

# Dr Jitendra directs Kathua administration for concerted campaign against illegal mining

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
KATHUA: Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh on Saturday directed the district administration to launch concerted campaign against illegal mining and drug abuse. He said, Kathua was earning a bad reputation on these accounts.

Dr Jitendra also disclosed that North India's first Govt Homeopathy College at Kathua will admit the first batch of students this year.

Also he said that the much demanded Army recruitment will be held here in the month of March.

The Minister was chairing meeting of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) here on Saturday with the district administration and representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).

During the District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee Meeting (DISHA) held in the office of Deputy Commissioner, the Union Minister was briefed on the status of implementation of several schemes.

Addressing the meeting, Dr Jitendra directed the officials to ensure implementation of schemes related to water,



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh chairing the District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee Meeting (DISHA) at Kathua on Saturday.

electricity, health and education, in active collaboration with local MLAs and representatives of PRIs.

Dr Singh also directed that works pertaining to roads, water and electricity must be accorded the highest priority so that common citizens are put to minimum inconvenience.

Dr Singh issued the direction that both officers and public representatives must jointly conduct field visits and address issues expeditiously.

The Union Minister suggested that Public Works Department (PWD) should work in close coordination with the Border Roads Organisation

(BRO) vis-à-vis certain road projects, including Basohli Highway, to remove bottlenecks in their execution.

He also underscored that there must be no compromise on the quality of material being used in building roads. Dr Singh also directed that timelines of projects aimed at improving connectivity must be adhered to.

On Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Grameen (PMAY-G), Dr Jitendra Singh said all efforts must be made to ensure saturation of the schemes.

He issued the direction that the concerned officials must visit villages to check the status of houses built under

the scheme, and identify places where no houses have come up till date. Dr Singh said the left-over locations must be catered to without further delay.

The Union Minister urged the MLAs to create awareness about the benefits of PM SVANidhi in their areas so that more beneficiaries can be enrolled into it.

He said PM Vishwakarma scheme needs to be promoted, and festivals for creating awareness about cultivation of lavender be organised.

Dr Jitendra also called for launching a multi-agency campaign to deal with the twin issues of drug menace and illegal mining. He said these evils have brought ignominy to Kathua.

Today's DISHA meeting was attended among others by MLA, Kathua, Dr Bharat Bhushan; MLA, Barnoti, Rajiv Jasrotia; MLA, Hiranagar, Vijay Sharma; MLA, Basohli, Darshan Singh; MLA, Bani, Rameshwar Singh; DDC, Chairperson, Mahan Singh; DDC, Vice Chairperson, Raghunandan Singh; SSP, Kathua Shobhit Saxena, and officers of various departments of the district administration.

## Power shutdown



**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: Chief Engineer (Distribution) JPDC/L, Jammu has informed that the power supply to Siot, Lamberi, Bagnoti, Narian, Nowshera, Jaba Deeing Sial, Nonial, Manpur, Chowki-Jangher, Qila Darhal, Rajpora Laroka and adjoining areas will remain affected on December 09 from 10 am to 4 pm.

Superintending Engineer (Distribution) JPDC/L, O&M Circle Kathua has informed that the power supply to Krishna Colony, Ward No. 3, 4, Hospital, Kharote and adjoining areas will remain affected on December 09 from 8 am to 2 pm.

Similarly, the power supply to Sehora and adjoining areas will remain affected on December 09 from 8 am to 11 am.

