing of wage and material payments, effective monitoring of works and coordination between district and block-level functionaries to ensure that implementation remains on schedule and funds are utilised efficiently.

He observed that although the planning process is digital, errors and discrepancies often emerge at the finalisation stage. He directed the concerned officers to adhere to prescribed timelines, review entries carefully and ensure that Gram Panchayat-level functionaries are fully familiar with the list of permissible works. The Secretary also emphasised that village plans should reflect local needs, geographical conditions and the specific vulnerabilities of each area. He called for prioritising works according to ground requirements, including water conservation, drainage, protection structures and connectivity in vulnerable and disaster-prone locations.

Reviewing PMAY-G, the Secretary assessed the progress of rural housing under the SECC and Awaas Plus categories. As per the data, 3,27,210 houses had been completed against 3,34,586 sanctioned houses, taking the overall completion rate to approximately 98 per cent.

The Secretary stressed the need to accelerate the completion of pending houses through regular district-level monitoring, close follow-up with beneficiaries and prompt resolution of implementation bottlenecks. He also emphasised proper verification of beneficiary records, timely release and utilisation of available funds, and effective convergence with other schemes to ensure that eligible rural households receive the intended housing benefits without avoidable delays.

Reviewing SBM-G Phase II, Kumar underscored the importance of sustained behavioural change in ensuring long-term sanitation outcomes across Jammu and Kashmir, stressing that the focus must extend beyond infrastructure creation towards fostering a lasting sense of responsibility and ownership among the people towards sanitation, hygiene and cleanliness.

Reviewing the Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission under NRLM, the Secretary took stock of initiatives relating the women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs), institution building, financial inclusion, farm and non-farm livelihoods, and the Lakhpati Didi programme. The review also covered community-managed training centres, capacity-building activities and the integration of the Rural Livelihoods Mission with Mission Yuva to expand livelihood and enterprise opportunities for rural households.

Environment Committee reviews Anchar Lake conservation, inspects SKIMS waste management

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, OCT 15

The Committee on Environment of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, under the Chairmanship of MLA Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami, today conducted an extensive visit to Anchar Lake and its adjoining areas to assess the measures being undertaken by the Government for conservation, restoration and pollution control of the lake besides identifying further interventions required for its effective protection and sustainable management.

Members of the Committee, including MLAs Daleep Singh Parihar, Showkat Hussain Ganie, Javid Ahmad Mirchal, Dr. Sajjad Shafi, Salman Sagar and Javid Reyaz Bedar besides MLA Mubarak Gul, accompanied the Chairman during the visit.

During the inspection, the Committee expressed serious concern over the rampant en-

croachments in and around Anchar Lake. It said that immediate and effective measures shall be taken for removal of illegal encroachments and retrieval of encroached land in accordance with the law. The Committee stressed that any further encroachment on the lake and its adjoining areas must be prevented through stringent enforcement, regular monitoring and coordinated action by the concerned departments.

The Chairman directed the Vice-Chairman, Lakes Conservation and Management Authority (LCMA), to furnish a detailed report on the nature and extent of illegal encroachments around Anchar Lake, the status of land retrieval and the action taken against the violators. He also called for clear timelines and an account of the measures proposed to prevent fresh encroachments and ensure strict compliance with the applicable environmental and land protection regula-



tions.

Expressing concern over the deteriorating ecological condition of the lake, the Chairman observed that Anchar Lake is facing serious environmental challenges due to encroachment, pollution, siltation and other anthropogenic pressures. He emphasised that the protection and restoration of the lake require sustained institutional efforts, effective

implementation of environmental safeguards and close coordination among all concerned departments.

He underscored the need for a comprehensive and time-bound conservation strategy, encompassing the prevention of untreated sewage and waste discharge, scientific desiltation wherever required, restoration of the lake's natural water channels, protec-

tion of its catchment areas and regular monitoring of water quality. He stressed that all interventions must be guided by scientific assessments and ecological considerations to ensure the long-term sustainability of the lake.

The Chairman also emphasised that the preservation of Anchar Lake is a shared responsibility of the government and the public. He called for

greater community participation, public awareness and strict adherence to environmental norms while urging the concerned authorities to adopt a proactive approach towards safeguarding the lake from further degradation.

As part of the visit, the Committee also inspected Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) to assess the concerns regarding the management and disposal of hospital waste and its potential impact on Anchar Lake. The Committee stressed that biomedical waste and other hospital effluents must be handled, treated and disposed of strictly in accordance with the prescribed environmental and biomedical waste management norms to prevent contamination of the lake and its surrounding ecosystem.

The Committee called upon the concerned authorities to ensure proper functioning of effluent treatment and waste management systems, conduct regular inspections and

maintain effective monitoring mechanisms to prevent any discharge of untreated waste into water bodies. It also emphasised the need for accountability and interdepartmental coordination to address any identified deficiencies and ensure compliance with environmental standards.

The Committee reiterated that the conservation of Anchar Lake must be accorded due priority.

It called for concrete, measurable and time-bound action by all concerned departments to curb pollution, remove encroachments, restore the lake's ecological balance and preserve this important natural asset for future generations.

Chairman JKPC Vasu Yadav, DC Srinagar Akshay Labroo, Commissioner SMC Dr Basharat Qayoom, VC LCMA Khurshid Ahmad Shah besides senior officers from the concerned departments accompanied the committee during the tour.