

# Sakeena Itoo holds massive Public Darbar at Sailkhanen DH Pora Kulgam

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**KULGAM:** Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo today visited Sailkhanen village in D.H. Pora, Kulgam and held a massive Public Darbar to directly engage with the people and listen to their grievances and developmental aspirations.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, the Minister highlighted that the Omar-led Government is public centric and making concerted efforts to meet developmental aspirations of the people and ensure improved services at their doorsteps. She added that the government in recent months has initiated several projects of public importance besides healthcare facilities have been upgraded across the length and breadth of Jammu and Kashmir with particular focus on rural

and far-flung areas.

In her address, the Minister also spoke about various schemes meant for various sections of society, including women. She also urged youth to actively avail skill development schemes and stressed the importance of community participation in ensuring accountability and progress.

The Minister further underlined that these Public Darbars are at the core of the present government and vital for bridging the gap between administration and the people. She added that the Government is committed for responsive governance and grassroots development.

During the Darbar, locals projected several demands like upgradation of Middle School to High School, establishment of Animal Husbandry Centre, a Sub Centre, SFC wood depot, Agriculture and Horticulture



units, food store, relief in utility bills, fast-track completion of Panchayat Ghar, as well as development of a playfield in the area.

While responding to these demands, the Minister directed the concerned authorities to identify land for a playfield and assured the locals that an am-

balance will be provided to the area considering its far-flung nature. She also assured the public that other demands will be addressed promptly.

## Traffic police refutes reports of challaning vehicles parked for flood safety

**SRINAGAR:** The City Traffic Police on Friday refuted reports that challans were issued to vehicles parked on higher grounds in Srinagar and other areas amid flood concerns.

SSP Traffic City Srinagar, Ajaz Ahmad Bhat, clarified that no such challan was issued to vehicles that were parked on flyovers and other elevated locations for safety reasons.

“Some social media posts and a few news outlets have wrongly circulated photos claiming that traffic police were challaning vehicles. This is false and misleading. No challan has been issued against any such vehicle. We request the public not to pay heed to such rumours,” Bhat said.

He said traffic police personnel have been actively assisting people in flood-vulnerable areas including Natipora, Mehjoor Nagar, Shalina and others. “Our officers have been continuously responding to calls on our helplines and regulating the movement of traffic to ensure public safety,” he said.

## Kulgam police conducts market checking

**KULGAM:** As part of its sustained campaign to safeguard public health and ensure the availability of safe, hygienic, and quality food items, Kulgam Police, in coordination with the Food Safety Department and the concerned Magistrate, carried out extensive market inspections across the district.

The drive led to the detection of multiple violations of established food safety and hygiene standards. Consequently, fines were imposed on several erring establishments, including hotels, restaurants, and vegetable and fruit vendors. Furthermore, FIR No. 179/2025 at Police station Qazigund and FIR No 67/2025 at Police station Devsar under Sections 271 and 275 IPC stands registered against certain proprietors for grossly unhygienic practices, which posed a grave risk to public health.

## SC upholds JKBOPEE decision on MBBS, BDS admissions for persons with temporary disabilities



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**SRINAGAR:** The Supreme Court of India has upheld the judgment passed by the Jammu & Kashmir High Court in favour of the decision taken by the Jammu and Kashmir Board of Professional Entrance Examinations (JKBOPEE) regarding the eligibility of persons with temporary disabilities for MBBS and BDS admissions.

The Supreme Court dismissed the Special Leave Petition (Civil) challenging the High Court’s ruling issued last year in W.P. (C) concerning the eligibility of individuals with temporary

disabilities for admission to MBBS or BDS courses for the academic session 2024-25 under the Persons with Benchmark Disability (PWD) category, which falls under the Horizontal Reservation.

JKBOPEE Secretary Dr Shabir Hussain Keen said, “Aggrieved by the rejection of temporary disability certificates by JKBOPEE, the petitioners approached the Division Bench of the Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court, which set a minimum period of 10 years for a disability to qualify as long-term and eligible for reservation benefits under the PWD cate-

gory.”

He said that out of five petitioners, two filed SLPs (Special Leave Petitions) in the Supreme Court. The SLPs were heard extensively on multiple occasions. After considering both sides, the Supreme Court observed that no relief could be granted to the petitioners. While the Court condoned the delay in filing, it ultimately dismissed the petitions, vacated the interim order, and disposed of all pending applications.

Dr Keen added that with this decision, the judgment of the Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court stands upheld.

