

# CS pushes for time-bound reforms to transform higher education

**EARTH NEWS SERVICE**  
**JAMMU:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo on Saturday chaired a comprehensive review meeting of the Higher Education Department (HED) to strategise a forward-looking roadmap for advancing higher education and steering Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) in Jammu and Kashmir towards excellence. The meeting was attended by the Vice-Chancellors of various Universities; Commissioner Secretary, HED; Registrars of the Universities; Director Colleges; and other senior officers of the department. Emphasising the need for institutional accountability and time-bound reforms, the Chief Secretary directed all HEIs to formulate their own actionable plans for implementation of reform measures recommended during the 5th Chief



Secretaries' Conference chaired by the Prime Minister himself. He stressed strict adherence to timelines and called for a results-oriented approach without any laxity. He observed that these reform measures are closely aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and form a strong foundation for achieving the objectives envisioned for higher education institutions in the Union Territory. Taking a detailed review of faculty positions and student enrollment across universities and colleges,

the Chief Secretary directed that faculty vacancies be filled up to at least 90 percent by August this year, underscoring that quality education hinges on adequate and competent teaching staff. Highlighting the need for academic relevance, he called for a comprehensive audit of all courses offered by universities and affiliated colleges. He stressed that courses with low demand or outdated content should be phased out and replaced with emerging, technology-driven programmes that align with market needs and student aspirations.

The Chief Secretary also emphasised regular updation of curricula to reflect latest developments and research in respective fields. He instructed institutions to integrate skill-based courses with conventional academic programmes to enhance employability and industry readiness of graduates. Focusing on professional education, he directed the Vice-Chancellors of IUST and SMVDU to undertake a detailed study of engineering colleges and schools of architecture in the UT and recommend measures to improve enrolment.

# NC focused on ULB, Panchayat Polls: Rattan

**EARTH NEWS SERVICE**  
**JAMMU:** The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (NC) Ajay Kumar Sadhotra former minister and Additional General Secretary and Provincial President for Jammu, Rattan Lal Gupta, on Saturday asserted that the party's anticipated success in the upcoming Urban Local Bodies (ULB) and Panchayat elections across the Jammu region will significantly strengthen the Omar Abdullah-led government's development outreach and help reverse the decade-long developmental setbacks witnessed during the previous BJP regime. Addressing a workers' meeting of Jammu East Assembly Segment at Sher-e Kashmir Bhawan, Jammu, chaired by Chandar Mohan Sharma District President Jammu Urban, Sadhotra emphasized the urgent need to prioritize urban development and grassroots governance in the region.

"People of Jammu have realized the hollow promises made over the past decade. The forthcoming ULB and Panchayat elections will provide them an opportunity to reinforce a government that is committed to inclusive growth and equitable development," Sadhotra said. He further criticized the BJP's much-publicized Smart City initiative in Jammu, alleging that it failed to deliver tangible results on the ground. "The so-called Smart City project in Jammu remains a glaring example of mismanagement and unfulfilled commitments. Basic urban infrastructure continues to suffer, exposing the gap between claims and reality," he added. Provincial President Jammu JKNC, Rattan Lal Gupta while addressing the gathering, echoed similar sentiments and called for renewed public participation in strengthening democratic

institutions at the grassroots level. "Urban development cannot be achieved through slogans and announcements alone. It requires a sincere approach, transparent governance, and active involvement of the people. The failure of the BJP's policies, particularly in urban sectors, has only widened the trust deficit among citizens," Gupta said. He further stressed that the National Conference remains committed to restoring confidence among the people by ensuring accountable governance and focusing on core developmental issues. The meeting witnessed enthusiastic participation from party workers, who reiterated their commitment to mobilizing public support ahead of the upcoming elections. Gupta emphasized the cadre of the party to gear up workers in their respective areas to strengthen the party and Omar led Government.

