

# We will chalk out realistic, workable plan for revival of tourism, trade: CM

## ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday held an interaction with a delegation of the Kashmir Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI) at the Civil Secretariat here where wide-ranging issues pertaining to different sectors were discussed.

The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary to Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary Finance Shailendra Kumar, Commissioner Secretary Industries & Commerce, Vikramjit Singh, Commissioner Secretary Youth Services & Sports Sarmad Hafeez, Director Tourism Kashmir Raja Yaqoob and other concerned officers.

The delegation, led by KCCI President Javed Ahmad Tenga, highlighted concerns across industries including trade, travel and tourism, agriculture, horticulture, education, health, hospitality, urban development and transport sectors.. The Chief Minister assured the delegation of full governmental support and expressed solidarity with the business community of Jammu and Kashmir during these challenging times. "Whatever issues you have raised here, we are examining them with utmost seriousness. We will extend all possible help. If needed, we will approach the Government of India to secure the necessary assistance," he stated.



Chief Minister Omar Abdullah interacting with delegation of KCCI at Civil Secretariat.

CM Abdullah emphasized that the economic slowdown currently faced by the region is not recent but a legacy of previous years. He underlined the need for a realistic and targeted relief package, designed in consultation with stakeholders from the business community. "We are asking for support in light of the unprecedented circumstances we face. A joint proposal for a package will be prepared, but it must be distinct from regular demands to ensure focused and definite attention," he said. The Chief Minister specifically addressed concerns suggested by the KCCI demanding moratorium on repayment of loans, interest relief, account protection from NPA, emergency credit lines, soft loans for transporters, tourism promotion, issue of litigations in allotment of land to industrial units, facilitating export of goods through multiple airlines, conservation of wetlands, parking issues in downtown Srinagar. CM assured the delegation that these matters would be addressed and more specifically the difficulties faced by businesses shall be taken up

with the Union Finance Ministry and other relevant authorities. Recognizing the severe impact of the downturn in tourism, CM Omar Abdullah assured that restrictions on tourists to travel to 48 destinations need to be reviewed gradually. He also called for measures which include promotion of local tourism and encouraging schools and colleges to plan excursions within Jammu & Kashmir. He said that he has requested to the Prime Minister and Parliamentary Affairs Department to hold Standing and Consultative Committee meetings of Parliament in Kashmir, aimed at boosting confidence and visibility. Besides he said that he had called upon participants at NITI Aayog conference to help organize PSU conferences, meetings incentive tours, and national-level events in Kashmir. CM announced participation in upcoming Travel & Tourism Fairs (TTFs) in Kolkata and Ahmedabad to reinvigorate tourists' interest.

To address long-standing structural issues such as lease policy, electricity

amnesty to commercial sector, Ease of Doing Business measures, difficulties in obtaining of NOCs, business compliance, and environmental clearances, the Chief Minister said these concerns, some dating back several years, are being actively reviewed.

CM Abdullah stressed that the government's priority would be the small stakeholders associated with tourism who had just started and invested in tourism and transport sectors and they are the most vulnerable:

"I am deeply worried about the Sumo driver who upgraded to an Innova, the homestay owner who built a 15-room hotel, or the local vendor whose daily income fed his family. These are the people we must stand by now."

He highlighted the importance of equitable relief to ensure that grassroots-level entrepreneurs, self-employed individuals, and small business owners are not sidelined in comparison to big & established players.

Discussing agriculture and logistics, CM Abdullah shared updates on the

ongoing efforts with the Railway Ministry to improve cargo movement, particularly for agriculture and horticulture produce. He expressed optimism that freight logistics would soon become more streamlined, aiding producers across the valley.

