

JAMMU

@JKACB
J&K ACB traps and arrests Des Raj, Junior Assistant, Social Welfare Department, Billawar, District Kathua for

@Dis_Pol_Jammu
Jammu Police foiled a bovine smuggling attempt in Nikki Tawi, rescuing 37 animals. Accused fled. FIR registered at PS Nowabad. During investigation, an illegal structure linked to the activity was identified and demolished as per law.

MEDICINE:
On this day in 1998; World Health Organization declared the celebration of World Health Day as Women's Medicine Day.

VILLAGE:
In the entire Samba district of Jammu division, 378 are total villages.

TONGAS PROHIBITED
Tongas or Horse cart were extensively used as a popular means of transport in recent past. With the advent of new and faster means of transport this vehicle becomes hurdle in the smooth traffic flow. So many of the areas/roads have become prohibited for Tongas.

Speaker Rather presides over 102.35 hrs in 22 sittings of Budget Session 2026

JAMMU: Speaker Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly (JKLA), Abdul Rahim Rather, has created a remarkable milestone in the history of legislative proceedings by presiding over all 22 sittings of the recently concluded Budget Session.

Demonstrating exceptional dedication and commitment towards parliamentary responsibilities, the Speaker personally chaired proceedings for an impressive 102.35 hours out of the total 110.36 hours of the session, while three members on the panel of Chairmen collectively chaired 8 hours.

In the absence of Deputy Speaker, this achievement stands as a record and marks a first-of-its-kind instance in the legislative history.

Notably, despite challenges, the Speaker's unwavering presence of mind and active leadership throughout the session have been widely admired. His steadfast approach ensured the smooth and efficient conduct of the Assembly's business which is unprecedented and unparalleled in the Legislative history.

The Members from across party lines expressed their deep appreciation for the Speaker's exemplary efforts, acknowledging his dedication serving as an inspiration and a testament to his sense of duty.

Meanwhile a delegation of J&K PHE (Jal Shak-ti) Contractors Coordination Committee today called on Speaker JKLA Abdul Rahim Rather at Assembly Secretariat.

The Delegation apprised the Speaker regarding the pressing issues faced by JJM contractors. These included pending payments under JJM, delay in submission of the House Committee report besides extending timely relief through the release of pending bills and deposits.

The delegation urged for immediate attention to these matters to ensure smooth execution of the ongoing works and ease the financial burden on the contractors.

Responding to their issues, the Speaker said that the Assembly has given two months extension to the House Committee to submit the report in this regard. He assured that the report will be submitted within the stipulated time. He told the delegation that all their concerns will be taken up with the government for early redress.

The delegation was headed by Nazir Ahmed Mir President Kashmir Province and Rakesh Kumar President Jammu Province. The other members of the Committees were also present.

CS reviews implementation strategy for urban challenge fund in J&K

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a review meeting to assess the roadmap for implementation of the ambitious Urban Challenge Fund (UCF) in the Union Territory. The presentation was made by the Housing & Urban Development Department, outlining a transformative approach to urban financing and infrastructure development.

The meeting besides the concerned Administrative Secretaries was attended by Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD and other HoDs of the Department.

The Chief Secretary took this occasion to impress upon the concerned departments to identify projects strictly in line with the scheme guidelines. He observed that the scheme has immense potential to transform the standards of urban centres and emphasized that



the Union Territory should optimally leverage it for upgrading infrastructure and making cities more liveable and citizen-friendly.

Highlighting the innovative funding structure, it was informed that central assistance under UCF will be limited to 25% of project cost, acting as a catalytic instrument to mobilize at least 50% of funds through market sources such as bonds, bank loans, and public-private partnerships. This blended financing model is aimed at enhancing financial

ATR flights from Udhampur to start from existing premises in next few months: Dr Jitendra Singh

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Reviewing the status of the proposed airport at Udhampur for civilian operations, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh informed today that the process of land transfer has commenced with the concurrence of the UT government. He added that meanwhile, the tender for fabrication work has already been floated to start ATR flights from the existing premises in next few months.

Highlighting the importance of accessible and quality healthcare, the Minister informed that the Army Command Hospital Udhampur has agreed to extend super-speciality medical services to the civilian population. He asked the district administration and MLAs to create awareness among the public regarding these services, and to identify deserving patients who can be referred for specialised treatment. He suggested that health camps can be organ-



ized on a quarterly basis by the Command Hospital for the benefit of local people.

The Minister also reviewed the progress of branding of local milk-product Kaladi under the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative. He said, a project has been undertaken by National level Mysuru institute to technologically make Kaladi recipes viable for national and international food chains by extending its shelf life and delicacy without compromising its quality. The Minister noted that the initiative has the potential to generate sus-

tainable livelihood opportunities and enhance income for local producers.

