

# ACB conducts Vigilance Awareness Programmes at RTI Jammu

■ STATE TIMES NEWS  
JAMMU: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), Jammu & Kashmir in collaboration with the Revenue Training Institute organized an awareness programmes for Officers, Officials of Revenue Department at Revenue Training Institute (RTI) Jammu.

The programmes aimed at promoting transparency, accountability, ethical conduct, and collective responsibility in curbing corruption within the Revenue Department, in which 100 Revenue officers and officials including public representatives have participated.

Sunaina Sharma Mehta, Principal, RTI Jammu, extended a warm welcome to the Chief Guest, Rakesh Minhas, Deputy Commissioner, Jammu, and Shivdeep Singh Jamwal, SSP, ACB Jammu, along with all the



Principal, RTI Jammu, Sunaina Sharma Mehta, extending welcome to DC Jammu, Rakesh Minhas.

participating officers. A key highlight of the event was the launch of a documentary by the Anti-Corruption Bureau, J&K, showcasing its anti-corruption initiatives and strategies aimed at promoting transparency and accountability. The participants also took the Integrity Pledge during the programme. Rakesh Minhas, graced the occasion as the

Chief Guest, commended the efforts of ACB in spreading vigilance awareness among the public and government functionaries and emphasized the importance of upholding integrity and ethical conduct in both public and private life.

Shivdeep Singh Jamwal addressed various corruption-related issues, underlining their adverse impact

on society and emphasizing the collective responsibility of citizens and government functionaries in curbing such practices.

Sunny Gupta, Additional SP, JSK Branch, ACB Jammu, delivered a comprehensive Power Point presentation on the nature of complaints received by ACB and shared relevant case studies pertaining to the Revenue Department.

Sunaina Sharma Mehta, Principal, RTI Jammu, appreciated the sustained efforts of ACB in combating the menace of corrup-

tion in Jammu and Kashmir. She also delivered a detailed lecture to the participants, highlighting the role of capacity building, ethics, and training in strengthening transparency and accountability among Revenue Department officials.

During the events participant feedback was collected through questionnaires via the Mobile App to assess awareness levels and gather valuable suggestions for further strengthening Anti-Corruption initiatives in Jammu and Kashmir.



## New frontiers in preventive cardiology for older adults: Dr Sushil

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Keeping in view increased prevalence of cardiac ailments in elderly contributing significantly to morbidity and mortality Head Department of cardiology GMCH Jammu Dr Sushil Sharma held a day long cardiac awareness cum health Check up camp with Senior Citizen Rejuvenation Centre at Trikuta Nagar Jammu and educating them about adopting cardiac friendly lifestyle in all routine activities of life.

While delivering lecture Dr Sushil stated that Cardiovascular disease remains the leading cause of death among older adults worldwide, but the approach to preventing heart disease in elders has evolved significantly as medical science advances and life expectancy increases, the focus of healthcare has gradually expanded beyond simply treating disease to preventing it. Previously, most cardiovascular risk prediction models were developed based on middle-aged populations, which made them less accurate for individuals over 70. Aging introduces changes in vascular stiffness, body composition, and immune response, making the elderly population biologically distinct. Today, preventive cardiology is shaped by personalized risk assessment tools, tech-



Head Department of Cardiology GMCH Jammu Dr Sushil Sharma and his team carrying out check up of patients during the camp.

nology-assisted monitoring, and improved medications that address the unique physiological and metabolic needs of aging individuals. These developments aim not only to prolong life but also to enhance its quality, independence and vitality.

He elaborated that to address this, newer tools such as the SCORE2-OP (Systematic Coronary Risk Evaluation 2 - Older Persons) have been introduced. These tools are specially designed to evaluate cardiovascular risk in adults aged 70 and above. They incorporate parameters such as age-specific vascular aging patterns, frailty status, lifestyle factors, and comorbid conditions like diabetes or chronic kidney disease. This personalized assessment allows clinicians to identify who may benefit from more intensive preventive strategies and who may

need a more conservative, comfort-oriented approach. It marks a major shift from generalized guidelines to individualized care. The focus has moved from aggressive risk-factor modification to creating realistic and safe health targets, ensuring that treatment supports both longevity and well-being. This flexibility acknowledges that the aim of preventive cardiology in older adults is not only to extend life but to retain dignity, independence, and emotional balance.