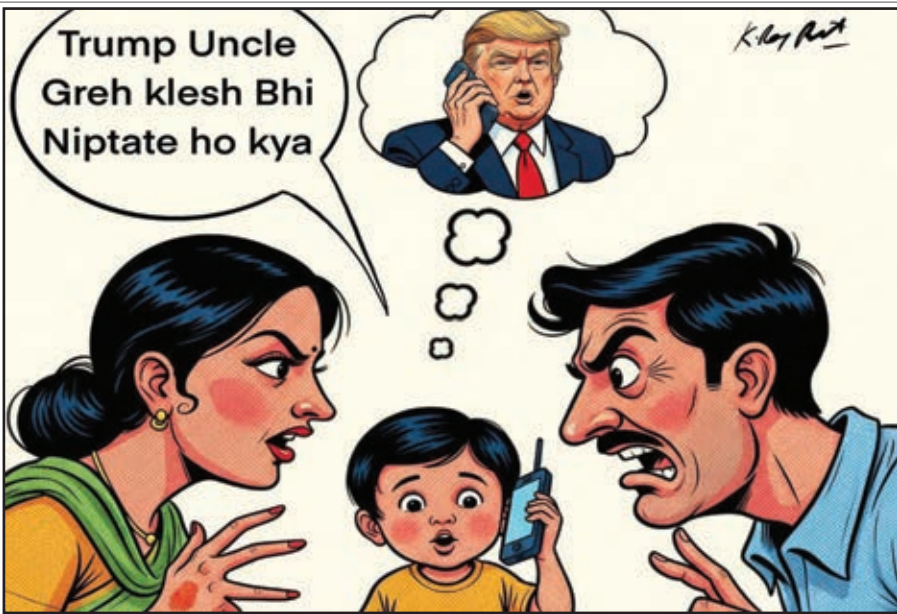
Reaffirming his commitment, the Chief Minister stated that his government will prepare a well-structured, implementable plan in consultation with all stakeholders. "We will present our case unitedly to the Government of India. The Union Finance Minister was receptive when I spoke to her, and I am hopeful of a positive response."

The Chief Minister concluded by assuring the business community that the administration is committed to helping them overcome current difficulties and plan for a sustainable, resilient future.

While concluding, CM called upon all those associated with tourism to adopt ethical practices and transact honestly with tourists so that fair trade is ensured and tourists would want to come back to Jammu and Kashmir again and again.

He warned against unfair trade practices being employed by some elements which would bring a bad name to Kashmir Tourism and products.

He said that Government would also step in to curb instances of misbranding, overcharging and sale of counterfeit items.



## Yudhvir inspects SMGS Hospital, reviews facilities & patient care

### Distributes fruits among patients

## ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Senior BJP leader and MLA East constituency, Yudhvir Sethi on Monday conducted an extensive inspection of the Sri Maharaja Gulab Singh (SMGS) Hospital, Jammu, to review the medical facilities and ensure quality patient care.

Accompanied by Medical Superintendent Dr. Dara Singh, the MLA toured various sections of the hospital and interacted with the staff and patients.

Dr. Dara Singh briefed the MLA about several infrastructural shortcomings in the hospital, including the urgent need for the development of a proper parking lot, a dedicated park for patients and attendants, and the installation of additional water coolers to meet the summer demand.

Assuring prompt action,



MLA, Yudhvir Sethi distributing fruits among the patients and their attendants at SMGS Hospital Jammu.

MLA Sethi said that he will take up these issues with the concerned departments to ensure early redressal.

"Health care remains a top priority, and we will ensure that every possible step is taken to provide a clean, accessible, and patient-friendly environment at SMGS Hospital," he said.

The MLA also directed the Medical Superintendent to ensure that the best possible medical treatment is provided

to all visiting patients without delay or inconvenience.

Later, Yudhvir Sethi, along with his supporters Rakesh Khanna, Anil Jandial, Subash Anand, and Bittu, distributed fruits among the patients and their attendants as a goodwill gesture.

The visit was aimed at reinforcing the commitment of the BJP-led government to provide efficient and compassionate health services to the people of Jammu.

## First ever Kashmiri-Kannada feature film 'Harmukh' unveiled in J&K

## ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: "Harmukh", the first-ever feature film made in both Kashmiri and Kannada languages, had its official launch here on Monday.

At the event, the film's trailer and songs were launched. The film is produced by and features Ayash Arif in the lead role.

The title of the film is inspired from a mountain located in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district, between the Sindh river to the south and Kishanganga river to the north and is considered sacred in Hinduism.

Veteran filmmaker and actor T S Nagabharana, who has won 16 national and state awards, is also part of the cast.

Arif described the film as "a dream, a bridge, and a bond" between Kashmir and Karnataka. At its core, there is a message of friendship

beyond borders. The movie depicts the emotional journey of two families from different cultures and how they grow to love and understand each other.

"At its heart, the film is a tribute to unity, empathy, and the power of human connection," he said.

The story, written by acclaimed filmmaker Ashok Cashyap, beautifully weaves together the spirit of Kashmir and the warmth of Karnataka, Arif said.

