

Addresses FTII's Atma-Nirbar Bharat event

LG vows to transform J&K into genuine market powerhouse



LG Manoj Sinha at Atma-Nirbar Bharat event being organised by Federation of Trade & Industry of India in Jammu.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Sunday offered three principles to strengthen the Made in India and Atma-Nirbar Bharat initiative - Quality, Innovation, and Reliability. He stressed that these three mantras must become the new identity of domestic manufacturing sector. "I view Swadeshi Apnao (Embrace Swadeshi) not as a slogan, but a way of life. I urge people of Jammu Kashmir and across the country- let it shape our daily habits," the Lieutenant Governor said. The Lieutenant Governor was speaking at Atma-Nirbar Bharat event organised by Federation of Trade

& Industry of India (FTII). The Lieutenant Governor felicitated the recipients of Vyapar Ratan Awards for their significant contribution.

The Lieutenant Governor spoke on fortifying domestic manufacturing prowess and "Made in India" goods translates to surging Indian jobs and a resilient economy.

"Atma-Nirbar Bharat is a national awakening. It is an economic revolution propelled by Industry's might. 'Made in India' now symbolizes trust in global trade. We must ensure that when someone, anywhere in the world, sees 'Made in India' on a product, it inspires confidence," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted that India began scripting a new chapter in 2014, forging a new path to self-reliance under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He said that under Prime Minister's visionary leadership, India did not follow a predetermined path but it built its own.

"India resolved to rise not ordinary, but empowered. Today, it is witnessing a genuine economic renaissance. Our MSMEs are the backbone of our economy. They embody hope for millions of families and businesses.

Spread across every district and every town of this country, MSMEs innovate

even under the constraint of limited resources. And that is why when we purchase a product from a small enterprise, we are not simply buying a commodity- we are securing the future of a family, and giving birth to employment, skill and opportunity," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor emphasised that every stakeholder must understand that trade is not merely the act of buying and selling.

He said that Trade must be viewed as the flow of opportunity.

The Lieutenant Governor said that small-scale and micro-enterprises now anchor J&K's economy.

He highlighted the efforts that have revolutionized work in villages and towns, instituting ease of living and ease of doing business, vowing to transform Jammu Kashmir into a genuine market powerhouse.

"We have crafted fresh opportunities for youth and women, starting thousands of small and micro manufacturing ventures that sustain families, stabilize society, and now shaping Jammu Kashmir business landscape. This winds of change stir palpably in Jammu Kashmir too. Post-2019's historic shift, revolutionary strides reshaped industrial

growth and MSMEs. The new industrial policy earned the Union Territory its place among the most preferred investment destinations in the country," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor emphasized the necessity of rapid economic growth and the implementation of technological solutions to ensure a transparent, corruption-free system.

He urged every section of society to remain vigilant against elements trying to radicalize the youth and making efforts to sustain the terror ecosystem.

The Lieutenant Governor also spoke on meritocracy and called for collective action to achieve a terror-free Jammu Kashmir.

He stated that the number of stakeholders in peace has grown significantly over the last few years, with a vast majority of the population now prioritizing stability and prosperity.

"Today, J&K has emerged as a top performer in national integration programmes like Vande Mataram. Those dreaming of disrupting this progress must wake up to the new reality," he said.

Er. Gulam Ali Khatana, Member of Parliament, Satish Sharma, Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs; Sunil Singh, Chairman, National Traders Welfare Board (NTWB); Vikramjit Singh, Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce Department; Dr Sanjay Bansal, Member, NTWB and National President, Federation of Trade & Industry of India (FTII); Business & Industry leaders, entrepreneurs, members of FTII; representatives of various trade organisations and senior officials were present.

Drinking water in Jammu found contaminated: Report

■ SANJAY SHARMA

JAMMU: A recent investigation by the Government Medical College & Hospital Jammu (GMC&H-J) has reportedly revealed alarming levels of contamination in drinking water across the Jammu City.

Out of 600 water samples collected over the past 12 months, 390 samples were found to be unsafe for consumption. The testing was conducted in the high-tech Microbiology Laboratory of GMC, the premier healthcare institution of the region.

