

DG Territorial Army reviews ecological initiatives in J&K

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Director General of the Territorial Army, Lt Gen Girish Kalia, on Saturday visited the 'Chinar Eco Warriors' ecological battalion in Samba district to review its role in the greening of Jammu and Kashmir, a defence spokesman said.

The programme is being implemented in close synergy with the Jammu and Kashmir (J-K) Forest Department under projects funded by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the spokesman said.

During the visit, the director general was briefed on the battalion's initiatives involving afforestation, ecological rejuvenation and community outreach across the Union Territory.

Lt Gen Kalia appreciated the unit's commitment to environmental stewardship. He noted that the battalion's efforts have encouraged ecological responsibility among the



children, youth and local communities.

The director general praised the battalion for its work in reviving awareness about India's heritage trees, many of which hold profound historical significance and were silent

witnesses to the nation's freedom struggle.

He commended the initiative to educate the local populace about the ancient botanical treasures of medicinal plants and indigenous tree species, thereby reconnecting

communities with the rich ecological wisdom embedded in India's traditional knowledge systems.

The DG particularly praised the innovative collaboration between the Chinar Eco Warriors and the State Forest Department in promoting the Miyawaki techniques of medicinal tree plantation, through which clusters of medicinal tree species are being distributed and planted across villages and forest areas.

Such forward-looking initiatives, he foresighted, not only accelerate ecological restoration but also open avenues for value-added forest produce and sustainable income generation for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, thereby harmonising environmental conservation with socio-economic development.

He also applauded the Officers and personnel of the unit for pioneering the adoption of the Kokedama

method of plant cultivation, an eco-friendly technique that replaces conventional plastic and clay pots.

This innovative approach significantly reduces plastic usage and top soil conservation, while promoting aesthetic and sustainable plant cultivation, he said.

The DG said the initiative resonates strongly with the global call of the United Nations to "Beat Plastic Pollution" and supports the broader objectives of Government of India's directives of climate change mitigation and environmental sustainability frameworks.

He expressed profound admiration for the professionalism, dedication, and ecological vision displayed by the officers and personnel of the Chinar Eco Warriors, observing that their tireless efforts represent a unique confluence of national service, environmental guardianship and community empowerment.

Physics alumni reconnect at Central University



EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: The Department of Physics and Astronomical Sciences at the Central University of Jammu organized an Alumni Meet 2026 at the Auditorium, Aryabhata Bhawan today. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from alumni, along with faculty members and students of the department, creating an atmosphere of nostalgia and interaction.

The programme was formally inaugurated by the Dean Sciences Prof. Vinay Kumar, who highlighted the importance of alumni engagement in strengthening academic institutions. Prof. Kamni Pathania delivered the

welcome address and warmly greeted the alumni, appreciating their continued connection with the department.

The event was coordinated by Dr. Ashish Kumar and Dr. Vishal Singh, while the student of the Vigyan Vatika group actively served as the coordinators and helped organize the activities smoothly.

A series of cultural performances added vibrancy to the programme, including dance and singing performances by students. Interactive games and creative activities further encouraged participation and engagement between alumni and current students. The alumni also

shared their experiences and memories, making the gathering meaningful and inspiring for the younger participants.

The department expressed gratitude to the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Prof. Sanjeev Jain, for his encouragement and support, and acknowledged the guidance of the Dean, DSW Prof. Ritu Bakshi in facilitating the successful organization of the event.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Vishal Singh, followed by souvenir distribution, cake cutting, a group photograph, and lunch, marking a memorable reunion for the alumni and the university community.

97 pc houses completed under PMAY-G: Secy RDD

JAMMU: Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, MOHAMMAD Aijaz Asad, on Saturday chaired a high-level meeting to review the progress of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) across Jammu and Kashmir.

During the meeting, a detailed district-wise review of the scheme was undertaken with particular focus on completion of the pending houses. It was informed that 3,23,299 houses have already been completed, achieving an overall progress of 97 percent under the scheme.

The Secretary noted that 3447 houses have been completed from the last 2 months and directed officers to further accelerate the pace of work so that the remaining 11,340 houses are completed at the earliest.

Speaking on the occasion, Aijaz Asad said that the current phase of PMAY-G is nearing completion and a new phase of the scheme is set to begin, therefore all works sanctioned under the existing phase must be completed without delay. He asked officers to work with seriousness and accountability to achieve the targets.

He directed Assistant Commissioners Development (ACDs) and Block Development Officers (BDOs) to track each individual case and ensure that no sanctioned house remains incomplete. He further instructed that any technical or administrative bottlenecks hindering the progress of works should be resolved immediately.

The Secretary emphasized that all pending works must be completed by April 15, 2026, stressing that officers should make every possible effort, even if it requires working round the clock, as houses left incomplete under the previous phase will not be taken up once the new phase begins.

Aijaz Asad also directed the Director Rural Development Jammu and Director Rural Development Kashmir to hold weekly review meetings and keep the department informed about the progress achieved.

