

Delay in restoration of statehood hampers holistic development of J&K: Sadhotra

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: National Conference Additional General Secretary and Former Minister, Ajay Kumar Sadhotra on Monday said the continued delay in the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir is severely obstructing its overall development and undermining the aspirations of its people.

Addressing a 'day-long workers' convention of Jammu Rural District 'A' held under the chairmanship of Raghuraj Singh Manhas District President, Sadhotra emphasized that statehood is not merely a political status but a symbol of the people's dignity and self-esteem.

He said the people of Jammu and Kashmir are yearning for the restoration of their democratic rights that enable them to live with dignity, decide their own developmental priorities, and shape their collective future. "Stripping Jammu



Additional General Secretary NC Ajay Sadhotra and others during Convention of Jammu District Rural 'A' of National Conference.

and Kashmir of its statehood and reducing it to a Union Territory has not only demoted the status of a historically significant and vast region, but also trampled upon its distinct ethos and identity," he said, adding that governance from a distance cannot substitute the sense of empowerment that comes with locally elected and accountable governments.

Honouring the popular mandate of the people in this part of the country that has undergone most testing times during the past over three decades, he added.

Sadhotra said that the prolonged absence of an elected government for over five years and bureaucratic style of functioning had created a democratic vacuum and delayed progress on multiple fronts, particularly youth-centric development and employment. Now that the people have put in place through their power of vote a democratic government under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, it has to be allowed to function as per the aspirations of the people, he said.

Sadhotra also voiced seri-

ous concern over the rising graph of unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir and stressed that proactive steps are urgently needed to fill existing vacancies and to generate fresh employment avenues for the youth. Recalling past initiatives during National Conference-led governments, Sadhotra highlighted that under the leadership of Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah, special recruitment drives were conducted for youth in border and hilly areas, especially in the police department. He hoped similar initiatives

will contribute in addressing the issue of joblessness.

Sadhotra reiterated commitment of the National Conference to the holistic development of Jammu and Kashmir, saying the party stands for youth empowerment, inclusive progress, peace, and restoring the constitutional and democratic rights of the people.

Ved Prakash Sharma was appointed as organizer of the Jammu North Assembly Constituency to organize and identify candidates for Wards of Jammu Municipal Corporation and Sarpanchs and Panchs for General, SC, ST, OBC and Women for Panchayat Elections. District President Jammu Rural has been asked to constitute a 11 Member Committee to assist Ved Prakash Sharma, newly appointed organizer.

Sadhotra congratulated Ved Prakash Sharma and hoped that his zeal and dedication will strengthen the party.

Heat wave



CS takes cognizance of delays in AIIMS Kashmir Asks to initiate remedial measures to meet Nov deadline

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, on Monday chaired a high level meeting to review the progress on the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) project in Kashmir besides addressing the operational and expansion-related issues raised by AIIMS Jammu. The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Jal Shakti Department; Directors of AIIMS Jammu/Kashmir; Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir/Jammu; Secretary, Public Works (R&B); Secretary, Health & Medical Education Department; Project Director, NHAI; Chief Engineers of PIIE and PDD and other senior officials.

The Chief Secretary took serious notice of the slow pace of construction work at AIIMS Kashmir and expressed strong dismay over the inadequate deployment of men and machinery on the site. He said that this flagship project, which is being closely monitored at the national level and through the Prime Minister's PRAGATI review meetings, must not be allowed to lag behind. He emphasized that accountability must be fixed on the contractor for failing to mobilize sufficient skilled and unskilled labourers to meet the project timelines. He directed the CPWD to expedite the

pace of work and initiate the immediate remedial measures on this account. He asked to issue strict instructions to the contractor to avoid any further delay. He categorically stressed that November 2025 deadline must be met without any compromise.

The Chief Secretary assured the executing agencies of full administrative and security support from the local administration to overcome logistical or operational hurdles. He urged all the stakeholders to work in synergy and ensure that on-ground implementation matches the urgency conveyed in official directions.

It was informed during the meeting that around 64% of the project work has been completed, so far. Around 480 workers are currently engaged at the site and this number is expected to rise to 1,500 by the end of June.

