

# Rs 3,340 Cr being utilized to strengthen disaster readiness

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo on Tuesday chaired a high-level review meeting to assess the road-map and ongoing initiatives aimed at strengthening disaster management mechanisms across the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. Emphasizing a proactive and resilient approach, the Chief Secretary directed the concerned departments to effectively plan and utilize funds amounting to ₹3,340 Cr earmarked under various components of disaster management, mitigation, and risk reduction across all



districts. The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Finance; Additional Chief Secretary, PWD; Principal Secretary, DMRR&R;

Divisional Commissioner, Jammu/Kashmir, Director CD & SDRF; CEO, ERA, and other senior officers. Deputy Commissioners from all districts participated through video conferencing. During the meeting, the Chief Secretary underscored the need for a focused and structured approach across six key verticals of disaster management including Early Warning Systems, Risk Reduction, Relief & Response, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, and Capacity Building & Training.

He called for sustained efforts to build a disaster-resilient Jammu & Kashmir

through long-term, evidence-based planning. Stressing the importance of expert-driven policy formulation, he directed the department to undertake detailed analysis through the constituted expert committee for developing precise, actionable recommendations tailored for each department. He further emphasized leveraging mitigation funds under Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF), landslides, and floods, to reduce vulnerabilities and enhance preparedness.

Highlighting the approaching monsoon season,

the Chief Secretary instructed all Deputy Commissioners to identify vulnerable areas in advance and implement preventive measures based on past experiences. He also laid emphasis on strict enforcement of disaster management laws, calling for the formulation of Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) and their effective implementation at the district level to ensure compliance and accountability.

Additional Chief Secretary, Finance, Shailendra Kumar, stressed the need to safeguard critical connectivity infrastructure along with life and property.

# NCORD meet outlines measures to reinforce anti-drug abuse initiatives

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**KISHTWAR:** Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma on Tuesday chaired District-Level NCORD (Narco Coordination Centre) Committee meeting to review and reinforce ongoing anti-drug abuse initiatives in the district.

The deliberations centered on strengthening the institutional framework for drug de-addiction and evaluating the progress achieved under the Information, Education & Communication (IEC) campaign being implemented as part of the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan.

At the outset, District Social Welfare Officer Tariq Parveez Qazi gave a detailed

presentation of Action Taken Report (ATR), highlighting the implementation status of decisions taken in the previous NCORD meeting.

The Deputy Commissioner sought inputs on vulnerable pockets, affected demographic groups and identified hotspots requiring urgent and targeted interventions. He also reviewed the spectrum of preventive, rehabilitative and enforcement measures being executed by the enforcement departments.

The Deputy Commissioner directed Heads of enforcement Departments (HoDs) to encourage active participation from designated resource persons and officials in the IEC campaign under the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan. He

cautioned that any instance of negligence or non-compliance would invite strict action.

To bolster grassroots-level interventions, the Deputy Commissioner directed the Sub-Divisional Magistrates and Tehsildars to expedite the declaration of Panchayats as "Nasha Mukh" in accordance with prescribed Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs), after due verification and active community participation.

He also directed for empanelment of dedicated volunteers at the Sub-Division and Panchayat levels. "These volunteers will function as whistle blowers and community mobilizers at the grassroots level," he added.

# Women writing new chapter of J&K's growth under Omar Govt: Sheikh Bashir



EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Provincial Secretary, Jammu, Sheikh Bashir Ahmad, on Tuesday reiterated that the cornerstone of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference government led by Omar Abdullah is to place women at the forefront of development and progress in the region.

He made these remarks while addressing a meeting of the Women's Wing functionaries, chaired by former MLA and State Women's Wing Vice President Bimla Luthra.

In his address, Sheikh Bashir Ahmad highlighted the significance of the "Zero-Ticket Travel" initiative, describing it as a transformative step that enhances women's access to education, employment, and public participation. He noted that the initiative strengthens women's dignity, safety, and empowerment across Jammu and

Kashmir.

Addressing the gathering Vijay Lochan Chairman SC Cell emphasized that the government is actively promoting women's empowerment through key initiatives such as Lakhpati Didi, aimed at enabling financial independence among women.