He added that Technological innovation is playing a crucial role in transforming elder heart health. AI-assisted diagnostics enhance the ability to detect subtle abnormalities in ECGs, echocardiograms, and imaging. Wearable devices and remote monitoring systems allow real-time tracking of blood pressure,

heart rhythm, and physical activity from the comfort of home. Telemedicine platforms provide easier access to regular follow-up and consultation, reducing the need for frequent hospital visits. These advancements are especially meaningful for older adults who may face mobility limitations. Technology strengthens continuity of care while reducing stress and effort for both patients and caregivers, He said.

Dr Sushil Sharma in his concluding remarks told that preventive cardiology for the elderly is experiencing a transformative shift from a generalized, medication-centric model to a personalized, holistic, and technologically supported approach. The focus is no longer solely on adding years to life, but on adding life to years. By using advanced risk assessment tools tailored for older adults,

setting individualized treatment goals, incorporating remote and AI-based monitoring, and utilizing safer and more effective medications, modern cardiology is helping seniors maintain stronger hearts, healthier bodies, and more fulfilling lives. In short a heart that is cared for with wisdom, precision, and compassion continues to beat with strength regardless of age.

Members of Senior Citizen Rejuvenation Centre Er. K S Samyal ( President), Er. T R Puri, T C Taggar, Romesh Gupta, Ashok Gupta , S C Verma, K L Gupta and Er Narinder Gupta appreciated the efforts of Dr Sushil and his team for conducting Cardiac awareness cum health Check up camp in their area and expressed their heartfelt gratitude . Shri Arun Gupta ( President ) Chamber of Commerce and Industries Jammu and Smt. Rekha Mahajan ( Vice President BJP Jammu ) also graced the occasion.

Others who were part of this camp includes Dr Pankaj Banotra and Dr Dhaneshwer Kapoor. Paramedics and volunteers include kamal Sharma, Raghav Rajput, Rajkumar, Sanjay Singh, Makhn Sharma, Maninder Singh , Shubham Sharma, Rajinder Singh, Vikas Kumar and Nirvair Singh Bali.

## Yudhvir Sethi raises issue of damaged Fourth Tawi Bridge in Assembly, demands immediate restoration

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: On the second day of the ongoing Legislative Assembly session in Srinagar, Yudhvir Sethi, Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) from Jammu East Constituency, raised the issue of the damaged Fourth Tawi Bridge with a strong voice, urging the government to take immediate steps for its restoration.

Speaking in the House, Sethi expressed deep concern over the hardships being faced by the residents of Jammu due to the closure of the bridge for over a month.

He said that the Fourth Tawi Bridge serves as a vital link between several parts of the city, and its prolonged blockage has caused immense inconvenience to commuters, traders, students, and



office-goers.

"The people of Jammu are suffering badly because of the closure. The administration must act swiftly to restore the bridge and ensure safe and smooth movement of traffic," Sethi said, adding that alternative routes are already overcrowded, leading to daily traffic chaos and delays.

He further emphasized that the bridge holds great strategic and economic

importance for Jammu, as it connects residential and commercial zones and eases pressure on other major routes. "Timely restoration is not just a matter of convenience but a necessity for the city's functioning," he asserted.

Sethi asked the J&K UT Government and the concerned departments, to expedite technical assessments and begin repair work without further delay. He also asked the government to ensure regular monitoring of major public infrastructure to prevent such damage in the future.

Reiterating his commitment to the welfare of the people of Jammu, Yudhvir Sethi said that he would continue to raise public issues both inside and outside the Assembly until effective action is taken to address them.

## Kathua to lead biotech StartUp driven economic growth of North India: Dr Jitendra

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHUA: In a landmark step toward promoting innovation and entrepreneurship in the biotechnology sector, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, and Vice President CSIR, Dr. Jitendra Singh, today inaugurated North India's first BioNEST Incubator at the Industrial Biotechnology Park, Ghatti, Kathua. The event, Bioinnovation Connect @ Kathua, was organised by CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (IIIM), Jammu and witnessed a large gathering of scientists, innovators, industry experts, and students.

Speaking at the inauguration, Dr. Jitendra Singh described the occasion as "a historic day for Kathua and the entire Jammu region", marking the beginning of a new era of scientific enterprise, self-reliance, and economic growth. He said that the BioNEST Incubator will offer a unique platform for the youth to transform innovative ideas into viable business ventures. The facility aims to nurture startups in biotechnology, agriculture, healthcare, and allied sectors, ultimately strengthening the local economy.

Dr. Singh highlighted that when the concept of biotech incubation began in



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh during launching of BioNEST Incubator at Industrial Biotechnology Park, Ghatti, Kathua on Monday.