AIIMS observes World Glaucoma Week 2026

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: The Department of Ophthalmology at AIIMS Vijaypur, Jammu, observed World Glaucoma Week from 8th to 14th March, 2026. During this period, patients were screened for glaucoma using equipment like Non-Contact Tonometer, Applanation Tonometer, Automated Perimetry and Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT). Glaucoma awareness lectures were organized in the OPD area for patients and their attendants.

All the activities were conducted under the guidance and supervision of ED & CEO, AIIMS Jammu, Prof. (Dr.) D. N. Sharma. Logistic support for the activities was provided by Dean

(Academics) and MS, AIIMS Jammu, Prof. (Dr) Meeta Gupta.

Speaking on the occasion, ED & CEO AIIMS Jammu, Prof. (Dr.) D. N. Sharma said that glaucoma is a leading cause of irreversible vision loss, and by the time a patient becomes aware of the disease, his or her vision is severely compromised.

Prof Sharma further added that timely detection and proper management are the only two weapons that can prevent vision loss due to glaucoma.

Dr. Bhavani Raina, Additional Professor and Head, Department of Ophthalmology, AIIMS Jammu, said that the Department of Ophthalmology at AIIMS

Jammu has all the latest technology and machines for the evaluation of glaucoma patients and the necessary expertise to treat glaucoma.

The faculty of the Department of Ophthalmology, including Dr. Nitin Kumar (Associate Professor), Dr. Nazia Anjum (Assistant Professor), and Dr. Ridham Nanda (Assistant Professor), played a key role in organizing the event, with active support of Senior Residents Dr. Asma Jabeen, Dr. Sadaf Chaudhary and Dr. Shefali Verma.

The theme for this year's Glaucoma Week was "Early Detection is the Key," emphasizing the role of education and awareness in tackling this "silent killer of vision."

IAS Mudgal chairs review meeting of Anantnag CCBL

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Commissioner Secretary, Cooperative Department, Yasha Mudgal, on Saturday chaired a comprehensive review meeting held to evaluate the performance and operational status of the Anantnag Central Cooperative Bank Ltd. (ACCB) at the JCC Bank Rail Head Complex.

The meeting was attended by the senior officials, including Registrar, Cooperative Societies, Mohammed Shafiq Chak; Director Finance, Cooperative Department; Assistant General Manager, NABARD, Ravi Shankar Sharma; other senior officers from the department and branch heads of the bank.

General Manager, ACCB, Intikhab Hussain, delivered a detailed PowerPoint Presentation highlighting



the bank's physical and financial performance. The overview encompassed key parameters such as deposit mobilization, advances, loan disbursement, liquidity management, asset quality, profitability, productivity, and human resource management.

He also outlined ongoing initiatives aimed at enhancing the operational efficiency, strengthening internal controls, and transforming the bank into a financially sound, customer-centric

institution with improved service delivery to members and customers.

The meeting featured in-depth discussions on the bank's overall financial health, operational challenges, and strategic priorities. Key focus areas included measures to reduce Non-Performing Assets (NPAs), strengthen recovery mechanisms, improve profitability, and ensure long-term sustainability. The Commissioner Secretary was briefed on various operational aspects, performance indicators, challenges encountered and proposed strategic interventions to fortify the cooperative banking framework across Jammu and Kashmir.

Emphasizing the critical importance of financial discipline, Yasha Mudgal directed the officials to prioritize robust recovery

strategies, enforce timely loan repayments and adopt sound financial management practices. She instructed the concerned officers to focus on achieving the targeted financial benchmarks, particularly improving the Capital to Risk-Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR), enhancing overall financial stability and ensure regulatory compliance.

The Commissioner Secretary further asked all the officers to work with full dedication. She reaffirmed the bank's commitment to proactive steps for boosting operational efficiency, elevating financial performance and delivering superior banking services to members and customers.

She reiterated the need to increase quality loan disbursement, modernize management systems and accelerate recovery efforts.

Intensive market checking conducted ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr, Navratra

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

DODA: A joint team of enforcement departments Saturday conducted an intensive market inspection drive in Doda town and adjoining areas to check quality and prices of essential items ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr, Navratra and the ongoing holy month of Ramzan. The drive was conducted to ensure availability of quality essential commodities, prevent overcharging and safeguard consumer interests during the festive season when market activity increases significantly.

The enforcement team comprised officers and officials from the Legal Metrology Department,

Food Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FC S&CA) and Food Safety Department. During the inspection, more than 20 shops were checked for compliance with display of rate lists, accuracy of weighing and measuring instruments and maintenance of hygiene and quality standards in food items. Seven challans were booked against erring traders for violation of various provisions and a penalty of Rs 6300 was imposed.

The team also inspected LPG dealerships to verify compliance with legal norms and ensure delivery to genuine consumers through the OTP-based verification system.

National Lok Adalat conducted

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

RAMBAN: As per NALSA's annual Calendar of activities and on the directions of J&K Legal Services Authority, the first National Lok Adalat of the year 2026 was held at District Court Complex Ramban and other subordinate Courts today by District Judiciary, Ramban.

