

Div Com Kashmir reviews preparations for Chintan Shivir in Srinagar

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SRINAGAR: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, on Friday chaired a high-level meeting to review arrangements for the upcoming Chintan Shivir being organized by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, under the Poshan Abhiyaan Department.

The two-day event is expected to witness participation from Union Ministers, Ministers from various States and Union Territories, senior administrative officials including Secretaries and Directors, officers from the Jammu & Kashmir Administration, policymakers, domain experts, and representatives from key institutions.

The Chintan Shivir aims to serve as a collaborative platform for dialogue, innovation, and strategic planning in the Women and Child Development sector. The deliberations are expected to contribute significantly towards strengthening governance frameworks and pro-



moting sustainable development. During the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner conducted a comprehensive review of arrangements at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC), the designated venue for the event. He assessed the roles and responsibilities of various departments and agencies, including Civil Aviation and Airport Authorities, CISF, Hospitality and Protocol, Information, Transport (RTO), State Motor Ga-

rages, Police (Security and Traffic), District Administrations of Srinagar and Budgam, Fire and Emergency Services, Health, Floriculture, Tourism, Cultural Organizations, and the Cable Car Corporation. Emphasizing the importance of seamless coordination, the Divisional Commissioner directed all departments to designate nodal officers to ensure efficient communication and adherence to protocol. He stressed the need for meticulous

security arrangements for visiting dignitaries, proper allocation of transport facilities, and the successful organization of a cultural program.

The Tourism Department was instructed to arrange cruise rides in Dal Lake and prepare a detailed itinerary for visits to prominent gardens. Directions were also issued for the deployment of magistrates at the airport and event venue to ensure smooth operations.

Highlighting the importance of coordinated efforts, the Divisional Commissioner underscored the need for close inter-departmental collaboration to ensure the smooth and hassle-free & successful conduct of the event. The Senior Superintendent of Police (Traffic), Srinagar, was specifically directed to ensure effective traffic management during VIP movements.

The meeting was attended by the Deputy Commissioners of Srinagar and Budgam, along with senior officials and Divisional Level heads of all concerned departments.

Revision of Panchayat Electoral Roll 2026: DEO Kulgam flags off IEC Van for public awareness

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KULGAM: District Election Officer (DEO) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, today flagged off an IEC (Information, Education and Communication) Van from the Mini-Secretariat Kulgam to create awareness among the public regarding the Revision of Panchayat Electoral Roll 2026.

The IEC van will travel across various blocks and villages of the district to disseminate information about the ongoing revision process and educate citizens about the procedures for inclusion, deletion, correction and Transposition in the Panchayat electoral rolls.

Speaking on the occasion, the DEO emphasized the importance of maintaining accurate and updated electoral rolls for



strengthening grassroots democracy and ensuring free and fair Panchayat elections. He urged eligible residents, particularly new voters who have/will attain the age of 18 years on 01-04-2026, to verify their details and ensure their names are included in the electoral rolls with-

in the stipulated time-frame. Among others present on the occasion were Deputy District Election Officer, Bashir-ul-Hassan; Assistant Commissioner Revenue Reyaz Ahmad Shah; Assistant Commissioner Development, Bilal Ahmad Kamgar, and other officers.

SKUAST-K's RBIC idea resonator series commences at GDC Kulgam

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SRINAGAR: Rural Business Incubation Centre (RBIC) at SKUAST-K, a high-impact launchpad for agri-business and rural startups supported by NABARD, has officially kick-started its flagship program an idea resonator series, 'From Grassroots Problems to Scalable Startups: RBIC Idea Resonator on Agri & Rural Innovation'.

This initiative is designed to identify, nurture, and scale agri-business and rural innovations across the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. The inaugural event of the series was hosted at Government Degree College, Kulgam, marking the first step in a comprehensive roadmap to foster a sustainable culture of entrepreneurship among rural youth and student innovators. The program, which drew nearly 100 participants, aimed to bridge the gap between raw academic knowledge and commercial enterprise.