## Awantipora Police provide relief to flood-affected areas

**AWANTIPORA:** In a swift and coordinated response to the recent floods, Police Awantipora, organized and supervised a water distribution drive for the flood-affected communities under the jurisdiction of Police Post Reshipora. The distribution drive was led by SDPO Awantipora alongwith Incharge Police Post Reshipora Inspector Bilal Ahmad. Safe drinking water was distributed to a large number of residents, including Gadhajipora, Ghat Tokuna, and adjoining villages. General public of the area expressed their appreciation for the proactive role of police Awantipora in extending help at a critical time. Awantipora Police reaffirmed their commitment to stand by the people in all circumstances and assured that assistance and relief measures will continue.

## Dr. Farooq, Omar Abdullah extend condolences to Mirwaiz Reyaz Hamadani on bereavement

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference President Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Vice President & CM Omar Abdullah have expressed their heartfelt condolences to Mirwaiz Molana Reyaz Hamadani on the passing of his brother-in-law, Pirzada Muhammad Shafi Shah of Nowhatta.

The deceased was also the son-in-law of the late Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir, Moulana Muhammad Yasin Hamadani. The duo prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and strength to the bereaved Hamadani and Shah families to bear this irreparable loss.

Other senior party leaders, including General Secretary Ali Muhammad Sagar, Additional General Secretary Dr. Sheikh Mustafa Kamal, Advisor to the HCM Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Spokesperson Tanvir Sadiq, and others, also extended their sympathies and stood in solidarity with the grieving families.

## Rising cases of fish poisoning deal a blow to Kashmir’s growing trout industry

**SRINAGAR:** The flourishing trout farming industry in Kashmir has been dealt a serious blow with repeated cases of suspected poisoning being reported from different parts of the valley.

In the latest incident, a fish farm at Ganowpora village in Balpora, Shopian, suffered devastating losses when nearly 3,500 fish were found dead overnight. The farm, owned by Bilal Ahmad Lone, has suffered an estimated loss of nearly Rs 4 lakh.

Lone said that he discovered the dead fish early in the morning and immediately alerted the authorities. “I had worked tirelessly for years to raise these fish. In just one night, everything was destroyed,” he said in despair.

Locals alleged that miscreants sneaked into the farm at night and deliberately poisoned the water. The police have since registered a case and launched an investigation to trace those behind the act. According to the Fisheries Department, such incidents are no longer isolated. In Shopian district alone, around a dozen cases of mass fish deaths have been recorded this year. They said nearly three dozen poisoning cases have been reported since January across south Kashmir.

Officials confirmed that at least 50,000 to 60,000 fish of varying sizes have been killed in these incidents in Shopian alone, most of them due to pesticides being deliberately poured into ponds. Despite advisories and monitoring by the department, farmers remain unconvinced. “We are living in fear. One night of sabotage can undo years of work. This is not just financial destruction, it is psychological torture,” said another trout farmer from Shopian.

Trout farming has grown rapidly in Kashmir over the past decade. With government subsidies and schemes under the Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP), the valley has witnessed hundreds of new farms being established, particularly in rural districts. The industry not only supplements household incomes but also provides employment opportunities to the youth.

Officials say trout farming is emerging as a backbone of rural entrepreneurship in Kashmir. The valley now contributes significantly to the state’s aquaculture output, making the sector a vital component of the local economy. However, the increasing sabotage cases have cast a long shadow on this promising industry. Farmers believe that personal enmities and rivalries are driving much of the poisoning. At the same time, they accuse the administration of failing to enforce accountability.

“Unless there is strict punishment, these incidents will continue,” said a farmer from Pulwama.

## Dr. Farooq, Omar Abdullah pay tributes to Teachers on Teachers’ Day, Highlight role in nation-building

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**SRINAGAR:** On the occasion of Teachers’ Day, Jammu and Kashmir National Conference President Dr. Farooq Abdullah, along with the party’s Vice President and Honourable Chief minister Omar Abdullah, paid rich tributes to teachers, acknowledging their critical role in shaping individuals and building the nation.

In his message, Dr. Farooq Abdullah said, “Societies across the world are indebted to teachers not just for imparting academic knowledge, but also for instilling ethical values and a strong moral compass that shapes a stu-

dent’s future and, through them, the future of a nation. Teachers deserve our utmost gratitude and respect. Students, in particular, and society at large should always hold teachers in the highest regard.” CM Omar Abdullah, in his message, noted the significance of the day, commemorated on the birth anniversary of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, a revered teacher and statesman. “My grandfather, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, also began his career as a teacher. The welfare of teachers remained a top priority throughout his life,” he said, adding that the legacy of valuing educators must continue with equal com-

# KU begins 10-day AFC ‘B’ football coaching course with AIFF, FPAI

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**SRINAGAR:** To strengthen coach education and promote professional football training in the region, a 10-day AFC “B” Diploma Coaching Course commenced on Friday at the University of Kashmir (KU). The programme is being organised by the All India Football Federation (AIFF) in collaboration with the Directorate of Physical Education and Sports (DPES), KU, and the Football Players’ Association of India (FPAI).