The samples were sourced from multiple locations, including schools, government offices, hostels, public areas, PHE supply tanks and taps, border areas, and other institutional setups.

The laboratory reports indicate that the bacterium E. coli was detected in all 399 contaminated samples. This bacterium, normally present in the human intestine, points to contamination through sewage or animal waste. Consumption of such water can lead to serious waterborne diseases, including diarrhoea, nausea, fever, and other infections.

Of the total samples tested, around 200 met the safety standards and were deemed fit for

drinking. The highest number of samples, over 120, was tested in September last year, with 90 found unsafe. Similarly, in January 2026, 50 out of 90 samples failed to meet safety standards, and in February 2026, seven out of 15 tested samples were reported unsafe. Officials stated that this large-scale water sampling initiative aims to prevent potential outbreaks and ensure timely intervention to safeguard public health. Despite the submission of the laboratory report to the government, no public advisory regarding corrective measures has been issued so far, raising concerns about immediate action to address the contamination.

Experts emphasized that without swift remedial measures, the widespread consumption of contaminated water may trigger serious health risks and waterborne epidemics. They urged authorities to improve water treatment, maintain public supply systems, and regularly monitor water quality to protect residents across Jammu.

This report underscores the urgent need for public awareness and proactive governance to ensure safe and clean drinking water in the region.

Anjuman Imamia Jammu mourns martyrdom of Ali Khamenei



A large number of mourners, protesters mourning martyrdom of Ali Khamenei.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A protest rally was organized by Anjuman Imamia Jammu to mourn the martyrdom of Ali Khamenei, Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran. A large number of mourners and protesters participated in the rally, expressing deep grief and solidarity.

The procession commenced

from Imambargah Sufi Shah Peer Mitha and culminated at the Karbala Complex, Jammu. The atmosphere was emotionally charged, with grief and devotion visible on every face. The scenes reflected the deep love and reverence people held for him, as tears flowed and elegies were recited throughout the march.

Participants carried placards, mourned collectively, and raised slogans condemning oppression and injustice. The gathering stood in unwavering solidarity with the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the wider Muslim Ummah, paying rich tributes to the departed leader and remembering his lifelong commitment to faith, resistance, and the cause of justice.

IIM Jammu concludes Young Officer Development Program - NHPC Batch II



Dignitaries at closing ceremony of Young Officer Development Program - NHPC Batch II.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Indian Institute of Management Jammu concluded the Young Officer Development Program - NHPC (Batch II), a specially curated capacity-building initiative for officers of NHPC, a Government of India Navratna Enterprise. The valedictory ceremony was held on 28th February 2026 at the Yoga Classroom, Vedanta MDP Centre, IIM Jammu.

The programme was designed to enhance managerial capabilities, strategic thinking, and leadership competencies among young officers of NHPC, aligning with the evolving needs of India's power

and infrastructure sector.

Dr. Lalit Pankaj, Program Director, welcomed the distinguished guests and participants and presented a comprehensive programme report, highlighting the key learning modules, experiential sessions, and interactive discussions conducted during the programme. He emphasized the importance of continuous learning and leadership development in public sector enterprises. The ceremony featured reflections and feedback from participants, who shared their enriching learning experiences and appreciated the academic rigor, practical insights, and interactive pedagogy adopted

during the programme. Prof. (Brig. Retd.) Neeraj Kumar Soni, Co-chairperson, Anandam, addressed the participants and encouraged them to integrate managerial excellence with ethical leadership and a value-driven approach in their professional journey. The ceremony culminated with the distribution of certificates to the participants, marking the successful completion of the programme. Participants shared their reflections about the training programme. Dr. Guanganung Kahmei, Program Director, delivered the vote of thanks, expressing gratitude to NHPC, the faculty members, and the participants for their active engagement and contribution to the success of the programme. The event culminated with the National Anthem. The completion of the Young Officer Development Program further reinforces IIM Jammu's dedication to executive education and its role in nurturing competent, responsible, and forward-looking leaders for nation-building.

Dr Jitendra inaugurates unique 'Recombinant Cell' facility for drug discovery, medical genomics

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and other key portfolios, today inaugurated the state-of-the-art "Central Facility for Recombinant Cells and Sensors" at BRIC-Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology (BRIC-RGCB). The advanced facility is expected to significantly boost drug discovery, medical genomics and agricultural genomics research in the country.

