

GDC Drass unveils Human-Wildlife interaction Atlas, commemorates Snow Leopard Day 2026

Student-led initiative documents human-bear interactions across 17 villages
Global Snow Leopard Expert praises College's citizen science efforts

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DRASS: Government Degree College Drass has unveiled a student-led Human-Wildlife Interaction Atlas documenting reported human-bear interactions across 17 villages, marking International Snow Leopard Day 2026 with a focus on wildlife conservation, citizen science and coexistence between communities and wildlife.

The atlas was presented by Dr Javed M. Iqbal, convener and principal investigator of the initiative, during a programme organised by the college's Department of Zoology on Friday. The project involved 32 student researchers and three faculty members who collected and documented village-level information on human-bear interactions across Drass district.

Dr Koustubh Sharma, Director of Global Partner-



ships at the International Snow Leopard Trust and international coordinator of the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection (GSEEP) Programme, delivered the keynote address through a video presentation. He highlighted the importance of snow leopard conservation across Himalayan countries and praised the college's efforts to document hu-

man-bear interactions.

Sharma congratulated the students and faculty and said he would highlight their initiative in his address to the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP), recognising the contribution of a Himalayan college to conservation challenges.

The programme also featured a presentation titled

"The Ghost of the Mountains: Understanding and Conserving the Snow Leopard" by Kulsoom Banoo, a first-semester BSc student.

As part of the global #23for23 campaign, students took part in an augmented reality-based environmental learning activity to mark the occasion. A "Sketch and Colour the Snow Leopard" activity involving students of Government Middle School Thrungos encouraged younger learners to engage with wildlife conservation through art.

The programme was held under the patronage of college principal M. N. M. Shabani and coordinated by the Department of Zoology, with support from Dr Javed M. Iqbal, Dr Shabir Hussain, Dr Mansoor, faculty members and students. BSc third-semester Zoology student Khatija Banoo conducted the proceedings.

Sharad Purnima to be observed on Oct 25, Sunday: Mahant Rohit Shastri

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JAMMU: Mahant Rohit Shastri, Jyotishacharya and President of Shri Kailakh Jyotish Evam Vedic Sansthan Trust, stated that the full moon day of the Hindu month of Ashwin is considered one of the most auspicious full moon days of the year.

It is known as Sharad Purnima and is also referred to as Sharadotsav, Raas Purnima, Kojagari Purnima, and Kamala Purnima.

To seek happiness, good fortune, longevity, good health, and wealth, devotees should bathe early in the morning, offer prayers, and worship Lord Ganesha, Goddess Lakshmi, Lord Vishnu, and their personal deities.

At night, devotees traditionally offer arghya (a ritual

offering of water) to the Moon before having their meal.

Sharad Purnima Date and Timings: According to the Hindu lunar calendar, the Purnima Tithi will begin at 11:57 AM on Sunday, October 25, and continue until 9:42 AM on Monday, October 26.

Accordingly, the nighttime observance of Sharad Purnima will take place on Sunday, October 25, while the daytime observance will be on Monday, October 26.

Therefore, the traditional rituals of worshipping the Moon and placing kheer (a sweet rice pudding) under the moonlight will be performed on the night of October 25. Bathing, charity, and religious worship are also considered particularly auspicious during the Purnima Tithi. These rituals may be

performed before 9:42 AM on Monday, October 26. Religious and Mythological Significance of Sharad Purnima: According to Hindu mythology, Lord Krishna performed the divine Maha Raas with the Gopis on this day. For this reason, the festival is also known as Raas Purnima.

According to religious beliefs, the Moon God, accompanied by his 27 wives, representing the 27 lunar constellations or Nakshatras, shines in the fullness of his sixteen phases on this night, spreading soothing moonlight across the world.

It is traditionally believed that the Moon's rays shower nectar on the night of Sharad Purnima. According to popular belief, the Moon is closest to the Earth on this night and shines with all sixteen of its

phases, symbolically showering divine nectar. This night is traditionally regarded as auspicious for health and well-being. The Tradition of Placing Kheer Under the Moonlight: On Sharad Purnima, kheer is prepared with dry fruits as an offering to the deities and placed in an open space under the moonlight so that the Moon's rays fall upon it.

The following morning, devotees should bathe, offer the kheer to the deity, and distribute it as prasad among three Brahmins or young girls. The remaining prasad may then be shared among family members.

According to religious tradition, consuming this kheer is considered beneficial for health. If possible, it may be kept in a silver vessel.

Shri Ram School ranked no. 1 under Community, Social Impact category

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JAMMU: In a moment of immense pride and distinction, The Shri Ram Universal School, Jammu, has secured No. 1 position in Jammu & Kashmir and 5th rank nationally in the Community & Social Impact category at the prestigious Education World Grand Jury India School Rankings 2026–27 in the award ceremony held at Pullman, Aerocity, New Delhi.

This recognition reaffirms the institution's commitment to socially responsible education, meaningful community engagement, and nurturing a generation dedicated to making a positive difference in society.