Central to the idea resonator series is the integration of specialized Design Thinking workshops, which serve as the primary engine for sourcing new ideas and localised solutions. These workshops are specifically crafted to help participants deconstruct the complex challenges facing the rural community. By utilizing a human-centred approach, students move from a general understanding of a local grievance to the development of concrete, scalable business models. This methodology ensures that the innovations

emerging from the program are deeply rooted in the contextual needs of the region. During the idea resonator event at GDC Kulgam, students were challenged to identify localized pain points and develop practical solutions through intensive group activities and pitch deck preparation. This hands-on approach culminated in an interactive pitching session where participants demonstrated remarkable creativity, reflecting the vast, untapped entrepreneurial potential residing within the rural districts.

The series is scheduled to move to ITI Baramulla on April 2 and GDC Shopian on April 8, followed by events in Anantnag and Handwara. The program will eventually cover all districts to ensure that no innovator is left behind. A core objective of this engagement is to 'catch innovators young', providing them with a platform to transform their unique knowledge of local challenges into viable business ventures. The series specifically invites problem statements under the themes of AgriTech, FoodTech, Horticulture, Sustainable Farming, and Rural Handicrafts.

Participants who emerge from these sessions gain direct access to RBIC's full suite of incubation programs, which provide mentorship clinics, technical validation, specialised incubation facilities, and grant support. By offering

a structured path from problem identification to prototype testing and investor readiness, RBIC aims to serve as a primary engine for rural development and employment generation across the entire region.

RBIC has urged students, innovators, rural youth or any other person interested in participating in idea resonator event can register on: <https://forms.gle/FkZ-KRbo7rN4VAiy8>.

Further, RBIC is mandated to operate across both Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh UTs, ensuring the development of a cohesive regional startup ecosystem. Besides, RBIC is preparing for a robust quarter of activities, including IP awareness seminars, Go-To-Market (GTM) readiness sessions, ideathons, and specialized bootcamps for school students in collaboration with Govt Degree Colleges, schools and other institutions. It has urged institutions, willing for the partnership to contact on rbic@skuast-kashmir.ac.in.

J&KAACL commemorates 150 years of 'Vande Mataram' special phase



EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: As part of the nationwide commemoration marking 150 years of the National Song 'Vande Mataram', the Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL) today organized a grand cultural event at Tagore Hall, Srinagar, under a special phase campaign being observed from March 23 to 30.

The national campaign aims to celebrate Vande Mataram and its unique role in India's history through a series of activities including mass singing, exhibitions, and cultural programmes across the country. The initiative seeks to invoke a deep sense of patriotism among citizens while reconnecting youth and students with the song's original, revolutionary spirit and enduring legacy. The programme commenced with a soulful live rendition of 'Vande Mataram' by student artists of the Institute of Music and Fine Arts (IMFA), creating a deeply inspiring atmosphere, followed by the screening of a short documentary highlighting the history, legacy, and lasting significance of 'Vande Mataram' in India's freedom movement and national consciousness.

A vibrant cultural programme presented by Son-

zal Art & Cultural Organization showcased music and artistic expressions rooted in patriotism and cultural heritage. The event also featured a compelling theatre play staged by artists of Kalidas Theatre Srinagar, which drew appreciation from the audience for its powerful portrayal. Adding further artistic depth to the celebration, a calligraphy session on the theme Vande Mataram was organized, reflecting creative interpretations of the iconic national song. Over 200 students from various schools across Srinagar participated enthusiastically in the programme, making it a lively and engaging occasion.

The programme was attended by Additional Secretary, Kashmir, JKAACL, Ideel Saleem; Joint Director Information Kashmir, Syed Shanawaz Bukhari; Veteran Actor, Director, Producer, and Theatre Artist, Ayash Arif; along with other officers, artists, and members of civil society.