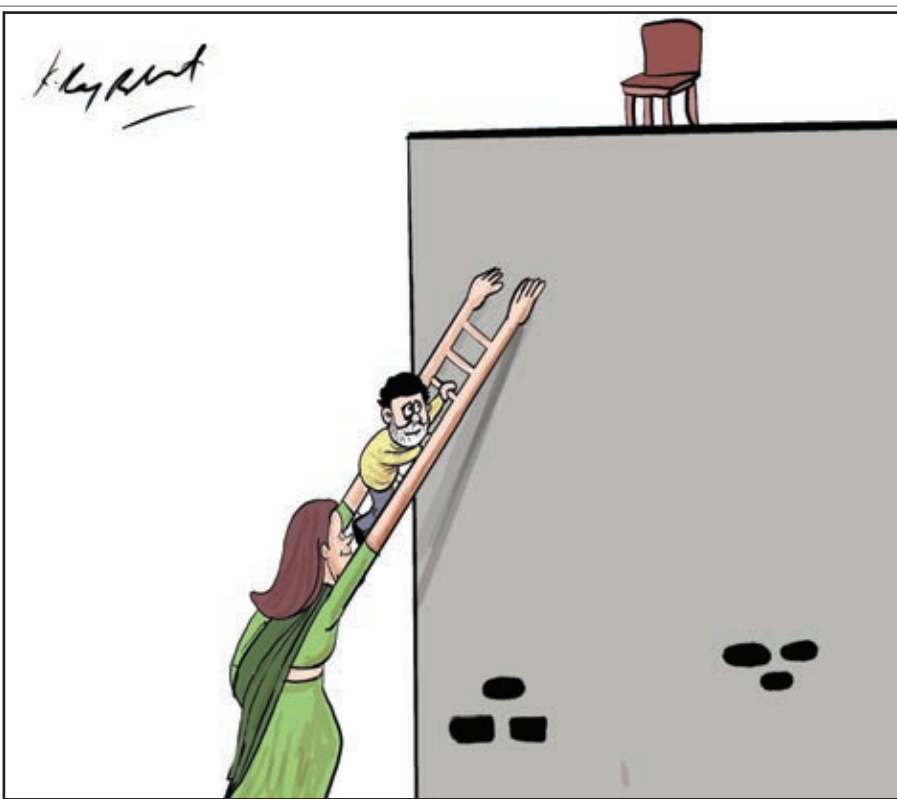
## Satish Sharma addresses NTTA's 8th AGM, HTEACON- 2024 at Srinagar

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
SRINAGAR: Minister for Transport, FCS&CA, Youth Services and Sports, Information Technology, Science & Technology, Satish Sharma on Saturday addressed the 8th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Nigeen Tourist Traders Association (NTTA) here.

MLA Zadibal, Tanvir Sadiq and MLA Hazratbal, Salman Sagar were also on the occasion as Guests of Honour.

The AGM was also attended by senior bureaucrats, hoteliers, travel trade professionals, civil society members, media representatives and academicians.

The AGM focused on the theme of sustainable tourism, emphasizing the vital link between environ-



## Director Horticulture flags off Farmers' Exposure visit'

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: Director Horticulture Jammu Chaman Lal Sharma flagged off a Farmers' Exposure visit-cum-Training programme, here on Saturday.

The group of 150 touring farmers, including a significant number of female participants started here from the office of the Chief Horticulture Officer.

Over the course of the visit within the J&K UT, the participants will tour various Demonstration Sites, Hi-tech fruit plant nurseries, processing units and engage with horticultural experts to gain hands-on experience. These interactions are designed to enhance capacity building among farmers and trainees, enabling them to adopt advanced practices in fruit cultivation, processing, and marketing.

The tour was flagged off in the presence of Joint Director Horticulture Vikas Anand; Chief Horticulture Officer Rakesh Kotwal; Dean Horticulture SKUAST Jammu Dr Vikas Tandon; DLSMS Pomology Sandeep Gupta; DMPP Abdul Hamid and Horticulture Development Officer Amit Saraf.

Addressing the farmers



Director Horticulture Jammu Chaman Lal Sharma flagging off Farmers' Exposure visit-cum-Training programme.

before their departure, the Director underscored the pivotal goal of the program. "This initiative aims to familiarize farmers with the latest techniques and practices adopted by the horticulture department to enhance fruit production quality. Furthermore, it seeks to educate unemployed youth and trainees about the opportunities available for establishing small-scale fruit processing units to produce value-added products," the Director stated. The programme also emphasizes the promotion of hi-tech polyhouses for cultivating off-season fruits, vegetables, and flowers-a strategy designed to secure better market returns for farmers, significantly increasing their incomes while generating employment for others in the

region. The Chief Horticulture Officer highlighted the value of exposure visits in equipping farmers and unemployed youth with innovative horticultural practices and entrepreneurial strategies. "By adopting advanced technologies and establishing small-scale processing units, participants can not only boost their income but also create employment opportunities within their communities," Kotwal remarked.