**BJP ULB Cell holds meet**  
**POONCH:** Urban Local Bodies (ULB) Cell of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Jammu & Kashmir, held its meeting in Poonch district. ULB Cell Convener, J&K BJP Pawan Singh, along with Co-Conveners Ajay Gupta, and Dinesh Gupta, chiefly addressed the meeting reaffirming Cell's commitment to strengthening the party at the grassroots level and preparing for the upcoming elections in the Union Territory. BJP District President Poonch chaired the meeting, which witnessed the active participation of the entire district team, office bearers of various morchas, executive members, representatives of municipal committees, and prominent residents. The enthusiastic presence of party workers reflected the growing organizational strength of the BJP in the region.

# JKAACL organises literary interaction

**EARTH NEWS SERVICE**  
**JAMMU:** The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages on Saturday organised a literary interaction titled "Meet the Eminent Writer with Dr. Lalit Gupta." The event drew an impressive gathering of academicians, writers, cultural personalities, and students from across the region. In her welcome address, Sonali Arun Gupta, Additional Secretary of JKAACL, stated that Dr. Lalit Gupta's contribution to the art, culture, and heritage of Jammu and Kashmir is immense and continues to serve as a guiding force for the new generation of the region. Delivering his address, Dr. Lalit Gupta

shared personal anecdotes linked with the cultural movement of the Jammu region. He spoke about the role of the Institute of Music and Fine Arts Jammu in promoting visual arts, especially painting, sculpture, and terracotta art. He also shared his experiences with legendary artists such as G. R. Santosh, Master Sansar Chand, and Vijay Gupta, among others. Speaking about performing arts, Dr. Gupta stated that Jammu has been contributing immensely to theatre and stands on par with the national and international theatre scene. He also reflected on literary developments in Dogri, Gojri, Pahari, Urdu, and Hindi, sharing his experiences with the literary movement of the region.

# Police crackdown on bovine smuggling

**RAJOURI:** During Naka Checking at Thalka under the jurisdiction of PS Nowshera a tipper vehicle bearing registration No. JK02BW-0824 was intercepted. During checking 07 bovine animals were found loaded in a cruel manner. The driver Mohd Mustafa S/o Mohd Shafi R/o Rajdhani Thanamandi District Rajouri was arrested on the spot. In this regard a Case FIR No. 59/2026 under relevant sections of law has been registered at PS Nowshera. During naka checking at Chatyari under the jurisdiction of PP Chingus Tata Mobile bearing registration No. JK11A-2475 was intercepted. During checking 03 bovine animals were found loaded in a cruel

# Emphasizes laid on critical role of FPOs in developing rural economy

**EARTH NEWS SERVICE**  
**JAMMU:** Commissioner Secretary Cooperatives, Yasha Mudgal on Saturday chaired a meeting at Civil Secretariat here to review the performance of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) registered under the Central Sector Scheme across Jammu and Kashmir. The meeting was attended by Registrar Cooperatives, Mohammad Shafi Chak; Regional Director, National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC), Lalit Goel; Director Finance, Cooperative department; Managing Directors of Anantnag Central Cooperative Bank, Jammu Central Cooperative Bank, and Kamco Bank; representatives from SKUAST Jammu and SKUAST Kashmir; and other senior officers of the Cooperative Department. Addressing the officers during the meeting, Yasha Mudgal emphasized on the critical role of FPOs in enhancing farmers' income,



strengthening agricultural value chains, and promoting collective farming practices. She stressed on urgent need for expediting registration process of remaining FPOs, ensuring timely release of financial assistance, and providing continuous handholding support to make these organizations sustainable and viable in the long run. She directed the Regional Director, NCDC to create widespread awareness among the general masses, especially farmers, about the range of financial loans and other facilities available for the smooth functioning of FPO cooperatives. She assured that all necessary support

will be extended to FPO cooperatives for scaling up their business operations as per the guidelines of the scheme. She further directed that capacity building programmes for all FPOs shall be organized in the coming days and all FPOs should be credit-linked at the earliest to strengthen their financial position. The Commissioner Secretary instructed all Cluster Based Business Organizations (CBBOs) to achieve the prescribed milestones without delay so that early release of funds can be ensured by NCDC and FPOs do not face any funding constraints in their day-to-day operations. She highlighted that in view of limited