It was apprised that in order to start operationalization of this hospital on time procurement and installation of medical equipment is underway. Besides, AIIMS Kashmir is expected to commence its OPD services by April 2026, IPD services by December 2026 and welcome its first batch of MBBS students in July/August 2026, the meeting was apprised.

In addition to the Kashmir project, the Chief Secretary also reviewed

pressing issues flagged by the administration of AIIMS Jammu, especially in the context of its future expansion and seamless functioning.

Some of the key requirements discussed included augmentation of water and power supply, construction of an underpass to connect north and south blocks across the National Highway, allotment of additional land for expansion, establishment of a dedicated police post and fire station besides development of a comprehensive drainage system etc.

The Chief Secretary directed the concerned departments to take note of these critical needs and assured the AIIMS Jammu administration of the UT government's full support in fast-tracking approvals and infrastructural facilitation.

Reiterating the government's unwavering commitment towards strengthening the tertiary healthcare infrastructure in the Union Territory, Atal Dulloo asked all the departments to work proactively to ensure that both AIIMS campuses evolve into world-class medical institutions. He highlighted that the timely completion and efficient functioning of these institutes is crucial for delivering affordable, accessible and advanced medical care to the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir.

Additional Registrar reviews Cooperative initiatives in Jammu division



Additional Registrar Cooperative Societies Jammu Bal Krishan chairing a meeting.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Additional Registrar Cooperative Societies Jammu Bal Krishan on Monday convened a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress of cooperative activities in Jammu Division. The meeting was attended by Joint Registrar (Audit), Cooperative Societies, Jammu, Priyanka Bhat along with all Deputy Registrars (DRCS), District Audit Officers (DAOs) and Assistant Registrars (ARCS) of Jammu Division.

A district-wise review was conducted, covering the implementation status of Centrally Sponsored Initiatives, UT-specific schemes and activities being undertaken under the International Year of Cooperatives. Officers were

urged to align district-level efforts with the vision and guidelines of the Ministry of Cooperation, Government of India to ensure uniformity and efficiency in program execution.

In view of the forthcoming Amarnath Yatra, Machail Yatra and other high-footfall pilgrimage events, Bal Krishan directed districts to establish Cooperative Mandaps at strategic locations. "These mandaps will act as facilitation and promotion centers, displaying cooperative products and services and increasing the movement's reach and visibility among pilgrims and locals alike" he said.

The Additional Registrar issued strict instructions to ensure that e-PACS (Primary Agricultural Credit Societies) conduct

dynamic day-end closures and that e-Audit processes are completed within stipulated timeframes. These digital processes are monitored at the national level and are critical for ensuring compliance with evolving cooperative governance standards.

To further boost rural economy and value addition, the Additional Registrar assigned district-wise targets to all Deputy Registrars for the establishment of additional Food Processing Units during the Financial Year 2025-26. He also emphasized that existing units must be made fully functional at the earliest to serve cooperative members effectively and generate local employment.

Moreover, the DRs were instructed to expedite the identification of core agricul-

tural produce in their districts for Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS)-based Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs). They were directed to mobilize additional farmer members in coordination with designated Cluster-Based Business Organizations (CBBOs) to facilitate structured development and access to central support under the FPO scheme.

Highlighting the importance of inclusivity, the meeting placed special focus on increasing women's participation in cooperatives beyond the dairy sector. Officers were encouraged to support the formation and strengthening of women-led cooperatives, tapping into their potential for inclusive economic growth and social empowerment.

During the interactive session, several ARs and DRs raised operational issues, especially the need to permit Common Service Centres (CSCs) functioning under cooperatives to offer services involving Aadhaar authentication and e-stamp generation. The Additional

Registrar acknowledged these concerns and assured that the department will explore measures to enable such service delivery, thereby enhancing cooperative revenues and enabling doorstep governance services.

Addressing regional imbalances, the Deputy Registrar of Kishtwar was specifically instructed to initiate the establishment of PACS in remote and spiritually significant areas such as Machail, inspired by the Baba Jitto Multi-Purpose Cooperative Society (MPCS) model which merges spiritual identity with community empowerment.