The award and ranking recognition were received by the school's Chairman, Sanjeev Gupta, and Director, Rajni Gupta, whose vision and leadership continue to inspire the institution's pursuit



of educational excellence, holistic development, and values-driven learning.

This prestigious recognition reflects the school's conviction that education extends far beyond academic achievement.

Through initiatives that promote environmental consciousness, community participation, inclusivity, and social responsibility, the school empowers students to

become empathetic individuals, responsible citizens, and proactive contributors to society. By integrating values and real-world social awareness into the learning experience, The Shri Ram Universal School, Jammu, encourages students to recognise their responsibilities towards their communities and the environment. Its efforts aim to instil compassion, sustainability, and a

strong sense of civic responsibility, ensuring that learning translates into meaningful action. This milestone is a proud moment for the entire school fraternity, including the management, Principal, Headmistress, Academic In-charges teachers, students and parents.

Their collective dedication and shared commitment to nurturing responsible citizens have contributed to building a learning environment rooted in purpose, inclusivity, and social consciousness. With this remarkable achievement, The Shri Ram Universal School, Jammu, reinforces its vision of education as a powerful force for social transformation—shaping not only accomplished learners, but also compassionate changemakers committed to building a more responsible, inclusive, and sustainable future.

Agriculture Department Jammu organises Khet Bachao Abhiyan at Pangiri, Akhnoor

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JAMMU: The Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare Department, Jammu, Friday organised an awareness programme under the Khet Bachao Abhiyan at village Pangiri, Zonal Bomal, Block and Sub-Division Akhnoor, to promote sustainable agricultural practices and enhance farmers' awareness about soil health and resource conservation. The campaign, being conducted from October 22 to November 30, 2026, will cover every village across the Jammu Division.

Regional Level Subject Matter Specialist Ashwani Kumar, while addressing the farmers, highlighted the importance of adopting sustainable agricultural practices to safeguard soil fertility and improve farm productivity. He stressed the need for balanced fertiliser application



based on soil requirements, the promotion of natural farming and the effective utilisation of organic resources.

He also urged farmers to adopt crop diversification, particularly pulses and oilseeds, conserve water through micro-irrigation and follow scientific farming practices to reduce cultivation costs and enhance their income.

Assistant Entomologist Harvinder Singh emphasised the importance of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for effective and environmen-

tally responsible crop protection. He sensitised farmers about the judicious use of pesticides, timely identification of pests and diseases and the adoption of preventive and biological control measures to minimise crop losses and protect beneficial organisms. He also encouraged farmers to follow scientific crop protection practices for safe and sustainable agricultural production.

The programme also focused on water conservation, micro-irrigation, post-harvest management, improved

market linkages and sustainable mechanisation, with the objective of reducing input costs, preserving natural resources and improving farmers' income. The programme was attended by SMS RL Ashwani Kumar, Assistant Entomologist Harvinder Singh, SDAO Akhnoor Vijay Pal Chaudhary, SMS-SDL Jatinder Singh and Ashmeeta Sharma, scientists from Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Jammu, field officers of the Agriculture Department and around 80 farmers, including members of women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs). The Khet Bachao Abhiyan aims to strengthen grassroots-level awareness and encourage farmers across Jammu Division to adopt resource-efficient, climate-resilient and sustainable agricultural practices for long-term soil conservation and improved farm livelihoods.

DC Rajesh stresses timely completion of ongoing projects, effective implementation

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KATHUA: Deputy Commissioner Kathua, Rajesh Sharma chaired a meeting at the DC Office Complex, Kathua, to review and monitor the physical and financial progress of ongoing schemes under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) in the district.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner took stock of the progress achieved under various ongoing projects and reviewed their implementation status, with a focus on assessing physical achievements vis-à-vis financial expenditure.

He stressed the need for close monitoring of the projects to ensure their timely execution and adherence to prescribed quality standards.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned departments and executing agencies to expedite the pace of work on ongoing projects and ensure optimum utilisation of funds. He emphasised the importance of inter-departmental coordination and accountability for resolving bottlenecks, wherever encountered, to facilitate smooth implementation of the schemes.

He further underscored that all projects under AMRUT should be executed in a time-bound manner, in accordance with the approved guidelines, to achieve the intended objectives of improving urban infrastructure and civic amenities for the residents of the district.

The Deputy Commissioner called upon the concerned officers to maintain regular oversight of the projects and ensure that the benefits of the mission reach the intended beneficiaries through efficient and effective implementation.

The meeting was attended by the Chief Planning Officer Kathua, Chief Education Officer Kathua, Chief Medical Officer Kathua, concerned district officers, representatives of the departments and executing agencies associated with the implementation of AMRUT schemes in the district.

Dr Dhar to provide specialist consultations in Jammu today

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JAMMU: Eminent oncologist Dr. (Prof.) A. K. Dhar, a renowned cancer specialist with extensive experience in cancer treatment and bone marrow transplantation, will provide specialist consultations to patients at HexaMed Hospital, Channi, Jammu, on October 24, 2026, from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM.