Dr. Jitendra Singh was chairing the District Development and Monitoring Committee (DDMC) meeting here today to review the implementation and progress of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) and key infrastructure projects in the district.

Dr. Jitendra Singh also took note of the progress of the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway and expressed satisfaction that the project is picking up pace. He ob-

served that the corridor will significantly enhance connectivity, promote tourism and contribute to economic growth in the region.

The Minister also reviewed the status of the International Yoga Centre at Mantalai. He said it can be made operational through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model. He stated that opening the centre through this mode will help ensure professional management, optimal utilization of infrastructure and improved services as well as promote wellness tourism.

In his address, Dr. Jitendra Singh underscored that roads, drinking water and power supply must be accorded the highest priority. He directed the implementing agencies to ensure time-bound execution of projects. Stressing the importance of forging close coordination by the district authorities with elected representatives, Dr Singh emphasised that MLAs and other public representatives must be kept informed and actively involved in planning, execution and monitoring of developmental works.

Reviewing the progress of rural connectivity projects under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), the Minister highlighted pending issues related to forest clearances in certain parts of the district. He directed that the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) convene a meeting with local MLAs at the earliest to resolve bottlenecks and facilitate expeditious forest clearances so that road projects

are not delayed.

Taking stock of the power scenario in the district, Dr. Jitendra Singh called for urgent steps to augment and strengthen the electricity distribution network, including installation of additional transformers in underserved areas. He instructed that a meeting of stakeholders be held in consultation with NTPC to prepare a coordinated plan for improving power infrastructure.

During today's DISHA meeting, Deputy Commissioner, Sh. Minga Sherpa gave a presentation on the progress of Centrally Sponsored Schemes like Jal Jeevan Mission, AMRUT 2.0, PMGSY, PMAY, PM Surya Ghar Yojana and PM SHRI Schools in the district. The meeting was briefed on the status of construction of New Government Medical College in Udhampur. It was informed that radiology block would be completed soon and, GMC shall be handed over by June 2026.

Amid 'One Student-One Tree' call, Sakeena Itoo launches mega plantation drive

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: In a significant initiative aimed at promoting environmental sustainability, Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo today launched a mega plantation drive across Jammu and Kashmir from SRML Higher Secondary School (HSS) here to instil the spirit of environmental protection and green development among students.

MLAs Qaysar Jamshaid Lone; Justice (Retd) Hasnain Masoodi and Showkat Hussain Ganie; MD ICDS, Sajad Hussain Ganai; Director School Education Jammu; Naseem Javid Choudhary; Director Social Welfare Jammu, Ranjeet Singh; Director Health Jammu, Principal



SRML HSS Jammu, CEO Jammu, Principals and Headmasters of other HSSs and HSSs of Jammu district, large number of teachers and students were also present on the occasion.

Director Social Welfare Kashmir, Director Colleges, J&K, Director School Education Kashmir, Director Health Kashmir, Chief Education Officers of all dis-

tricts other than Jammu, Principals and Headmasters of various HSSs and HSSs along with students and faculty also participated in the plantation drive virtually.

The drive has been organised collectively by School Education, Higher Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education departments.

Javid Dar reviews progress on irrigation Khuls, micro irrigation works under MGNREGA

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, today chaired a review meeting to assess the progress on desilting works of Irrigation Khuls and the execution of Micro Irrigation projects undertaken under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act for the 2025-26 fiscal.

The meeting also reviewed the proposed action plan for the Financial Year 2026-27 aimed at strengthening the irrigation infrastructure and improving water availability for agriculture.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Rural Development Department Sheetal Nanda, Director RDD Jammu, Shehnaz Akhtar, Director RDD Kashmir, Shabir Hussain Bhat, Member Secretary MGNREGA, Waseem Raja, Chief Engineer of the Irrigation and Flood Control Department, Assistant Commissioners Development (ACDs) of both divisions and other senior officers of the concerned departments while the

outstation officers participated online.

During the meeting, the Member Secretary, MGNREGA, delivered a detailed PowerPoint Presentation highlighting the district-wise performance of Micro Irrigation works being implemented under the MGNREGA. The presentation informed that a total of 26,198 works were taken up across the Union Territory, of which, around 12,000 have been physically completed while 13,493 works are currently under execution. It was further apprised that the ongoing works are progressing at a steady pace and are expected to be completed by 10 April 2026, thereby strengthening the irrigation infrastructure and enhancing water availability for the farming community.