The music and songs of "Harmukh" are composed by legendary Kashmiri singer Wahid Jeelani. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, who was the chief guest at the launch ceremony, emphasised the importance of sharing Kashmir's true essence with the world. "There is a tremendous need to portray the hospitality, warmth, and humanity of

Kashmir to the global audience," he said, adding "Harmukh" appears to do exactly that - "beautifully capturing the cultural richness and compassionate spirit that define our land."

Wani said such cinematic efforts go beyond storytelling and act as cultural ambassadors, offering the world a glimpse into the real Kashmir -- not through conflict, but through connection, creativity, and care.

He also hoped that "Harmukh" serve as a catalyst for the region's tourism sector, which remains a vital pillar of the local economy.

"This endeavour will certainly prove blissful for our tourism industry and contribute to a more positive, inclusive narrative about our Valley," he said.

At the launch, the audience was treated to a captivating performance by renowned folk artist Fayaz Shilvati.

## Dr Jitendra launches world-class 'Forecast System', aims to consolidate India's economic growth

## ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Union Minister of Earth Sciences, Dr. Jitendra Singh on Monday dedicated one of the world's first indigenously developed high-resolution weather forecast systems - the Bharat Forecast System - at a launch ceremony held at Vigyan Bhawan.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said, as India celebrates the rise of her economy to Rank 4 and looks forward to move up to Rank 1, our forecast precision aims to consolidate India's economic growth by reducing potential losses and simultaneously adding potential gains.

Developed by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune, the cutting-edge system enhances India's weather prediction resolution from 12 km to 6 km, enabling every village in India to



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh speaking after launching world's first indigenously developed high-resolution weather forecast systems "Bharat Forecast System", at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on Monday.

access more precise and location-specific forecasts. This advancement marks a quantum leap in India's weather services and is a significant milestone under the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' and 'Make in India' initiatives.

Dr. Jitendra said "This indigenous breakthrough positions India among global leaders in weather prediction. It's a proud testament to our rise as the world's 4th

largest economy and showcases our ability to develop state-of-the-art, self-reliant scientific solutions is another feather in the Nation's Cap."

In a heartening revelation, Dr. Singh shared that the Bharat Forecast System is being spearheaded by four women scientists, reflecting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Nari Shakti'. "Science Ministries no

longer empower women - we are being empowered by them," he noted.

Highlighting the nationalistic spirit behind the project, Dr. Jitendra said, "The efforts are Indian, the technology is Indian, and the beneficiaries are Indian. This is true Atmanirbharta. Moreover, this system will also benefit other tropical regions globally, which face the most complex and variable weather challenges."

Emphasizing the tribute to 'Vikas Se Virasat' and the government's commitment to using modern technology to support traditional sectors like agriculture, Dr. Jitendra said the system would help reduce crop loss and anomalies by improving extreme weather predictions - with a 30% improvement in extreme rainfall forecasts and a 64% enhancement in core zones, using real-time modelling based on the 'Triangular Cubic Octahedral Grid model.'

Dr. Jitendra emphasized the government's commitment to last-mile delivery of forecasts, enabling both citizens and farmers to make informed decisions and mitigate risks.

At the event, Dr. Jitendra also launched IITM's Hindi Rajbhasha magazine 'Indradhanush', celebrating linguistic inclusion in science communication.

## Preparations for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra reviewed in Jammu

## ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Sachin Kumar Vaishya on Monday chaired a comprehensive meeting to review the preparedness for the upcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra 2025.

The meeting aimed to ensure seamless coordination among all departments and agencies involved in the smooth conduct of the annual pilgrimage.

Key issues discussed included security and traffic management, accommodation for pilgrims, yatra registration facilities, sanitation and fire safety measures. The DC emphasised meticulous planning and



Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Sachin Kumar Vaishya chairing a meeting.

timely execution of all arrangements, reiterating that necessary steps must be taken in accordance with established protocols, while incorporating improvements as per current requirements.

The meeting was attended by SSP Jammu, Joginder Singh, SSP Traffic City

Jammu, Farooq Qaiser, Additional District Magistrates Ansuva Jaimwal and Rakesh Kumar, Joint Director Information Jammu, Deepak Dubey, Sub Divisional Magistrates and other concerned district officers.