2014, India had only ten such centres. The Kathua Biotech Park became the 11th, with its foundation laid in 2014-15. After its formal inauguration in 2022, the government's focus shifted toward making the facility fully functional through the creation of a self-sustaining innovation ecosystem. The newly launched BioNEST (Bioincubators Nurturing Entrepreneurship for Scaling Technologies) will play a key role in providing infrastructure, mentorship, and technology support to budding entrepreneurs.

The Minister informed that the Kathua facility will be capable of incubating 25 startups annually, helping India's growing network of more than 11,000 biotech startups. With advanced facilities for distillation, fermentation, plant tissue culture, enzyme production, and genetic process platforms, the centre will enable youth to explore opportunities in biotechnology and agri-entrepreneurship.

Dr. Singh emphasized that Kathua's strategic location, strong connectivity, and rich biodiversity make it ideally suited to become a biotechnology hub in

North India. He urged young innovators to utilize schemes such as Mudra Yojana for collateral-free loans and to take advantage of opportunities offered under the National Education Policy (NEP) for interdisciplinary learning. He encouraged students to evolve from being job seekers to job creators.

Appreciating the efforts of CSIR-IIIM Jammu, the Department of Biotechnology, and BIRAC, Dr. Singh praised their collaboration in establishing the facility. He said such partnerships exemplify "the spirit of cooperative federalism" and demonstrate the government's commitment to fostering research-based growth.

Earlier, Dr. Zabeer Ahmed, Director, CSIR-IIIM, Jammu, briefed about the park's facilities, including phytopharma drug extraction, micro-propagation, and central instrumentation units. He informed that six startups have already been enrolled and will receive incubation and training support.

The event also featured an Innovation Showcase Walkthrough, Startup and Investor Interactions, Industry-Farmer Interface, and signing of MoUs with academic and industrial partners, marking a new milestone in transforming Kathua into North India's biotechnology innovation hub.

## HC dismisses bail plea of Punjab Resident in NDPS Case

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Justice Rajesh Sekhri of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court at Jammu has rejected the bail plea of Liaqat Ali alias Lucky, a Punjab resident, who was arrested last year in Samba district after police claimed to have recovered nearly 589 grams of heroin (chittai) from his possession.

Appearing for the applicant, M.A. Goni, Senior Advocate with S. Tanzeel Illahi, Advocate, argued that Ali was merely a passenger in the Bolero vehicle intercepted at Rajpura and that the real offender, the driver, had fled from the spot. Counsel also highlighted discrepancies in the registration number of the seized vehicle and questioned the validity of the recovery memo.

Opposing the plea, Vishal Bharti, Deputy Advocate General, representing the Union Territory, stressed the seriousness of the charge and the statutory bar under Section 37 of the NDPS Act, which limits the court's discretion in granting bail in

narcotics cases.

The Court observed that while the right to speedy trial and presumption of innocence are important, they cannot override the gravity of NDPS offences. Citing Supreme Court precedents, Justice Sekhri said prolonged incarceration by itself does not entitle an accused to bail when the offence is serious and carries severe penalties. Noting that both the defence and prosecution contributed to delays in trial, the Court concluded that no grounds existed to relax the statutory bar. The application was accordingly dismissed, with the judge clarifying that nothing in the order should be read as an expression of opinion on the merits of the trial.

The case stems from FIR No. 109/2023 registered at Ghagwal Police Station, Samba, after a police-NDPS team intercepted a Bolero near Rajpura on November 25, 2023, and allegedly seized heroin intended for sale in Samba and adjoining areas.

## Slathia lays Report of House Committee on revision of salary, allowances of Legislators in LA

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Chairman Surjeet Singh Slathia on Monday laid on the Table of the House a copy of Report of the House Committee constituted to recommend revision in "Salary and Allowances of Members of Legislative Assembly of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the Revision of Pensionary benefits to the Ex-legislators of Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly."

The committee was constituted to examine the existing salary framework of lawmakers in the Union Territory and bring it in line with the prevailing standards in other states and union territories.

The report is expected to outline the financial implications, justifications and recommendations for revising the pay structure of elected representatives.

## MLAs highlight issues of public importance during Zero Hour in LA

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: During the Zero Hour of the ongoing session of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly on Monday, Members from across party lines raised a range of public interest issues concerning their constituencies and the UT at large, seeking urgent attention and redressal from the Government.

