

Dir Agri inaugurates distribution of Hybrid Vegetable Seedlings at CoE

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, OCT 19

Director Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare Jammu Anil Gupta today inaugurated the distribution of hybrid vegetable seedlings here at the Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Entrepreneurship in Precision Vegetables & Floriculture Farming, Krishi Bhawan, Talab Tillo. The centre has been established under the Agronomist Vegetable Improvement Scheme (VIS), Jammu.

Among others present on the occasion included Deputy Director Agriculture (Central) Sanjeev Rai Gupta; Agronomist (VIS) Bhabishan Singh Jasrotia; Assistant Botanist Ajit Singh; SMS SDL Mohan Singh Slathia; Floriculture Development Assistant and In-charge, Centre of Excellence Surinder Radotra and other senior officers and staff of the Department.

Anil Gupta distributed hybrid vegetable seedlings among 20 farmers from the Marh and R.S. Pura Sub-



Divisions. The Centre of Excellence is raising a range of Hybrid, high-quality, disease-free seedlings using scientific techniques to promote improved vegetable cultivation among farmers. The varieties available include Girja and Snow Pearl (C7008) cauliflower, Green Flash and Royal Ball (BC-51) cabbage, Red Jewel red cabbage, New Red Fire lettuce, Green Magic broccoli and Heemsohna and Abhishash tomato.

Interacting with the farmers, the Director Agriculture urged them to avail themselves of the facility and adopt scientific vegetable cultivation practices to enhance productivity, improve the produce quality and increase farm profitability. He also directed the field functionaries to assess farmers' requirements for vegetable seedlings and ensure timely fulfillment of their demands.

Agronomist (VIS)

Bhabishan Singh Jasrotia briefed the Director Agriculture on the activities being undertaken at the Centre.

He informed that hybrid vegetable seedlings for the Rabi season are ready for distribution and are being made available to farmers at a highly subsidised rate of ₹2 per seedling. He urged farmers to visit the Centre and avail themselves of the facility as per their requirements.

Grand Maha Aarti performed by Matr Shakti on Navratri at Shree Raghunath Ji Temple

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In view of the ongoing Navratri, a grand Maha Aarti was organised under the aegis of Shri Raghunath Ji Jammu Maha Aarti Sanstha, with the support of the Dharmarth Trust Jammu and Kashmir, at the iconic Shree Raghunath Ji Temple in Jammu. The event witnessed an atmosphere of deep devotion and spiritual fervour, reflecting the rich traditions and enduring values of Sanatan culture.

The evening commenced with the devotional rendition of Aigiri Nandini, invoking the blessings of Goddess Durga. The Maha Aarti was performed with deep devotion and reverence, with women, scholars, students and members of the organising committee participating in the spiritual gathering.

Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Minga Sherpa, attended the ceremony as the Chief Guest, while Jammu Municipal Corporation Commissioner Arushi Sudan was the Special Guest.

Addressing the gathering, M.K. Ajatshatru Singh offered prayers for peace, prosperity and the well-being of all. He emphasised the importance of preserving peace, harmony and collective well-being.

Rajkumar Ranvijay Singh, in his address, highlighted



Dharma to future generations.

Dr Ritu Singh said that the grand Maha Aarti was a beautiful expression of the devotion, dedication and spiritual strength of Matr Shakti. She emphasised that women play a vital role in preserving and promoting Sanatan traditions, nurturing cultural values and passing on India's rich spiritual heritage to future generations. She said that the active participation of Matr Shakti in performing the Maha Aarti reflected the strength of women in keeping the country's age-old religious traditions alive and fostering peace, harmony and collective well-being.

Rajkumar Ranvijay Singh, in his address, highlighted

the significance of religious traditions in strengthening society's cultural roots and spiritual consciousness. He emphasised that such gatherings provide an opportunity for people to come together in devotion, promote mutual respect and harmony, and uphold the values and traditions that have shaped India's civilisational heritage.

Speaking on the occasion, Baldev Khullar said that the grand Maha Aarti symbolised the enduring spirit of Sanatan traditions, spiritual awareness and religious devotion. He emphasised that such religious and cultural events play a vital role in fostering faith, social harmony, moral values and cultural unity while connecting the

younger generation with India's ancient traditions.