During the visit to the Akkulam campus in Thiruvananthapuram, the

ADC reviews restoration work on Bhaderwah-Chamba Road

■ STATE TIMES NEWS BHADERWAH: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Bhaderwah, Sunil Kumar Bhutyal conducted an extensive visit to Khani Top and adjoining areas including Thanalla, Musdi Nallah and Dharu Nallah to assess the ongoing snow clearance work and permanent restoration of the Bhaderwah-Chamba Road.

The ADC directed the concerned departments to put in extra efforts to restore traffic movement on the strategic road.

The visit was conducted in the presence of AE R&B Muneeb Mir and other officials from the PWD Department and engineers from the Mechanical Department. The ADC emphasized the importance of maintaining connectivity, especially during the winter season and instructed officials to remain vigilant and prepared for any emergency situation.

Interacting with the field staff, the ADC appreciated their efforts in challenging weather conditions and stressed upon timely completion of restoration works to avoid inconvenience to commuters.



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurating new state-of-the-art facility at BRIC-Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology at Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.

Minister also announced the establishment of a dedicated Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) facility and released the book "Quantum Physics: One Hundred Magical Years" authored by Prof. V.P.N. Nampoori.

Addressing scientists, students, industry representatives and start-up incubatees, Dr. Jitendra Singh said India is steadily preparing for a bio-driven economy where biotechnology will shape the future of manufac-

ment, anticipating the global shift toward biomanufacturing and bio-based industries.

The Minister said India's bioeconomy has expanded nearly sixteen-fold over the past decade-from around USD 10 billion to nearly USD 166 billion-with a target of reaching USD 300 billion in the coming years. Biotechnology start-ups, he added, have surged from about 50-70 in 2014 to more than 11,000 today, reflecting a rapidly expanding innovation ecosystem.

The newly inaugurated Central Facility for Recombinant Cells and Sensors, built with an investment of approximately ₹60 crore by the Department of Biotechnology, houses a large panel of engineered recombinant cells and advanced screening systems.

It is designed to accelerate target-specific drug discovery and will serve academia, healthcare innovators and industry nationwide.

Dr. Jitendra Singh also addressed the growing bur-

den of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, fatty liver disease and cancer, noting projections of a significant rise in cancer incidence by 2030. He appreciated BRIC-RGCB's research in colon, oral, breast and cervical cancers, and underscored the importance of preventive healthcare, including HPV vaccination.

Announcing the ₹80 crore GMP facility, to be developed in two phases, he said it will support pre-commercial production of biologics and cell-based therapies, including CAR-T therapy, in collaboration with clinical centres in Kerala. The facility will operate on a "pay-and-use" basis, bridging laboratory research and industrial-scale production.

Emphasising stronger collaboration among research institutions, private industry and emerging sectors, the Minister assured continued government support to translate scientific innovation into real-world impact.

Sewing Training cum Production Centre inaugurated at Panchayat Patli

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SAMBA: In a major step toward women's empowerment and economic self-reliance, a Sewing Training Cum Production Centre was inaugurated at Community Centre Panchayat Patli under a CSR partnership of Sun Pharma Laboratories Ltd and Usha International, implemented by Care for You. The centre was inaugurated by MLA Vijaypur, Chander Parkash Ganga, in the presence of Narsingh Dayal Verma (JKAS), Assistant

Commissioner Panchayat Samba; Kamlesh Devkar, HR Head; and Roopesh Ajit Mirji, Plant Head, Sun Pharma Laboratories Ltd, along with local Sarpanches and community members.

Addressing the gathering, the MLA praised the collaborative initiative, stating that the centre would strengthen women's skills, promote entrepreneurship, and enhance financial independence in the region.

The event witnessed participation from Paryanka

Talwar (CSR Head, Sun Pharma), Touseef Malik (President, Care for You), Ramiz Raja (State Coordinator), Muzaffar Khawaja (Technical Head), Tanu Sharma Project Coordinator and representatives of Usha International including Shaista Ayoub, Farha.