He also underscored the importance of the Youth Mission, which encourages entrepreneurship among young women, particularly in digital and e-commerce sectors. These efforts, he said, reflect a strong commitment to inclusive growth by empowering women to become self-reliant and active contributors to the economy.

Highlighting the ongoing initiatives of the NC Women's Wing, Bimla Luthra stated that the organization remains deeply engaged with the public through continuous and purpose-driven outreach. "Through door-to-door consultations, public meet-

ings, and targeted outreach programmes, we are listening to women from all walks of life, understanding their challenges, and ensuring that their voices translate into actionable policies," she said.

She added that the Women's Wing is not only creating opportunities but also nurturing leadership that is informed, responsive, and transformative. She emphasized the women cadre of the party to get ready for forthcoming Panchayat and Urban Local Bodies elections and strengthen the party at grass root level to ensure glorious victory in these elections.

Among those who were present in the meeting included: Pardeep Bali Provincial Secretary Jammu, Laxmi Datta Senior leader, Rakesh Singh Raka Vice President Central Zone, Priyanka Sharma, Meenakshi Raina, Sonia Sharma, Ruchita Gupta, Satvir Kour, Arti Suri and others.

# Shiv Sena terms Temple Bill rejection 'Collusion'

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** The Jammu & Kashmir unit of Shiv Sena (UBT) has launched a sharp attack after the 'Temple Protection and Anti-Encroachment' private member bill, introduced by a BJP MLA, was rejected by voice vote in the Assembly. State President Manish Sahni termed it a well-planned collusion between the BJP and the government, calling it a blatant betrayal of the faith of the Hindu community and Kashmiri Pandits.

Sahni stated that more



than 1,400 temples and their properties in Jammu & Kashmir are under illegal encroachment, with an estimated value exceeding ₹25,000 crore. He said that after the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits in the 1990s, large-scale

encroachments took place on temple lands, while successive governments remained mute spectators. Today, hundreds of temples are either encroached upon or lie in ruins.

Targeting the BJP, Sahni said that if the par-

ty was genuinely serious, it would not have limited itself to a private bill but would have brought a concrete government proposal to enact a strong law. He also dismissed the Deputy Chief Minister's claim that "existing laws are sufficient," terming it insensitive and disconnected from ground realities.

Shiv Sena has demanded that, on the lines of the Waqf Act, a strict and dedicated law be enacted for the protection of Hindu religious sites, along with the formation of a strong and transparent temple man-

agement board. The party also called for the immediate release of a white paper on encroachments of temple properties in the Kashmir Valley.

Sahni warned that if concrete steps are not taken soon for the protection, restoration, and removal of encroachments from temples, Shiv Sena will take to the streets and expose the double standards of both the government and the opposition before the public. On this occasion Vikas Bakshi, Sanjay Bhatt, Jasbir Singh were present.

# Varuna Anand appointed National Initiative Head FICCI FLO

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**NEW DELHI:** Varuna Anand has been appointed as the National Initiative Head for Textiles, Handlooms & Handicrafts and a National Governing Body (GB) Member of FICCI FLO for the term 2026-2027, under the dynamic and visionary leadership of the 43rd National President, Puja Garg.

This prestigious appointment underscores Varuna Anand's continued commitment to advancing India's rich textile heritage while fostering sustainable livelihoods and strengthening women-led enterprises. A textile designer by profession, her work has been deeply rooted in reviving and promoting the Art of Shawl making from Kashmir. In her new role, she will work to carry forward the President's vision by building a strong and inclusive ecosystem for textiles, handlooms, and handicrafts. Her focus



will be on preserving traditional crafts while enabling innovation, enhancing market access, and creating meaningful linkages at both national and global levels. A key priority will also be to strengthen the capabilities within the FLO network, alongside driving impactful engagement with grassroots artisans, Self-Help Groups (SHGs), and craft communities across the coun-

try. With five years of experience as a GB member through her association with the FLO JKL Chapter, Varuna Anand has consistently contributed to high-impact initiatives. She also served as Chairperson of FLO JKL (2023-24) & National Initiative Head Partnership & Collaborations FICCI FLO (2025-26). Expressing her gratitude, Varuna Anand thanked Ms. Puja

Garg for her trust and confidence, and reaffirmed her commitment to strengthening India's textile and handicrafts sector—an enduring cultural legacy and a vital driver of inclusive economic growth. She emphasized taking pride in our traditional textiles and crafts leads to creating sustainable opportunities for the artisan communities.