In his concluding remarks, Bal Krishan urged officers to personally visit societies, engage with grassroots members and promote awareness about progressive cooperative models including PACS as FPOs, Food Processing Units and diversified economic activities. He reiterated the transformative power of cooperatives in fostering economic self-reliance, local entrepreneurship and collective bargaining power across rural Jammu.

Satish Sharma inaugurates bus service from Baba Nagri to Rajouri

STATE TIMES NEWS

KANGAN: Minister for FCS&CA, Transport, IT, Youth Services and Sports, Satish Sharma, on Monday visited the revered Baba Nagri Shrine Kangan, in Ganderbal district, on the eve of 129th annual Urs of Hazrat Mian Nizamud Din Kiyani (RA), where he paid obeisance and interacted with the local devotees and shrine management.

The Minister took stock of the facilities being made available to the pilgrims at the Shrine. He acknowledged the significant spiritual and cultural importance of Baba Nagri in the region. As a major highlight of his visit, the Minister inaugurated a dedicated JKRTC bus service connecting Baba Nagri, Kangan to Rajouri via TRC Srinagar. The move was aimed at improving accessibility for the devotees from far-flung regions, especially in the Pir Panjal area.

Member of Parliament, Mian Altaf and Local MLA, Mian Mehar Ali besides offi-



Cabinet Minister Satish Sharma flagging off bus.

cers and officials of JKRTC were present on the occasion.

"Baba Nagri holds a special place in the hearts of thousands across Jammu and Kashmir. By launching this bus service, we aim to strengthen inter-regional connectivity, promote religious tourism and ease the travel burden for the devotees," said the Minister while addressing the gathering. He emphasised that the Omar Abdullah led government is committed to rapid development of religious

and remote areas. He assured continued efforts to improve road connectivity, transport infrastructure and public amenities in the region. The bus service has been made operational with the Jammu and Kashmir Road Transport Corporation (JKRTC) overseeing the logistics and route planning.

The visit concluded with the Minister holding discussions with the officials and community representatives on further developmental needs in the area.

Hindu Samrajya Divas 2025 celebrated with enthusiasm and sports competitions in Bhawani Nagar

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Hindu Samrajya Divas was celebrated with great enthusiasm, josh, and dedication in the Bajrang Basti of Bhawani Nagar - Lakad Mandi / Old Janipur areas. The event, which took place on 8th June 2025, was dedicated to paying rich tributes to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, the great Hindu warrior, and remembering his legacy. The celebration witnessed an overwhelming participation from men, Maatreshakti, and children of the area, all gathering in large numbers at the local park. Maatreshakti, led by Sudesh Behanji and her team, organized a special Satsang in honor of Veer Shivaji. Meanwhile, children showcased their enthusiasm and sportsmanship by competing in a variety of games and races, earning prizes for their performance.

The children of Spring Blossoms High School, Lakkar Mandi, exhibited exceptional josh and disci-



Organisers along with students during the event.

pline during the event. Various fun-filled competitions took place, including Doudo, Khojo Aur Pao Race (Boys): Sadhan, Paras, Aarav, and Anmol; Doudo, Khojo Aur Pao Race (Girls): Vanya, Satuti, Radhika, and Riya; Baggy Rat Race (Young Kids): Saatvik, Rakshit, Shiva, and Karamveer; Long Race: Anmol Takotra, Prince Takotra, Ujjwal Sharma and Eik, Do, Teen, Chaar Game (Girls): Poorvi.

The event saw children enthusiastically chanting slogans like "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" and "Chhatrapati Shivaji Ki Jai" while partici-

ating in the races. The elderly members of the community shared their memories of India's historic wars, including those of 1947, 1962, 1971, and 1999, highlighting the valor of the nation.