Guests were felicitated with handcrafted Paper Mache plates made by SHGs of care for you. The centre is now operational and ready to begin technical training at Panchayat Patli, Samba.

Army organizes Science & Technology Quiz

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: On the occasion of National Science Day, troops of Crossed Swords Division under the aegis of White Knight Corps organized an engaging Science and Technology Quiz Competition at Government Middle School, Ambaran. The event aimed to promote scientific temperament, critical thinking and innovation while commemorating National Science Day, celebrated annually to mark Sir C.V. Raman's discovery of the Raman Effect.

The quiz witnessed enthusiastic participation from 40 students across various classes, who demonstrated their knowledge on topics including recent technological advancements, artificial intelligence, general science, space research, scientific discoveries and the role of science in national development. Multiple rounds, including buzzer and rapid-fire segments, created a lively and competitive environment. The Headmaster and teaching staff appreciated the Indian Army's initiative to inspire young learners. Winners were awarded prizes in recognition of their performance. The event concluded with a vote of thanks, reflecting the Army's commitment to youth engagement, knowledge and holistic development.

Army conducts engaging Tech Session for students at GMS at Kund

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SUNDERBANI: The Indian Army recently conducted an interactive technology session for students of Government Middle School, Kund, Sunderbani, aimed at fostering curiosity and innovation through hands-on learning. Organized as part of the Army's civil outreach efforts, the initiative strengthened positive engagement and meaningful connections with the local community. Students were introduced to emerging technologies including the Internet of Things (IoT), electromagnetism, 3D printing and Augmented and Virtual Reality, gaining insights into real-world applications of science and technology. Interactive modules encouraged students to build models, experiment with concepts and participate in structured challenges, enhancing problem-solving, creativity, teamwork and critical thinking.

BSP to observe Kanshi Ram Jayanti across all zones

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: On the occasion of the Jayanti of Manyawar Kanshi Ram Ji, the President of Bahujan Samaj Party, Jammu & Kashmir (UT), Darshan Rana announced that commemorative programmes will be organized at the district level across the entire Union Territory.

These programmes will comprehensively highlight the historic and inspirational journey of Manyawar Kanshi Ram Ji from the formation of BAMCEF to DS-4 and ultimately the establishment of the Bahujan Samaj Party-underscoring his lifelong struggle to unite, awaken, and politically empower the Bahujan society.

Rana stated that party workers and the general public will be sensitized to

the ideology, mission, and sacrifices of the great leader through meetings, seminars, and public gatherings, with special focus on engaging youth and marginalized sections of society.

He emphasized that the transition from BAMCEF to DS-4 and finally to BSP symbolizes the transformation of social consciousness into organized political power, a vision that continues to guide the party's mission today. Inspired by this legacy, the BSP organization in Jammu & Kashmir will be further strengthened. All district presidents and office bearers have been directed to ensure disciplined organization and enthusiastic participation to make the Jayanti celebrations meaningful and impactful.

DC Ramban inspects assets established under HADP

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAMBAN: Deputy Commissioner Ramban Mohammad Aiyas Khan today conducted a comprehensive inspection of assets established under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) in Ramban, with a special focus on the Hi-Tech facility set up at Karol.

Senior Superintendent of Police Arun Gupta; Additional Deputy Commissioner Varunjeet Singh Charak and Sub-Divisional Agriculture Officer (SDAO) accompanied the Deputy Commissioner.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner inspected the infrastructure and operational components of the Hi-Tech unit aimed at promoting modern and scientific agricultural practices in the district.

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the functioning of the unit and emphasized the importance of optimum utilization of resources. He directed the concerned officers to ensure timely and effective implementation of all components of the programme.

Stressing the need to promote innovative farming techniques, he instructed the Agriculture Department to intensify field outreach, provide regular training and organize awareness programmes to enable farmers to fully leverage the benefits of the Hi-Tech initiatives.

Earlier, Chief Agriculture Officer (CAO) Dr Vinay Kumar Jandial briefed the Deputy Commissioner in detail about the objectives, implementation strategy and expected outcomes of the Hi-Tech project. He informed that the facility has been established to introduce advanced technologies, improve crop productivity, enhance quality output and provide technical guidance to farmers.