He also expressed gratitude to the distinguished guests, the Dharmarth Trust Jammu and Kashmir, and all office-bearers and members of the organising committee for their valuable support in making the event a success.

Committee members Mona Saraf and Seema Murti, along with several other dignitaries, including Capt. Murti, were also present on the occasion.

The ceremony concluded on a spiritually uplifting note with powerful mantras recited by Seema Murti, reinforcing the significance of collective prayer and the preservation of India's timeless spiritual traditions.

Rana holds public outreach programme at Sunjwan-Barmini

JAMMU, OCTOBER

19: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today held a public outreach programme in the Sunjwan-Barmini area of Jammu district to listen to public grievances and assess the difficulties faced by the residents, particularly families affected by the land-sinking incident.

Accompanied by senior JKNC leaders Abdul Gani Teli, Vijay Lochan, Shamma Akhter and others, the Minister interacted with the affected families, heard their concerns and reviewed the challenges they continue to face following the incident.

The land-sinking incident in the Sunjwan area in August 2026 reportedly damaged 15 houses and displaced dozens of families, forcing them to relocate to safer places. The incident severely affected the lives of the residents, making continued administrative support and access to essential services imperative.

During the interaction, the affected families raised



issues concerning basic amenities, drinking water supply, land-related matters and the assistance required at their temporary places of settlement.

Taking cognisance of their concerns, Rana reviewed matters pertaining to the Forest Department, particularly those relating to land. He assured the families that their genuine grievances would be examined and addressed through the appropriate authorities.

The Minister also took serious note of complaints regarding the irregular supply of drinking water. He directed the concerned

officers to ensure an adequate, regular and uninterrupted supply of potable water to the residents, with focus on families displaced by the land-sinking incident.

Emphasising the importance of essential services and basic amenities, he instructed the concerned departments to work in close coordination and take prompt action to resolve the issues highlighted during the programme. He stressed that families living in temporary settlements must not be left to face avoidable hardships due to gaps in service delivery.

Rana directed the offi-

cials to maintain regular coordination, prioritise the issues raised by residents and ensure timely intervention wherever required. He underscored the need for continued engagement with the public to assess ground-level challenges and facilitate effective solutions.

The public outreach programme was attended by the DFO Social Forestry, officers from Soil Conservation and Urban Forestry, DFO Jammu, Chief Engineer PHE, Chief Engineer Irrigation, the concerned Executive Engineer and other officials from the relevant departments.

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, OCT 19

Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Vikas Kunal, today flagged off the Jammu-Basohli Bike Ride from Tawi River Front, Jammu, as part of Basohli Utsav-2026, aimed at promoting the region's rich cultural heritage, scenic beauty and tourism potential while spreading the message of a drug-free society.

Speaking on the occasion, Vikas Kunal said that around 30 bikers are participating in the ride from Jammu, with more riders expected to join the convoy en route. The participants are also carrying the national flag, reflecting their spirit of patriotism and commitment to the nation.

He said that Basohli Utsav provides a plat-



form to showcase the region's vibrant cultural traditions, artistic legacy and rich heritage. He added that the bike ride would further strengthen efforts to highlight Basohli as an attractive tourism destination.

Emphasising the vital role of youth in nation-building, the Divisional Commissioner appreci-

ated the initiative for promoting a positive and healthy outlook among young people. He urged the youth to stay away from drugs and other social evils and channel their energy towards constructive activities, sports and nation-building.

The Div Com further observed that such initia-

tives would give an impetus to tourism in Jammu and Basohli by showcasing the region's picturesque landscapes, natural beauty and cultural attractions. He said that these activities could encourage more tourists to explore the region and contribute to the growth of local tourism and the economy.

The Jammu-Basohli Bike Ride is among the activities being organised as part of Basohli Utsav-2026, scheduled from October 19 to 21, to celebrate the region's distinctive cultural identity and promote its tourism potential among a wider audience.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Ansuya Jamwal, along with other officers and officials, was present on the occasion.

Navratra Prabhat Pheri concludes amid devotion & festivity

KATRA, OCT 19: The nine-day Navratra Festival Prabhat Pheri in the holy town of Katra the base camp of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi concluded on a spiritually vibrant note this morning on the auspicious occasion of Ram Navami amidst the chanting of devotional bhajans, resounding Jaikaras of Maa Vaishno Devi and rhythmic beats of drums at Bus Stand Katra. The Prabhat Pheri, which formed an integral part of Navratra Festival Katra 2026 was jointly organized by the Department of Tourism, J&K Government and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board Katra in association with the J&K Association of Prabhat Pheri with the support and cooperation of various other organizations and stakeholders.