The event was conducted under the patronage of Chairman, District Legal Services Authority, Ajay Kumar Gupta and with the assistance of Secretary, District Legal Services Authority, Priyanka Mahajan.

The Chairman inaugurated the Lok Adalat at the District

Court Complex, where he emphasized the importance of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in ensuring quick and affordable justice.

The Lok Adalat focused on matters such as motor accident claims, bank recovery cases, matrimonial disputes, labour disputes and compoundable criminal cases etc.

By encouraging dialogue and mutual agreement between parties, the National Lok Adalat provided a cost-effective and time-saving alternative to conventional litigation. Judicial officers, legal services authorities, advocates, and volunteers worked together to

ensure smooth conduct of the proceedings. The initiative reaffirmed the judiciary's commitment to providing accessible and efficient justice to all citizens.

Nine benches were constituted across all Courts of District Ramban for amicable and speedy settlement of the cases. A total no. of 770 cases (672 Post-litigation and 98 Pre-litigation) were taken up, out of which 490 Post-litigation and 50 Pre-litigation cases were disposed of with a settlement amount of Rs. 1,79,73,600 in Post-litigation cases. A total settlement award amounting to Rs. 1,93,59,107 was settled out.

DDC Krishan Lal reviews arrangements for upcoming festivals

DODA: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Doda Krishan Lal Saturday chaired a review meeting to assess the arrangements for the upcoming festivals of Navratra, Ram Navami and Eid-ul-Fitr.

The DDC reviewed the measures being taken by the stakeholder departments to ensure smooth and peaceful celebrations across the district.

The meeting discussed arrangements made for security around religious places, uninterrupted power and water supply, availability of essential commodities, sanitation, traffic regulation, health services and fire safety measures.

The DDC instructed the Municipal Committees and other concerned departments to ensure proper sanitation, street lighting and availability of drinking water at religious places and other public locations.

The Senior Superintendent of Police briefed the chair about the security arrangements.

The meeting was attended by Assistant Commissioner Development, Chief Medical Officer, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, District Sheep Husbandry Officer, Tehsildar, Executive Engineers of PWD (R&B), Jal Shakti, JPDCL, STD, Assistant Director Fisheries, Assistant Director Fire & Emergency Services, Assistant Controller Legal Metrology, Executive Officer Municipal Committee, Poultry Development Officer and other concerned officers.

ADC Bhadrawah, ASP Bhadrawah, SDMs of Gandoh, Thathri and Assar, all SDPOs and Executive Officers of Municipal Committees participated in the meeting through virtual mode.

DC directs officers to intensify awareness activities, strengthen services

UDHAMPUR: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Minga Sherpa Saturday chaired a meeting of the District NCORD Committee to review the enforcement measures in place to curb trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and to strengthen measures aimed at curbing drug abuse in the district.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Prem Singh; Additional SP Sandeep Bhat and senior officers from line departments attended the meeting.

The meeting reviewed the identification and rehabilitation of drug addicts, PIT-NDPS cases, drug seizures recorded during 2025, action taken against erring pharmacies, installation of CCTV cameras, measures against illicit crop cultivation, inspection of de-addiction centres, block-wise data on drug abusers, identification of hotspots, surveillance of educational institutions, IEC campaigns, mass awareness programmes, Nasha Mukti Abhiyan, Nasha Mukti Panchayats and cases registered under the NDPS Act.

Relief Comm (M) reviews status of devp works in Migrant Camps

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner (M) J&K, Dr. Arvind Karwani on Saturday chaired a meeting to review the ongoing development works in the Jammu migrant camps.

He also reviewed the requirement of works/projects in the migrant camps, including migrant schools, dispensaries, community halls etc and took appraisal of the budgetary provisions made by the different government departments for the financial year 2026-27. The progress of integration



of migrant ration cards into the NFSA database and extension of social sector schemes to the eligible migrant beneficiaries was also reviewed.

The meeting was

attended by Assistant Commissioners (Relief) and senior officers from Health, PWD(R&B), Jal Shakti, JPDCL, H&UDD, UEED, FC&CA Department, Social Welfare Department,

Employment Department, JAKeGA, JAKeDA and Floriculture.

Besides, the Principals of Migrant Schools and In-charge Sub-District Hospital Jagti also attended the meeting.

The Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner reviewed the status of drinking water supply, power supply and sanitation in the camps. It was noted that 250 street lights have been installed at different locations in the migrant camps recently. The multi-purpose community hall coming up at Jagti at an estimated cost of Rs 6.5 crores is likely to be completed by the end of

this month. Dr Karwani also reviewed the outcome of a series of outreach camps conducted recently by the Relief Organization for identification of potential beneficiaries of various social sector schemes and self-employment schemes. The Social Welfare Department apprised that 381 beneficiaries have been sanctioned benefits under various social sector schemes since December 2025. The Department of Youth Services & Sports was asked to formulate a proposal for the maintenance of open spaces/ playgrounds in migrant camps.