A special focus of the programme was the empowerment of women farmers. Female participants were encouraged to explore entrepreneurial ventures in horticulture, contributing to their economic independence and strengthening the role of women in the agricultural sector.

## Tourism Deptt organizes Stakeholder Consultation to formulate Comprehensive Homestay Policy for J&K



Sunaina Sharma Mehta, Joint Director Tourism interacting with stakeholders

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Department of Tourism, J&K, under the visionary leadership of Yasha M u n d g a l , Commissioner/Secretary, Tourism Department, conducted a stakeholder consultation through the Directorate of Tourism, Jammu, to gather inputs for formulating a comprehensive Homestay Policy for Jammu & Kashmir.

Guided by Mudgal's vision, the policy aims to promote rural tourism, empower local communities, and offer authentic cultural experiences, while fostering sustainable development and preserving the region's unique heritage.

The initiative aims to address challenges faced by homestay operators, foster rural tourism and enhance community participation across the region. Currently, the region operates

under procedural guidelines issued on June 30, 2022, for the registration of Homestays and Paying Guest Houses.

This consultation marked a significant step toward upgrading these guidelines into an inclusive policy designed to enhance the competitiveness and operational capacity of homestay operators.

The session, chaired by Sunaina Sharma Mehta, Joint Director Tourism, witnessed the active participation of 23 homestay owners from across the Jammu Division.

In her address, she highlighted the pivotal role of homestays in promoting cultural and rural tourism while empowering local communities.

She remarked, "Homestays provide tourists with authentic experiences and serve as a vital tool for community-driven tourism. Training local operators in hospitality services, designing curated packages, and incorporating gender-based incentives and sustainability measures are essential

for a robust homestay ecosystem."

Participants highlighted several key areas of focus, including operational challenges, marketing strategies, financial support, infrastructure development and sustainability practices. Significant suggestions included charging electricity bills for homestays at domestic rates instead of commercial rates, introducing subsidies on solar panels to promote sustainable energy practices, increasing the permissible number of rooms for homestays to at least six, simplifying the documentation process for registration, and exempting homestays from GST to improve financial viability. Stakeholders also emphasized the need for recognizing online platforms that drive significant traffic to homestays through awards and incentives to boost effective marketing.

The Officers of the Department assured the participants that the feedback gathered during the consultation will be thoroughly analyzed and

incorporated into the final Homestay Policy.

This new policy aims to create a robust framework to empower local communities, preserve cultural heritage, and promote eco-friendly tourism practices, thereby strengthening the homestay ecosystem across Jammu & Kashmir.

The Directorate also extended gratitude to all participants for their active involvement and reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the growth of rural tourism and the homestay sector in the region.

Also present on the occasion were officers and officials of the Directorate of Tourism, Jammu, including Shokat Hayat Matoo, Deputy Director Tourism; Arif Lone, Assistant Director Tourism; Muzammil Hassan Choudhary, Assistant Director Tourism; and Jyoti Bhatti, Principal, Food Crafts Institute. Prominent stakeholders from the tourism and homestay sectors, including Dr. Uttam Singh (Hunter Ranch Homestay), Col. R.S. Parmar (Colonel Resort Homestay), Swarn Singh (Swarn Homestay), Pritam Sharma (Pritam Homestay), Pawan Gupta (President, All Jammu Hotel & Lodges Association), Dr. Taran Singh (Jammu Adventure Sports Association), Kulbir Singh (Villago Homestay), Dharya Khejuria (Dharya Villa Homestay), and Monika Mittel (Wild Sapiens Homestay), actively contributed to the discussions.

## DIG JSK Range conducts winter preparedness for operations/security review meeting



DIG JSK Range, Shiv Kumar Sharma chairing meeting.

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHUA: The Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) of Jammu-Samba-Kathua (JSK) Range, Shiv Kumar Sharma on Saturday held a comprehensive security review meeting at Billawar of district Kathua along with SSP Kathua Shobit Saxena, SP Operations Ameer Iqbal, DySP Operations Malhar Sukhvir Singh, SDPO Billawar Shavinder Singh, SHO Billawar and other sister agencies Dy Comndt CRPF, Asst Condt CRPF Billawar.