Special focus was laid on key transit points and ven-

ues including Jammu Railway Station and Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas, where arrangements for crowd management, sanitation and accommodation were reviewed in detail. The deployment of paramilitary forces and the roles of nodal officers were also discussed to ensure effective

management of the yatra.

The Deputy Commissioner directed all departments to work in close coordination and maintain constant communication to address any issues promptly. He stressed the need for adequate provision of sanitation facilities, toilets and safe accommodation for the pilgrims, along with robust fire safety and crowd management measures.

The meeting concluded with the DC urging all stakeholders to maintain high standards of service and hospitality for the visiting pilgrims, and to ensure that all arrangements are put in place well before the commencement of the yatra.

## Dy CM chairs meeting of JKEDI on J&K Startup Policy 2024-27

## ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Kumar Chaudhary, on Monday chaired a high level review meeting held to assess progress on the J&K Startup Policy 2024-27 here at the Civil Secretariat Srinagar.

Present in the meeting were Commissioner Secretary Industries & Commerce, Vikramjit Singh, Secretary in Industries & Commerce and Director, JKEDI, Khalid Jahangir; Managing Director, JKTPPO; Director Finance, Industries & Commerce; Director Planning, Industries & Commerce; Additional Secretary (A), Industries & Commerce and the Startup team from Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI).

Secretary in Industries & Commerce, who also holds the charge of Director JKEDI, gave a comprehensive presentation highlighting key developments under the J&K Startup Policy 2024-27, including startup registrations, workshops conducted, awareness initiatives and startups shortlisted for seed funding.

The Dy CM was also apprised of various Memorandums of



Dy CM, Surinder Chaudhary chairing a meeting.

Understanding (MoUs) signed by JKEDI, as a nodal agency for implementation of J&K Startup Policy, with national and state-level institutions aimed at fostering mentorship and knowledge exchange.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister directed the officials to initiate collaborations with reputed national and international institutions to mentor and accelerate startups in J&K.

He instructed for conducting grassroots level awareness programs in schools and colleges through idea challenges, business plan development camps, seminars and workshops to help the aspiring entrepreneurs get a clarity of thought and fine tune their ideas into potential business models.

In a significant move to sup-

port early-stage entrepreneurs, the Dy CM directed that co-working spaces at JKEDI's Pampore and Bari Brahmana campuses be made available to the eligible startups.

Choudhary also called for specific sessions for selected students on startup functioning under the supervision of the Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce Department.

To ensure swift and effective implementation, the Dy CM emphasised processing of the operational guidelines and funding mechanisms of the J&K Startup Policy so as to extend its benefits to the youth of Jammu and Kashmir. These measures aim to empower the youth of Jammu & Kashmir and strengthen the JK's economic landscape.

## Secy Health reviews preparations for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra

## ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The Health and Medical Education Department on Monday convened a high level meeting under the chairmanship of Secretary, Health & Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rashid Shah, to review and finalise preparations for the upcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY) 2025, scheduled to be held from 3rd July to 9th August 2025.

The meeting was attended by Director SKIMS, Directors of Health Services Kashmir and Jammu, Principals of all Government Medical Colleges including SKIMS Medical

College Bemina, Managing Director NHM J&K, Managing Director JKMSCL, Executive Director of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Narayana Super Speciality Hospital, Director Family Welfare and Dr. L Swasticharan besides Deputy Director General (Health Services), Government of India, along with his team.

The Secretary asked the Directors of Health Services, Kashmir and Jammu, to submit comprehensive deployment plans for medical personnel by 30th May 2025. He directed the JKMSCL to ensure availability and pre-positioning of essential medical stocks at strate-

gically located warehouses near Chandanwari and Baltal.

He asked the concerned for ensuring that the Base Hospitals at Chandanwari and Baltal must be fully operational before well commencement of the annual pilgrimage to manage the devotees effectively.

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has already shared a list of 123 medical personnel with DHS Kashmir for deployment during the Yatra.

It was directed that doctors and paramedics shall be deployed well in advance before the start of Yatra 2025.

Besides, healthcare personnel shall be relieved only after the reliever joins to ensure uninterrupted services.

It was decided that the telemedicine services will be operational and tested in advance. Besides, training in telemedicine and emergency response will be conducted by the Dhoobiwan Institute and SKIMS, with SKIMS Medical College Bemina leading the effort. The Secretary emphasised the need for meticulous preparedness, seamless coordination and timely implementation of all directions to provide efficient and reliable healthcare services to the pilgrims.