Patients who have recently been diagnosed with cancer, those seeking a second opinion on diagnosis or treatment, individuals requiring an assessment of ongoing treatment, and people experiencing suspicious lumps, enlarged lymph nodes or persistent symptoms are encour-



aged to consult Dr. Dhar.

Dr. Dhar is an alumnus of King George's Medical College (KGMC), Lucknow, and Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai.

During his distinguished career, he has treated more than 50,000 cancer patients and has specialised in the treatment of blood cancers, including

leukaemia, lymphoma and multiple myeloma, as well as bone marrow transplantation.

He has served in the Armed Forces Medical Services and has been associated with leading medical institutions, including Army Hospital Research and Referral, Delhi, and Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai.

He has also contributed to the development and modernisation of cancer treatment facilities and medical education.

Dr. Dhar believes that every cancer patient deserves access to appropriate treatment. He emphasises that elderly patients should not be denied cancer care and that treatment at specialised cancer centres plays a significant role in patient outcomes.

GDC Sham beats District Police in friendly T20 Cricket match on National Unity Day

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SHAM: Degree College Sham defeated District Police Sham in a friendly T-20 cricket match organised to mark National Unity Day, with the event aimed at strengthening police-public relations and promoting national integration through sport. Organised by District Police Sham, the match was attended by SSP Sham as the chief guest and brought together police personnel and college students in a sporting contest focused on teamwork, discipline and community engagement. Degree College Sham emerged victorious, lifting the winner's trophy after a competitive encounter. District Police Sham finished as runners-up, with SHO Khaltsi, who captained the police team, receiving the runner-up trophy on behalf of the squad. Professor Shabir Hussain was named Man of the Match for his outstanding performance. The organisers said the initiative was intended to build trust between law enforcement agencies and local youth while encouraging sportsmanship and community participation. The match also provided a platform for students and police personnel to interact outside their routine roles. Addressing the gathering, dignitaries highlighted the role of sports in bringing communities together, fostering mutual understanding and reinforcing the values of unity and cooperation.

The event concluded with a shared commitment to strengthening public trust, social harmony and youth engagement across the region through community-oriented initiatives.

Air Chief Marshal AP Singh takes NCC Cadet on Flying Sortie at Dundigal

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LEH: Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal AP Singh undertook a flying sortie with National Cadet Corps (NCC) Senior Wing cadet Jakkula Tejasvi Reddy at the Air Force Academy, Dundigal, on October 20, giving the young cadet practical exposure to aviation and flight operations.

The sortie took place ahead of the Air Chief's final flying sortie with his first flying instructor.

Before boarding the Kiran aircraft, Cadet Tejasvi underwent cockpit familiarisation, safety briefings, ejection-procedure familiarisation and medical checks. Air Chief Marshal Singh briefed her on the aircraft's specifications, major components, engine



functioning, cockpit procedures and safety mechanisms.

During the flight, he explained various manoeuvres, flight angles and steep turns, allowing the cadet to practise manoeuvres under his guidance.

The experience offered Tejasvi an opportunity to gain first-hand insight into flying and encouraged her aspiration to become an aviator. It also highlighted the exposure and career opportunities available to NCC Air Wing cadets seek-

ing to pursue aviation and join the Defence Forces.

The NCC continues to provide young people with trained opportunities aimed at developing skills, confidence, discipline and leadership. Its activities are aligned with the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047, which seeks to equip youth to contribute to nation-building. The sortie underscored the role of practical exposure in encouraging young cadets to explore aviation and consider careers in the armed forces.

DBPS seeks Bharat Rattan award for Duggar Rattan Pt. Prem Nath Dogra

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JAMMU: Dogra Brahman Pratinidhi Sabha (DBPS) on Friday urged the Prime Minister to confer the prestigious Bharat Ratna posthumously upon Dugger Rattan Pt. Prem Nath Dogra in recognition of his contributions towards keeping Jammu and Kashmir united post partition.

The demand was raised during a tribute function organised at Sabha premises under the chairmanship of DB PS President Ved Parkash Sharma.

Representatives from various Social and religious organizations participated in the event which was conducted with religious and Vedic rituals.

A resolution in this regard was moved Former Dy. Commissioner B.S. Jamwal and seconded by D.B.P.S chairman Advocate P.C.

Sharma and Bawa Bhair Dev Sathan Trust General Secretary Ramesh Sharma and others emphasized that Pt. Prem Nath Dogra played a crucial role in uniting the people of Jammu and Kashmir and spreading the EK Vidhan under Praja Parishad banner for the full integration of J and K with India.

They stated that conferring the Bharat Ratna on him would be a fitting tribute to his legacy. The event saw participation of several notable figures.

Prominent attendees included D.B.P.S spokesperson Subash Shastri, N.C. Sharma, M.L. Sharma, Sunil Sharma, M.L. Padha, Jagan Nath Sharma, Barita Ram Sharma, K.L. Sharma, Shiv Ram Sharma, Rajesh Sharma, Gurdas Sharma, Davinder Sharma (Baboo) Ritiz Khajuria, Prem Balotra and others.