Earlier Sajad Gani Lone, MLA Handwara, raised a procedural point over rejection of his adjournment motion regarding rationalization of reservations through a cabinet sub-committee. Responding, the Speaker clarified that Assembly Rules allow adjournment motions only on matters of recent occurrence and not on issues pending adjudication in courts.

Sajad Shahan, MLA Banihal, demanded a one-hour discussion in the House over the arrest of MLA Doda,

Mehraj Malik. In this regard, Nazir Ahmad khan suggested constitution of a committee to examine the legality of the PSA invoked against Malik. Supporting procedural clarity, RS Pathania, MLA Udhampur East, observed that imposition of PSA is the prerogative of the District Magistrate and subject to judicial scrutiny.

Raising infrastructure-related issues, Yudhvir Sethi, MLA Jammu East, sought immediate restoration of the Bhagwati Nagar Bridge damaged during recent floods. Shakti Parihar, MLA Doda West, requested rehabilitation of families affected by land sinking in Kastigarh and restoration of the Ramgarh road. Pyarelal Sharma, MLA Inderwal, and Dr Rameshwar Singh, MLA Bani, also urged rehabilitation of flood-affected families and restoration of damaged roads and infrastructure.

S.S. Salathia, MLA Samba, highlight-

ed the agitation of PHE Department daily wagers demanding regularization, noting that the ongoing strike was disrupting regular water supply. He further sought release of long-pending public deposits from the Jammu & Kashmir State Cooperative Agriculture and Rural Development Bank Ltd. (formerly CLDB). Justice (Retd) Hasnain Masoodi, MLA Pampore, requested deployment of water tankers in Pampore and Kakapora to ensure safe drinking water supply.

Several MLAs raised issues related to connectivity and road projects. Nizamuddin Bhat, MLA Bandipora, sought early completion of the Sumbal-Bandipora-Gurez road. Sheikh Khurshed Ahmad, MLA Langate, flagged delays in CRF-funded road projects. Choudhary Mohammad Akram, MLA Surankot, urged completion of the Baffiaz road, while Ghulam Mohi-ud-din

Mir, MLA Rajpura, pressed for restoration of damaged bridges in his constituency. Mir Saifullah demanded DPR formulation for the proposed Keran tunnel to improve border connectivity.

On developmental fronts, Dr Bashir Ahmad Veeri, MLA Srigufwara-Bijbehara, demanded that the Jablipora Fruit Mandi be developed as per its original DPR to serve as an international fruit terminal, besides seeking introduction of a Market Intervention Scheme for horticulturists. Rafiq Ahmad Naik, MLA Tral, and Abdul Majeed Bhat Larni, MLA Anantnag West, both sought establishment of Cold Storage and CA stores in their respective areas to aid fruit growers.

Tourism-related issues were prominently raised by Dr. Shafi Ahmad wani MLA Beerwah, who sought reopening of closed tourist destinations including Doodhpathri, Yousmarg, Tosamaidan, and Drang, while Pirzada Farooq Ahmad

Shah, MLA Tangmarg, echoed similar concerns, calling for early restoration of tourism activities.

Several members also flagged matters concerning administrative outreach and education. Kuldeep Raj Dubey, MLA Reasi, demanded setting up of an SDM office at Pouni/Arnas for public convenience, while Pawan Gupta, MLA Udhampur, urged restoration of work on the upcoming GMC Udhampur, stalled due to relocation issues with the ITI. Baldev Raj Sharma, MLA Shri Mata Vaishno Devi, pressed for speedy establishment of the IMS Katra project.

Social and humanitarian concerns were also voiced during the Zero Hour. Shameem Firdous, MLA HabbaKadal, sought constitution of a committee comprising retired judges and senior police officers to review cases of Valley youth jailed in prisons outside J&K.

Dr Sajjad Shafi, MLA Uri, highlighted

pending relief for families whose houses were damaged during Operation Sindoor, while Zafar Ali Khatana, MLA Kokernag, sought relief measures for nomadic families affected by floods.

Arjun Singh, MLA Ramban, brought to the notice of the House the kidnapping of a person belonging to his constituency in Niger and urged the Government to take up the matter with the Ministry of External Affairs for his early repatriation.

Rafiq Ahmad Naik and Ifitkhar Choudhary, along with Saif-ud-Din Bhat, urged that Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) works be taken up concurrently with ongoing departmental enquiries to avoid disruption in water supply schemes. Aijaz Ahmed Jan, MLA Poonch, called for early release of scholarships for tribal students, and Salman Sagar, MLA Hazratbal, demanded release of pending salaries of Khidmat Centre (CSC) operators.