A total of 24 football



enthusiasts from North India, South India, Central India, and the North-Eastern states are participating in the course, which is designed to provide modern training methodologies,

advanced coaching techniques, and updated practices to aspiring football coaches.

Vice-Chancellor KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, in her message, highlighted the

importance of the programme, terming it an important step towards nurturing sporting talent in the country.

“The University is committed to promoting sports

education alongside academic excellence. Collaborations with premier institutions like AIFF and FPAI provide our youth with global-level exposure and opportunities to excel in sports. Initiatives like these strengthen our resolve to make varsity a hub of sporting talent and professional training,” she said.

Prof. Tariq Ahmad Chishti, Director, Centre for Distance and Online Education KU, at the inaugural session, lauded the DPES for conducting impactful activities and termed the course a signif-

icant step towards advancing football coaching at the national level.

Prof. Musavir Ahmad, Head, Department of Linguistics and Media Advisor, KU, also addressed the gathering and highlighted the University’s growing partnerships with national sporting bodies and federations.

Earlier, Dr. Surjeet Singh, Coordinator, DPES KU, in his welcome address, said that the Directorate is committed to advancing coach education and skill development in football.

## KVK Bandipora Holds Farmer Awareness Programme at Pazalpora

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**BANDIPORA:** Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Bandipora-1 in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture and various allied departments today organised an awareness programme at Pazalpora Panchayat under the ongoing Kisan Sampark Abhiyan, a flagship component of the Jammu & Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement in Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project (JKCIP). The programme aimed to educate the local farming community about modern agricultural practices, encourage the adoption of climate-resilient techniques, and create awareness regarding various government schemes and support services. The event saw participation from over 100 individuals, including farmers, women entrepreneurs, students, and rural youth. During the technical sessions, Dr. Bilal Ahmad Zargar and Shab-

num Mumtaz, scientists from KVK Bandipora-1, delivered in-depth lectures on advanced crop production methods, the use of modern farm machinery, and opportunities in income-generating allied sectors such as beekeeping, mushroom cultivation, and poultry farming. Emphasis was laid on adopting scientific methods and improving farm productivity while promoting sustainable agricultural growth. Resource persons from the Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry, and Fisheries Departments shared details of newly launched schemes, input assistance programmes, and training opportunities available under JKCIP and other ongoing initiatives. Representatives from financial institutions also addressed the gathering, highlighting the availability of institutional credit, subsidized loans, and the streamlined process for availing agricultural finance.

# DC Budgam visits Zoonipora breach site; reviews relief & rehabilitation efforts

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

**BUDGAM:** The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat today visited the Zoonipora breach site and other flood-affected areas to take a first-hand assessment of the situation. He was accompanied by senior district officials, SDM Chadoora, engineers, and field functionaries.

DC carried out an appraisal of damages and interacted with the local population, listening patiently to their concerns. He assured people that the District Administration is standing shoulder to shoulder with them in this hour of crisis and that all possible support will be extended to them.



DC informed that relief measures are in full swing in

the affected areas.

The ration kits, medical kits,

and other essential items are being distributed among affected families, while portable water tankers have been pressed into service to ensure safe drinking water supply, he said.

Meanwhile, on-spot testing of water sources is also being conducted for public safety.

Regarding healthcare, DC said that medical teams with mobile ambulances and essential medicines have been deployed in all six flood-affected villages — Rakh Shalina, Shalina, Bagh Shakurshah, Seerbagh, Summerbugh & Zoonipora to provide timely medical care to the people.

Speaking on the restoration of services, the DC said that work on electricity restoration

is being carried out on war footing bases. He added that the local receiving station had been damaged, but necessary repairs are underway and supply will be restored at the earliest. DC further assured that work on restoration of the breached bund at Zoonipora will be taken up shortly in consultation with experts to prevent further damage and safeguard adjoining habitations.

He directed all line departments to remain on high alert, ensure coordination, and provide immediate relief wherever required.

ADC Budgam, SDM chadoora and other senior district and sectoral officers accompanied him during the visit.