The meeting was further apprised that a total of ₹267.90 crore have been utilized for execution of these works. Large-scale desilting of irrigation khuls, nallahs and canals is being carried out to improve the water flow and enhance irrigation potential. These interventions are expected to significantly support the water harvesting and irrigation requirements for the upcoming cropping

JMC strengthens drainage infrastructure with wire mesh installations

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: The Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) is undertaking proactive measures to strengthen urban drainage systems and enhance aviation safety by installing wire mesh over major drains across the city. Acting under the directives of Commissioner JMC Dr. Devansh Yadav, the Health and Sanitation Wing is intensifying efforts to address persistent sanitation challenges.

It has been observed that in several areas, residents indiscriminately dispose of garbage and other waste materials into



open drains, leading to severe accumulation of filth and obstruction of water flow. To curb this practice, JMC has initiated the installation of wire mesh over drains, which acts as a preventive barrier against the dumping of

solid waste.

The installation of wire mesh over open drains and channels is a critical structural intervention designed to improve urban waste management and enhance hydraulic efficiency. The step will

help ensure the smooth flow of wastewater, reduce the risk of waterlogging and contribute to a cleaner urban environment. The JMC also conducts regular awareness campaigns to sensitize citizens about responsible waste disposal practices. These initiatives emphasize the importance of avoiding littering in public places, preventing open defecation, ensuring proper disposal of Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste, discouraging the use of polythene and refraining from dumping waste into water bodies such as rivers, ponds and drains.

Chemist shop closed in Akhnoor, notice issued to defaulter

JAMMU: To ensure strict compliance with the provisions of the Drugs & Cosmetics Act and adherence to the prescribed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) by the chemist shops, an inspection drive was conducted today across Sub Division Akhnoor.

The inspection team was led by Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Mukhter Ahmed and consisted of Sub Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Virender Gupta and the Drug Inspector.

The team inspected multiple medical establishments to verify the maintenance of proper records, functioning of CCTV cameras and the implementation of mandatory computerized billing systems.

BJP celebrates 47th foundation day across J&K

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Jammu & Kashmir, celebrated its 47th Foundation Day on April 6, with great enthusiasm and organizational fervor across the Union Territory.

The celebrations were led by J&K BJP President and Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), Sat Sharma CA, along with General Secretary (Organization) Ashok Koul and other senior leaders. The party flag was hoisted at the party headquarters, District and Mandal offices, booth levels, and even at the residences of party activists, followed by the distribution of sweets.

At the party headquarters in Trikuta Nagar, Jammu, Sat Sharma and Ashok Koul were joined by former MLC Ashok Khajuria, former MLA Ashwani Sharma,

former MLC S. Charanjit Singh Khalsa, Vice-Presidents Bharat Bhusan, and Rakesh Mahajan, General Secretaries Sanjita Dogra and Gopal Mahajan, District President Naresh Singh Jasrotia, MLAs Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal, Prof. Gharu Ram Bhagat, Devyani Rana, and several other senior leaders. Hundreds of enthusiastic party activists participated in the celebrations. Sat Sharma, along with General Secretary Sanjita Dogra, District Prabhari Brajeshwar Singh Rana, District President Rajesh Gupta hoisted the party flag at the Kachi Chawni District Office. Sat Sharma, along with MLA Gharu Ram Bhagat, Former Minister Sham Chaudhary, District President Rinku Chaudhary senior leaders and district teams, also hoisted the party flag at Jammu Border District Office.

Kumar, underscored the importance of focusing on bankable projects as envisaged under the scheme. He advised the department to draw lessons from past experiences in implementing PPP projects to ensure that proposed initiatives are executed smoothly without encountering bottlenecks.

The Managing Director, J&K Bank, Amitava Chatterjee, also shared insights into best practices adopted by various States in leveraging similar financing models. He assured that the bank would extend full support in building local capacity and facilitating access to market-based financing to maximize the benefits of the scheme.

The Divisional Commissioners also identified several city development and housing projects with strong potential for successful implementation under the scheme. Representatives

from National Housing Bank and Housing and Urban Development Corporation expressed their keen interest in partnering with the Union Territory for execution of projects under the Urban Challenge Fund.

The Commissioner Secretary, Housing & Urban Development, Mandeep Kaur speaking in the meeting informed that the Urban Challenge Fund, with a national outlay of ₹1,00,000 crore, is designed to usher in a paradigm shift in urban development by leveraging market-based financing and promoting sustainable, revenue-generating infrastructure projects.

She added that out of the total outlay, ₹90,000 crore is earmarked for bankable infrastructure projects, while ₹5,000 crore each has been allocated for project preparation & capacity building and credit repayment guarantee mechanisms.