DIG JSK Range underscored the importance of the robust security plan, and proactive measures to counter threats from Over Ground workers (OGWs), Anti-National Elements (ANEs) and Anti-Social Elements (ASEs).

He directed the Officers to spread a comprehensive awareness drive for general public and urged them to report any suspicious or terrorist activity in nearest

Police Post or Police Station immediately and assured them to provide proper co-operation from J&K Police.

All efforts be made to destroy the support system of Terrorist in Malhar, Machedi Badnoda.

Moreover all the officers were directed to strengthening all the nakas especially during night/week hours.

DIG JSK Range imparted necessary instructions for installation of CCTV cameras with proper record keeping to monitor the activities of miscreants. The officers were also advised to cover all the Bridges (i.e Ujh Bridge, Varun Devta Bridge, Ludhar Bridge), and all the vulnerable points with CCTV Cameras.

DIG JSK Range imparted necessary instructions to the officers to direct their subordinate units to make a strong security grid to prevent any potential threat.

He also stressed for maintaining proper co-ordination

with all security agencies and established routine Nakas with them to effectively tackle challenges at the grassroots level for better results.

DIG JSK Range also emphasised that proper domination of Ujh river and other Nallah be plugged properly, so that no loop hole remain for infiltration routes. Regular CASO be launched to eliminate the Terrorist.

## 100 Day TB Elimination Campaign commences in Jammu District

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a major move towards eliminating tuberculosis in India, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, in conjunction with key stakeholders, launched the 100 Day TB Elimination Campaign.

In this regard, a 100-day TB Elimination Campaign was flagged off on Saturday from Block Marh Jammu by local MLA Surinder Bhagat under the overall Administration of Administrative Secretary Health and Medical Education Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah and guidance of Director Health Services Jammu Dr. Rakesh Magotra along with CMO Jammu Dr. Harbaksh Singh.

The key officials from the local administration including SDM Athar Amin and officials from Health



Dignitaries at flagging off ceremony.

Department, Dr Harjeet Rai State Nodal Officer NHM, STO Jammu Dr. Jyoti Jolly, CMO Samba Dr. Vidhi Bhatial, DTO Jammu Dr. Amita Turki, BMO Marh Dr. Jyoti Bhau, ZEO Marh Kasturi Lal and officials from Panchayati Raj Department were also present. Similar campaign was launched from District Kathua.

The project, which will be implemented in country's 347 districts across 33 states and union territories,

aims to increase TB case detection, reduce diagnostic delays, and improve treatment outcomes, particularly among high-risk groups. Jammu is one of these 347 districts in Jammu division.

The campaign highlights the government's commitment to reaching the end-TB goal by addressing the difficulties of tuberculosis (TB) notification and mortality in the division through the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's National TB Elimination

Programme (NTEP).

The 100-day campaign aims to improve programme performance in key output measures such as TB incidence, diagnostic coverage, and mortality rates. It also corresponds with previous policy advancements by the Ministry, such as greater financial aid for tuberculosis patients under the Nikshay Poshan Yojana and the addition of household contacts under the Pradhan Mantri Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan.

The campaign's primary focus areas are increased access to modern diagnostics, focused screening of vulnerable populations, specialized care for high-risk patients, and greater nutritional support. The project will make use of the large network of Ayushman Arogya Mandirs across the country, which has extended TB care to the last

mile.

The State TB Cell of Jammu Division and the Chief Medical Officer of Jammu jointly expressed their commitment to implement this intense campaign in the districts and identify TB cases from the high risk groups (>60 years, Malnourished, Diabetes, HIV, Smokers, Alcoholic, Past TB cases and Household Contacts) as majority of TB cases are being contributed by these groups along with CMO.

At the end of the Launch, the Block Medical Officer of CHC Marh and the Chief Medical Officer of Jammu expressed sincere gratitude to all dignitaries and public for attending the event. They said that with our dedication and "Jan-bhagidari" the district would be able to lower the TB burden and enhance public health outcomes across the country.