government jobs for youth, FPOs have immense potential to function as powerful livelihood generation accelerators, particularly for strengthening the rural economy and contributing towards the national goals of "Viksit Bharat" and "Atmanirbhar Bharat". The Commissioner Secretary directed the administrators of District Central Cooperative Banks (DCCBs) to increase number of awareness programmes for boosting membership in the FPOs. She emphasized that every FPO must avail the first tranche of the Equity Grant at the earliest for ensuring smooth functioning. She further instructed all concerned officers to ensure better coordination among various stakeholders, including line departments, implementing agencies, and financial institutions, so that the desired objectives of the Central Sector Scheme are achieved within the stipulated timelines.

# Shiv Sena submits memo regarding mandatory shows for Dogri films to DM

**EARTH NEWS SERVICE**  
**JAMMU:** Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) Jammu & Kashmir unit has taken a strong stand against the arbitrary pricing of tickets and food items in cinemas and multiplexes, demanding an immediate curb on what it termed as "open loot." The party also strongly advocated for mandatory screening space for Dogri and other local language films on the big screen. In this regard, a party delegation submitted a written memorandum to the District Magistrate of Jammu, who assured appropriate action from the administration. During a program held at the party's central office, State President Manish Sahni stated that cinema-goers are being openly exploited. He said that while ticket prices are already skyrocketing, food items like popcorn, cold drinks, and other consumables are being sold at several times their actual cost, amounting to blatant economic exploitation. Sahni warned that if this "loot" is not stopped immediately, Shiv Sena will not hesitate to take to the streets and launch an agitation.



He urged cinema owners to end arbitrary practices and called on the administration to issue strict guidelines without delay. Alongside this, Sahni also raised the demand for prioritizing Dogri and other regional language films in multiplexes and cinemas. He stated that the rich Dogri culture and local talent of Jammu have

long been neglected. While big-budget external films receive ample screen space, local artists and filmmakers deserve equal opportunities. Shiv Sena demanded that every multiplex must allocate fixed shows for local films to promote regional cinema and provide a platform for youth within their own region.

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# MCM prog held at AIIMS

**EARTH NEWS SERVICE**  
**SAMBA:** A three-day Mass Casualty Management (MCM) training program was successfully organized from March 26 to 28 at AIIMS Vijaypur, Jammu under the guidance of Prof. (Dr) D.N Sharma, ED and CEO, AIIMS Jammu. The program was conducted under the expert supervision of Dr Harald Veen, MCM Course Lead, WHO, an internationally recognized course leader in disaster and emergency care. The primary objective of the program was to enhance the preparedness and response capacity of healthcare professionals in managing mass casualty incidents effectively especially in casualty-prone areas in the North zone. Participants included doctors and nurses from AIIMS Jammu, AIIMS Delhi,



and District Hospital Leh who were trained through interactive sessions and hands-on exercises. The training emphasized critical aspects such as triage, rapid assessment, coordinated teamwork, and efficient utilization of available resources during

emergencies. Real-life scenarios were recreated to help participants develop practical skills required in disaster situations. This initiative marks a significant step toward strengthening emergency healthcare services in the region. By equipping healthcare workers with

essential knowledge and skills, the program aims to improve patient outcomes during large-scale emergencies and disasters. Such training programs are crucial in building a resilient healthcare system capable of responding promptly and efficiently to unforeseen events.