FICCI FLO, one of South East Asia's leading women-led chambers of commerce, has a strong membership base of over 15,000 women across 21 chapters and 4 YFLO chapters. Through its extensive network, it continues to champion women's leadership, enterprise, and economic empowerment.

In her new capacity, Varuna Anand aims to further this mission by fostering collaboration, strengthening networks, and enabling inclusive and sustainable growth within the textiles, handlooms, and handicrafts sector.

# Arrangements for Baisakhi reviewed

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**REASI:** Deputy Commissioner Reasi Kumar Abhishek on Tuesday chaired a meeting to review and finalize arrangements for the Baisakhi festival at the holy shrine of Dera Baba Banda Bahadur.

The annual mela is scheduled to be held from April 12 to April 14.

During the meeting, a comprehensive review of arrangements was undertaken, covering security, traffic management, sanitation, parking facilities and provision of essential amenities for the devotees.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti

to ensure regular supply of safe drinking water and station a water tanker at the venue during the mela days. The Executive Engineer JPDCI was instructed to provide uninterrupted power supply throughout the festival.

To ensure smooth movement of devotees, the Executive Engineer PMGSY was directed to carry out necessary repairs of roads and potholes leading to the shrine. The Motor Vehicles Department was asked to make adequate traffic arrangements and ensure availability of additional vehicles for public convenience. The meeting decided to restrict the movement of heavy vehicles on the shrine route

# Absconder held after 7 years

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** Janipur Police have apprehended Sunil Bhagat S/o Swami Raj — originally of Juddi, Doda, presently residing at Bari Brahmana — who was wanted in FIR No. 123/2019. The case is registered under Sections 376, 109, 363 IPC and Sections 3/4 of the POCSO Act at PS Janipur.

The accused had been evading arrest for a considerable period. Acting on specific inputs and sustained efforts, police teams located and arrested him.

# Drug peddler held with heroin

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**SAMBA:** Continuing its drive against drug smugglers/peddlers, Samba Police has arrested a drug peddler in the jurisdiction of Police Station Vijaypur and recovered approximately 50.17 grams heroin-like substance (Chitta) from his possession.

A team of Police Station Vijaypur during patrolling near Shiv Nagar area, intercepted a motorcycle bearing Registration No. JK02BW-3858 which was coming from Rakh Barotian side and moving towards Shiv

Nagar Vijaypur. During checking, approximately 50.17 grams of heroin-like substance (Chitta) was recovered from the possession of said motorcyclist.

The drug peddler identified as Aman Hussain S/o Mohd Shafi R/o Chananore Ghoumanhas Tehsil Marh district Jammu has been arrested and the contraband item has been seized. The motorcycle involved in the crime has also been seized by the Police. A case FIR No 48/2026 U/S 8/21/22/25 NDPS Act has been registered at PS Vijaypur and investigation started.

# Mahant Bharat Priye to install Lord Hanuman idol on April 2

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** In a remarkable continuation of his grandfather's spiritual legacy, Mahant Bharat Priye, carrying forward the revered teachings of Baba Ludhar Mani Dass, is all set to install an idol of Lord Hanuman at village Channi Tana, Tehsil Pargwal, Sub Division Khor, on April 2, coinciding with the auspicious occasion of Hanuman Jayanti. The event marks a spiritually significant moment for devotees in the region and beyond.

Baba Ludhar Mani Dass, popularly remembered for the legendary Baba Ludhri Ka Bhandara, established a tradition that has become synonymous with selfless service and devotion. This unique Bhandara, known as the "never-ending feast," is famed for feeding devotees without ever running out of food, symbolizing abundance, generosity, and divine grace. It has served as a source of spiritual inspiration and community bonding for generations, reflecting the ethos of selflessness and collective welfare.