The event concluded with a strong message of patriotism and cultural pride, reaffirming the timeless relevance of Vande Mataram and its enduring ability to inspire unity, identity, and national spirit among the people, especially the younger generation.

Plantation drive held in Shopian

SHOPIAN: A Mega Plantation Drive was conducted today in the Sedow area of District Shopian along with Distribution of Plants under the flagship initiative "GREEN J&K DRIVE 2026".

Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Shopian and Range Officer Shopian also participated in the event. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from Army Personnel, civil society and a large number of elderly and children, who collectively planted a significant number of conifer and broad leaved saplings during the event.

A large number of conifer and broad leaved saplings were also distributed free of cost by the Department of Forest to the local people at the event site.

Exhibition programme held on "Vande Mataram" in Bandipora

BANDIPORA: Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) Bandipora, in collaboration with the Education Department, today organised an exhibition programme on the theme of "Vande Mataram" at NM BHSS Bandipora. During the programme, students actively participated in various displays and activities highlighting the spirit and historical significance of "Vande Mataram". The exhibition aimed to instill a sense of national pride and unity among the younger generation.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students of different educational institutions, along with faculty members, who appreciated the efforts of the district administration in organising such awareness programmes.

Officials from the Information Department and Education Department were present on the occasion and highlighted the importance of engaging students.

DC Pulwama reviews banking performance at DLRC meeting

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

PULWAMA: Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama, Dr Basharat Qayoom today chaired the District Level Review Committee (DLRC) meeting for the third quarter of the financial year 2025-26 at Circuit House, Pulwama, to review the performance of banks and the implementation of various financial inclusion and employment generation schemes in the district.

At the outset, the Lead District Manager (LDM), Pulwama, presented a detailed overview of the district's banking performance. The Chair was apprised that Pulwama recorded a year-on-year growth of 9.03 percent in deposits and 12.19 percent in advances, while the Credit-Deposit (CD) ratio increased by 3 percent. The



district's CD ratio at the end of the third quarter stood at 113.86 percent.

During the meeting, the DC reviewed bank-wise and sector-wise performance under the District Credit Plan (DCP). A detailed review of employment generation schemes, including Mission

YUVA, PMEGP, PMFME, NRLM, HADP and PM Vishwakarma, was also conducted. The Chair stressed upon all banks and line departments to ensure timely sanctioning and disbursement of cases and to minimise pendency. He directed strengthening co-

ordination among stakeholders to enhance credit linkage and maximise beneficiary coverage.

The DC laid special emphasis on the implementation of social security schemes, including PMJDY, PMJJBY, PMSBY and APY. He directed banks to intensify enrolment drives to achieve saturation in a time-bound manner and ensure wider financial inclusion across all sections of society.

Emphasising accountability, the DC directed all banks to improve their performance in priority sector lending and devise concrete strategies to meet the annual targets. He also instructed regular monitoring of bank-wise performance and improvement in credit flow to productive sectors. The DC further stressed en-

hancing financial literacy and awareness among the public and directed concerned institutions to conduct more outreach programmes, especially in rural and underserved areas. On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner also launched the Potential Linked Credit Plan for District Pulwama for the financial year 2026-27, aimed at providing a roadmap for credit planning and facilitating sector-wise growth in alignment with the district's developmental priorities. Among others, the meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer, Pulwama; Lead District Manager; representatives of RBI and NABARD; Cluster Head, J&K Bank; Director, RSETI; district officers of line departments; and representatives of various banks and other stakeholders.

Anantnag witnesses massive Community Participation in First PTM-2026

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ANANTNAG: In compliance with the directions of the Director School Education Kashmir, the first Parent-Teacher Meetings (PTM), of the academic session 2026 were conducted with remarkable success across District Anantnag today, witnessing overwhelming participation from all stakeholders. The PTMs presented a vibrant picture of educational synergy, where Heads of Institutions, teachers, parents, students, and community members came together on a common platform, reflecting a shared commitment towards academic growth and student well-being.