# Special train to run from Jammu to Chhapra during Summer

**EARTH NEWS SERVICE**  
**JAMMU:** Special trains have been operated periodically within the Jammu Division to enhance passenger convenience. These services provide passengers with comfortable amenities as well as improved travel options. Extending these facilities further, a special reserved train—numbered 05193/05194—is being introduced to run between Jammu and Chhapra. Regarding the operational details and timetable of Special Reserved Train No. 05193/05194, the special train is scheduled to complete 15 trips in each direction. Firstly, Train No. 05194 will operate for a total of 15 trips, running from April 8 to July 15. train will depart

from Jammu Tawi every Wednesday night at 01:20 hrs and arrive at Chhapra the following day (Thursday) at 09:15 hrs. Train No. 05193 will operate for 15 trips, running from April 6 to July 13. This train will depart from Chhapra every Monday afternoon at 14:12 hrs and arrive at Jammu the following day (Tuesday) at 23:00 hrs. Looking at the stoppages along the route of this special train, it will halt in both directions at the following stations: Kathua, Pathankot Cantt., Jalandhar Cantt., Ludhiana, Ambala Cantt., Yamunanagar Jagadhri, Saharanpur, Roorkee, Lakar, Moradabad, Bareilly, Shahjahanpur, Sitapur, Gonda, Basti, Gorakhpur, Kaptanganj, Padrauna, Thawe, Dighwa Dubauli, and Chhapra Kacheri.

# Min Dar inaugurates veterinary hospital at R S Pura

**EARTH NEWS SERVICE**  
**JAMMU:** In a significant move to strengthen the livestock healthcare and support the farming community, Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, on Saturday inaugurated the Sub-Divisional Veterinary Hospital at Ranbir Singh Pura (R.S. Pura). The newly established facility is set to enhance access to quality veterinary services for the farmers across R.S. Pura, Suchetgarh and adjoining areas, thereby contributing to improved livestock productivity and rural livelihoods. The inauguration ceremony was attended by MLA Suchetgarh, Professor Gharu Ram Bhagat; Director Animal Husbandry Jammu, Sanjay



Gupta; Director Agriculture Jammu, Anil Gupta; Director Horticulture Jammu, Gul Syed; SDM R.S. Pura, Anuradha Thakur, along with other senior officers, local representatives and larger gathering. The Minister described the hospital as a vital asset dedicated to the farming community, equipped to provide comprehensive healthcare services for bovine animals as well as pets. He emphasized

that the facility will ensure timely treatment, preventive care and better disease management for livestock. Javid Ahmad Dar directed the concerned officers to ensure that all services and facilities are made fully functional, enabling the farmers to access quality veterinary care at their doorstep. Highlighting the government's focus on holistic agricultural growth, the Minister said that 29 schemes under

the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADDP) are being implemented to transform the agriculture and allied sectors. He termed agriculture a noble and sustainable profession, urging the youth to take it up as a viable career option and become job creators. He further underscored that the government is providing substantial subsidized financial assistance to support establishment of agriculture-based enterprises. Emphasizing the importance of research and data-driven planning, the Minister stated that students, scholars and professionals are being encouraged to actively engage with rural communities, visit villages and panchayats and collect field-level data to strengthen policy formulation and improve outcomes in agriculture and allied sectors.

# Bovine smuggler held, 15 cattle rescued: Police

**EARTH NEWS SERVICE**  
**SAMBA:** Tightening noose against bovine smugglers and their propagators, Samba Police has successfully foiled a bovine smuggling attempt in the jurisdiction of Police Station Ghagwal, arrested a bovine smuggler and rescued fifteen (15) bovines from the clutches of bovine smuggler. The vehicle used in the illegal transportation of bovines was also seized. Acting on an information received from reliable sources, a team of Police Station Ghagwal intercepted a truck bearing registration

No. HR55Y-2050 at Naka NHW Tapyal. During checking, fifteen bovines were found inside the vehicle which were tied in a cruel manner and were being transported illegally without any valid permission. All the bovines have been rescued and the vehicle has also been seized. The bovine smuggler identified as Sahil S/o Saleem Ahmed R/o Hakam Shah Colony, Saharanpur (UP) has been arrested. A case FIR No. 34/2026 u/s 223 BNS, 11 PCA Act has been registered at Police Station Ghagwal and investigation started.