A highlight of the event was the felicitation of young achievers from the area which include Chitreshi Gupta - National Basketball Player & NCC "C" Certificate Holder; Palak Dhiman - International-level Taekwondo Player (Gold in 2023 Nationals); Kartavya Sharma - M.B.B.S. Seat Holder at JMC, Jammu (Top NEET Score in 2024)

and Praznath Wangoo - Gold Medalist at the 23rd Sub Jr. National Wushu Championship

The judging panel, which included the young achievers themselves along with Prashant Chawla, Ashok Pandit, Dhruv, Sumati, and Pratham Dogra, was praised for the smooth conduct of the competitions. They were guided by Kiran Sharma, Senior Teacher, and Roshini Bhat.

Earlier in the day, Dheer Chander Sharma, Boudhik Pramukh of the local RSS unit, delivered an inspiring lecture on the valor and victories of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, which was

particularly well-received by the young children attending the event.

Various sports goods such as Cosco balls, Hoopa Hulla, skipping ropes, puzzles, and Rubik's cubes were awarded to the winners, along with medals and trophies, presented on behalf of the Naagrak Manch, Lakad Mandi.

In a bid to promote health and wellness, the children took an oath to avoid junk food like burgers, chips, and momos. They were served healthy snacks like sprouted Kala Chana and clean Matka Neembu Paani, with no single-use plastic bottles being used during the event.

As a part of environmental responsibility, the children themselves took the initiative to clean and collect all the garbage generated during the event before leaving the park.

The day concluded with a moving rendition of the National Anthem, marking the end of a vibrant and successful celebration of Hindu Samrajya Divas.

SSP Doda flags off annual Mindal Mata Yatra from Doda

STATE TIMES NEWS

DODA: Senior Superintendent of Police, Doda, Sandeep Mehta, flagged off the famous and sacred Mata Chandi Mindal Yatra from Dak Bungalow Doda towards Kishtwar and finally to Himachal Pradesh. Addl DC Doda Sh Anil Thakur, DySP Hqrs Doda Ajay Anand and organisers of the Yatra were present on the occasion.

A large gathering of devotees from across the district witnessed the auspicious commencement of the annual pilgrimage to the



SSP Doda, Sandeep Mehta participating in Mata Chandi Mindal Yatra.

reversed shrine of Chandi Mata in Mindhal, Himachal Pradesh. The Devotees were filled with

enthusiasm and devotion, passionately reciting hymns in praise of Maa Chandi. At the

flag-off ceremony, the SSP extended his best wishes to all the pilgrims and appealed them to pray to Maa Chandi for peace, prosperity and brotherhood in the country. He emphasized the spiritual significance of the Yatra and encouraged the devotees to maintain their devotion throughout the journey. The SSP also assured that all necessary facilities and security arrangements have been made enroute by the district Police to ensure a smooth and safe journey for the yatri.

He reiterated the administration's commitment in supporting the religious and cultural traditions of the region.

To facilitate the smooth conduct of the yatra, the administration deployed civil and police officials at the flag-off site, ensuring crowd management and assistance to the pilgrims.

The event concluded with spiritual chants, traditional rituals, and a devotional send-off, as Yatri embarked on their soulful journey to seek the divine blessings of Chandi Mata.

GDC Samba releases IQAC news letter SAARTHI

STATE TIMES NEWS

SAMBA: SPND Government Degree College, Samba proudly released the latest edition of its IQAC newsletter Saarthi - a reflective compendium of the institution's quality initiatives, academic achievements, and progressive practices.

The newsletter was formally unveiled by Principal Prof. (Dr.) Twinkle Suri, along with IQAC Coordinator Dr. Banpreet Kour, Dr Ramandeep Kour Co

Coordinator, Prof Narayan Dutt Convener Advisory Committee and all members of the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC). Saarthi documents the college's efforts toward fostering academic excellence, institutional growth, and stakeholder engagement in alignment with NAAC guidelines. On the occasion, Prof. (Dr.) Twinkle Suri commended the IQAC team for their commitment to strengthening the college's internal

quality culture. Dr Banpreet Kour reiterated the importance of Saarthi as both a record of progress and a roadmap for continuous improvement.

The event was attended by senior faculty staff, and students, who appreciated the initiative as a step forward in transparency, documentation, and participatory governance. The soft copy of Saarthi is available on the official college website: www.gdesamba.in