Earlier the grand concluding procession was flagged off by the chief guest Sh. Baldev Raj Sharma MLA Shree Mata Vaishnodevi Katra along with guest of honour Sh. Rajesh Raina Assistant Director tourism Katra in the presence of special guests Sh. Gopal Dutt Medical Superintendent and Sh. Shiv Kumar Sharma former Joint Secretary, J&K Sports Council. The dignitaries formally inaugurated the

procession by cutting the red ribbon and breaking a green coconut at Bus Stand Katra, from where the colourful procession commenced amid great religious fervour and enthusiasm.

The concluding day's Prabhat Pheri witnessed enthusiastic participation by artists of the Central Bureau of Communications representing Jammu and Kashmir along with a large number of local residents, pilgrims and devotees from Delhi and other parts of the country. The main attraction of the day was the beautiful tableau of Maa Siddhidatri, the ninth manifestation of Goddess Durga showcased by Ms. Nikita which added spiritual splendour to the procession. The devotees enthusiastically chanted the Jaikaras of Maa Vaishno Devi and danced to the tunes of drumbeaters along the route, creating an atmosphere of devotion, unity and celebration. The participation of pilgrims from different states further reflected Katra's importance as a major spiritual destination and the unifying power of religious and cultural traditions.

Addressing the gathering chief guest Sh. Baldev Raj Sharma extended his greetings and prayed that



Maa Vaishno Devi may shower her choicest blessings upon everyone on the pious occasion of Ram Navami. He appreciated the dedicated efforts of the members of the J&K Association of Prabhat Pheri for organizing the nine-day event in a colourful, successful and spiritually enriching manner. He observed that such religious and cultural initiatives strengthen the bond between devo-

tees and the holy shrine while adding vibrancy to the Navratra celebrations in Katra. The Senior Citizens Forum led by Sh. Rattan Chand also participated in the Prabhat Pheri in large numbers reflecting the enthusiasm and collective spirit of the local community.

A felicitation ceremony was subsequently organized to acknowledge the valuable contribution of digni-

taries, participating organizations and members of the J&K Association of Prabhat Pheri who worked tirelessly to ensure the smooth conduct of the nine-day event. The chief guest Sh. Baldev Raj Sharma and guest of honour Ad Katra were felicitated by the association members with traditional pagaris, chunaris and mementos as a mark of respect and appreciation. Mementos were also presented to representatives of various organizations and association members in recognition of their contribution, coordination and dedicated efforts in making the Prabhat Pheri a grand success.

Senior journalists Rakesh Sharma and Himanshu Purohit were also felicitated by the chief guest.

Following the felicitation ceremony, Kanya Pujan was performed by the dignitaries in accordance with the religious traditions associated with Navratras. Halwa prasad was subsequently served to the pilgrims, devotees and participants, marking the conclusion of the nine-day devotional celebrations with a spirit of reverence, community participation and goodwill.

Speaking on the occasion, Sh. Raj Kumar Padha, President of the J&K

Association of Prabhat Pheri, stated that the grand success of the event was the outcome of the collective coordination, dedication and sincere efforts of the people of Katra particularly the members of the association. He expressed his gratitude to the J&K Tourism Department, District Administration Reasi, Health Department, Police Department, Fire and Emergency Services Department, CRPF 6th Battalion Katra, school students, Municipal Committee Katra, print and electronic media and the people of Katra for extending their active cooperation and support throughout the nine days of Prabhat Pheri

Among the association members present on the occasion were Ajay Sharma, Ramnik Nawada, Aman Mahajan, R. S. Manhas, Rattan Sharma, Neelam Singh, Rakesh Sharma, Sohan Thakur, Vishal Pandit, Sanjay Kesar, Munish Kapoor, Renueji Dhar, Rattan Chand, Babu Ram, Parkash Raj, Rajesh Gupta, Vimal Sharma, P. N. Kaul, Suman Kotwal. Among other prominent participants were Babu Ram Dubey, Murlidhar, Prashant, Sanjay Tickoo, P. N. Raina, Sanjesh and others.