In keeping with these sacred customs, Mahant Bharat Priye, accompanied by his disciples, today carried the idol of Lord Hanuman to the holy River Chenab for ritual bathing—a centuries-old practice performed before the installation of deities in temples. This ceremonial bath is considered vital to sanctify the idol and imbue it with spiritual energy, reinforcing purity, devotion, and divine presence.

The formal installation



of the Lord Hanuman idol on April 2 will take place in a spiritually charged setting, transforming the temple premises into a focal point of devotion and communal harmony. The event is expected to attract a large number of devotees from surrounding areas, who will participate in prayers, seek blessings, and reaffirm their faith in the ideals represented by Lord Hanuman—devotion, courage, humility, and selfless service to humanity.

The occasion is also significant as it ensures the continuation of the Bhandara tradition established by Baba Ludhar Mani Dass. By organizing this event, Mahant Bharat Priye emphasizes the importance of sustaining age-old spiritual practices that promote unity, charity, and moral values among the community. It serves as a reminder that spiritual leadership is not only about religious rituals but also about fostering service, faith, and ethical living.

Mahant Bharat Priye's initiative reflects a deep commitment to preserving

cultural and spiritual heritage while inspiring younger generations to remain rooted in faith and connected to their traditions. The forthcoming installation and Hanuman Jayanti celebrations promise a harmonious blend of devotion, ritual, and social engagement, further strengthening the spiritual and cultural fabric of the region. The event is set to be a moment of inspiration, devotion, and collective celebration, highlighting the enduring relevance of spiritual values in contemporary society.

# Bali Bhagat mud-slings Rahul Gandhi over dual citizenship

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**JAMMU:** Senior BJP leader and former Health Minister Bali Bhagat on Tuesday launched a scathing attack on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over allegations related to dual citizenship, terming the issue as "extremely serious" and a direct affront to the spirit of the Indian Constitution.

In a strongly worded statement, Bali Bhagat said that the people of India have the right to know the truth, and any ambiguity on such a critical matter raises serious questions about accountability and transparency in public life.

He asserted that "any individual who is associated with voting rights or



citizenship in more than one country is the real 'vote chori'," adding that such actions, if proven, would amount to betrayal of the trust reposed by the citizens of India.

Bali Bhagat further criticized the Congress party for what he described as

its continued silence and evasive stance on the matter. He said that instead of providing clear answers, Congress leaders have been attempting to divert attention and mislead the public.

"Congress must come clean. The nation deserves clarity, not confusion. Issues related to citizenship are not mere technicalities—they strike at the very core of national integrity and sovereignty," he said.

He also emphasized that Indian law does not permit dual citizenship, and anyone holding public office or participating in the democratic process must adhere strictly to the constitutional provisions.

Taking a broader swipe at the Congress party, Bali

Bhagat alleged that the party has a history of disregarding institutional norms and accountability, and this issue further exposes what he termed as its "double standards."

He urged the concerned authorities to conduct a thorough and transparent investigation into the matter and ensure that the truth is brought before the people of the country.

"India's democracy is built on trust and rule of law. No individual, no matter how powerful, can be above it," Bali Bhagat said.

The remarks have added fresh political heat to the ongoing debate, with the issue once again triggering sharp exchanges between the BJP and the Congress.

# Power shutdown in Jammu Division

**JAMMU:** Chief Engineer (Distribution) JPDCI Jammu has informed that the power supply to Transport Nagar, Narwal, Railway Colony, Part of Channi Himmat, Industries, Seoda, Kanal, Birpur and adjoining areas will remain affected on April 01 from 9 am to 2 pm.

Meanwhile, Superintending Engineer (Distribution) JPDCI, O&M Circle Kathua has informed that the power supply to Patel Nagar, Shiva Nagar, Kalibari and adjoining areas will remain affected on April 01 from 8 am to 12 noon.

**NOTICE**  
I, Mohd. Yousuf F/O Mohd. Zaid wants to apply Date of Birth certificate of my child, Mohd Zaid Date Of Birth is (07-12-2022) As I am going to apply for Date of Birth certificate of my child, objection if any may be conveyed to Tehsildar Office Bhaderwah within in 07 days.