The meetings served as a dynamic forum for meaningful interaction and constructive dialogue. Detailed discussions were held on students' academic progress, attendance patterns, learning outcomes, behavioural aspects, and overall holistic development. Key highlight was the

active and heartfelt participation of parents and community members, who not only engaged in productive discussions but also offered valuable suggestions and feedback. This strengthened the bridge between home and school, reinforcing the idea that quality education is a shared responsibility.

The initiative marks a significant step towards fostering a culture of accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement in the education system. It reflects the collective resolve of all stakeholders to create a nurturing and academically enriching environment for every learner. Further, this outreach initiative strongly aligns with the ambitious vision of declaring 2026 as the "Year of Academic Excellence."

The Chief Education Officer reiterated its commitment to this mission and calls upon all stakeholders to work with renewed zeal, unity, and dedication to achieve new benchmarks in educational excellence.

DC Athar chairs 45th NCORD meeting

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BUDGAM: The 45th District-Level NCORD (Narco Coordination) Committee meeting was today convened at the DC Office Budgam under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, along with SSP Budgam Nikhil Borkar, to review the progress of ongoing anti-drug initiatives and to strategize further measures for achieving a drug-free Budgam.

The meeting was attended by ADC Budgam, all SDMs, ACP, CMO, Principals of Government Degree Colleges, DIO, DSWO, Medical Superintendent DH Budgam, Executive Officers of Municipal Committees, and other concerned officers. At the outset, a comprehensive review of the action taken on decisions from the previous NCORD meeting was carried out. Addressing the meeting, the DC reiterated that drug abuse is not merely a law enforcement issue but a serious social challenge impacting families and communities.



He stressed that strict and decisive action must continue against drug peddlers, traffickers, and illegal cultivators, while ensuring a compassionate and supportive approach towards individuals battling addiction. He emphasized the need for a multi-pronged strategy encompassing enforcement, deterrence, treatment, and mass awareness. All departments were directed to intensify efforts to eliminate narcotics cultivation and dismantle supply networks.

The DC underscored that roadsides, embankments, and Panchayat areas must remain free from cannabis and poppy cultivation through coordinated and sustained drives.

Reviewing enforcement measures, the DC directed that all chemist shops must ensure 100% CCTV coverage and adopt Computerized Billing Systems (CBS) to enhance transparency. He instructed the Drug Inspector to conduct regular inspections and ensure compli-

ance, including availability of CCTV footage and billing records.

The Excise Department was directed to work in close coordination with Agriculture, Revenue, and Police departments for identification and destruction of illicit crops, along with registration of FIRs against violators.

To strengthen grassroots monitoring and awareness, the DC directed that monthly meetings be held in every Gram Panchayat to review the situation, spread awareness, and ensure community participation in the anti-drug campaign.

SDMs were asked to engage religious scholars and local stakeholders to promote awareness against substance abuse and encourage the concept of "Nasha-Mukt Panchayats."

The Rural Development Department was tasked with organizing special Gram Sabhas focused on drug abuse awareness, while the DSWO was directed to launch extensive IEC campaigns across rural and urban areas, including educational institutions.

The DC further directed that the Addiction Treatment Facility (ATF) at District Hospital Budgam must remain fully operational round-the-clock, and the Drug De-Addiction Centre be made fully functional for admitting and treating patients.

The DC directed the Employment Department to facilitate recovered victims of drug addiction in accessing self-employment opportunities under schemes such as Mission YUVA, PMEGP, and other livelihood programmes, enabling their reintegration into society with dignity.

He also instructed that all Government Degree Colleges in the district ensure installation of CCTV cameras within their campuses to strengthen monitoring and preventive measures.

The DC stated that strict action will continue against all those involved in drug-related activities, while full support will be extended to victims seeking rehabilitation. He emphasised that the success of this campaign depends on collective efforts of government agencies.