

# Give top priority to youth fitness and nurturing sporting excellence: CS

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: In a significant move to harness the power of youth and channel their energies into productive and health-enhancing pursuits, Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, on Thursday chaired a high-level meeting to review the performance and roadmap of the Youth Services & Sports Department (YS&S). The meeting witnessed vibrant discussions on expanding the sporting landscape of the Union Territory and enhancing youth engagement through structured and inclusive initiatives.

Calling the Department's role vital in building a fit, focused, and drug-free society, the Chief Secretary underlined the transformative power of sports in shaping personalities, cultivating discipline, and deterring youth from harmful distractions like substance abuse. He emphasized that increased community participation in sports must become a key pillar of public health and social development in the UT. The



Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo chairing meeting to review roadmap of YS&S Department.

Department should aim to bring every young person into the fold of some sporting discipline. This not only nurtures physical well-being but fosters a sense of purpose, teamwork, and self-control, Dulloo remarked.

He applauded the strides made in strengthening sports infrastructure\* which he said now rivals national benchmarks. Encouraging the optimal utilization of newly created stadiums, indoor arenas, and playgrounds across the UT, the Chief Secretary urged the department to aspire towards organizing more mega sporting events

that can spotlight local talent and inspire wider participation. Recognizing the natural water bodies as untapped potential for adventure and water sports, Dulloo also directed officials to \*\*initiate water-based sporting activities at Manasbal Lake and to explore competitive events at Ranjit Sagar Lake in Kathua, adding a thrilling dimension to the UT's sports repertoire.

The meeting also marked a milestone celebration with the release of the Annual Sports Calendar, alongside beautifully curated coffee table books and compendi-

ums that capture J&K's remarkable journey in sports. These publications showcase the Department's achievements, the growth of infrastructure, and the rising graph of talent emerging from every corner of the UT.

The Commissioner Secretary, YS&S, Sarmad Hafeez, in his remarks, gave a panoramic view of the sporting ecosystem in the UT. He informed that millions of youth have been directly or indirectly engaged in various sports activities organized at the block, district, and UT levels. The Department, he noted, has created dozens of

world-class infrastructure facilities over the past few years, many of which now align with national and even international standards.

He reiterated that the day is not far when Jammu & Kashmir's sports infrastructure will be counted among the best in the country, adding that the Department is also collaborating with national sports associations to host major events in the region.

Secretary of J&K Sports Council, Nuzhat Gul, also made a detailed presentation outlining the Council's efforts in tournament organization, grassroots coaching, and infrastructure upgradation.

She highlighted the impact of trained coaches across disciplines and expressed confidence that, with continued support and planning, J&K's athletes will soon rank among the country's finest.

With a renewed commitment to nurture sporting talent, promote physical fitness, and build a robust sports infrastructure here.

# JMC, UFD launch 'Clean Jammu Green Jammu' Campaign

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a significant step towards promoting environmental sustainability, Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC), in collaboration with the Urban Forestry Division Jammu, launched the "Clean Jammu Green Jammu" campaign on Thursday.

The campaign was inaugurated by Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation, Dr. Devansh Yadav, who led the initiative by planting a sapling, symbolizing the start of a city-wide plantation drive. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from Swachhata Champions of various wards, media personnel from print and electronic media, and officers from both departments.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Yadav emphasized the urgent need for enhancing green cover in the city, especially in light of rising temperatures. Under the joint initiative, around 60,000 saplings will be planted across Jammu city before August 15, 2025, he informed and urged upon the citizens to actively participate



JMC Commissioner, Dr. Devansh Yadav planting a sapling.

in this noble campaign and contribute towards making Jammu a cleaner and greener city.

Each sapling will be tagged with a QR code, providing detailed information about the species and the individual who has adopted it. "We urge citizens to adopt a tree in their own name or in the name of their mother," said Dr. Yadav, "so that together we can convert vacant spaces into green

zones and bring long-term environmental relief to our city."

Among others, Joint Commissioner Health and Sanitation Abdul Star, Divisional Forest Officer, Urban Forestry Division Jammu, Ashwani Kumar Mittal, Chief Transport Officer, Dharamveer Singh, IEC Incharge Dr. Divya Sharma and AFO Rabia Khan were also present on the occasion.

# DC Poonch reviews progress of JJM projects; directs for timeline completion schemes

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

POONCH: Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal today chaired a review meeting to assess the progress of Jal Jeevan Mission schemes in the district. He emphasized timely completion of the projects to ensure safe drinking water supply to every household as per the mission's mandate.

At the outset, Superintending Engineer Hydraulic Circle Poonch gave a brief, detailing the total number of sanctioned schemes, along with the status of ongoing and completed works and challenges being faced in the execution.

The Deputy Commissioner discussed in detail the status of water supply schemes, infrastruc-



ture augmentation, groundwater exploration, and household tap connections. He directed the concerned officers to resolve land and coordination issues promptly to avoid delays. The DC directed the Superintending Engineer and Executive Engineer Jal Shakti to instruct contractors to expedite and complete pending works at the earliest. AEE

Ground Water was directed to complete the digging of borewells wherever pendency exists. The DC also stressed that completed schemes must be made operational immediately to benefit the public. He further instructed all executing agencies to ensure strict adherence to quality and safety standards to create sustainable and effective assets.

Others present at the meeting were Chief Planning Officer, Executive Engineer Jal Shakti, Executive Engineer PDD, AEEs and JEs of Sub Divisions Poonch, Surankote and Mendhar, AEE Mechanical, AEs and JEs, AEE and JE Ground Water.

# Sakeena calls for collective efforts for environmental preservation

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo on Thursday emphasised on the urgent need of reconnecting with nature and foster environmental stewardship among the young generation, especially college and school going students.

The Minister made these remarks while addressing a gathering held in the backdrop of World Environment Day-2025 week celebrations at Government Girls Higher Secondary School (GGHSS) Kothibagh here today.

Director School Education Kashmir, Dr. G.N Itoo; Chief Education Officer, Srinagar; Principal GGHSS Kothibagh, Heads of various institutions of Srinagar district, faculty members and large number of students were also present on the



Health Minister, Sakeena Itoo honouring a student.

occasion. Addressing the gathering, Education Minister said that Kashmir's weather is witnessing drastic changes due to deforestation and other allied activities. She emphasized on the urgent need of the hour is to reconnect with nature and foster environmental stewardship among the younger generation as well as school and college going students. "Environmental preservation is not just a policy issue, it is a

personal responsibility. Each of us has the power to influence change, starting with our homes, schools and communities", Sakeena Itoo stated. The Minister called upon all the participants to make plantation of trees a routine habit, highlighting that we need to work collectively to bring back the charm and environmental conditions our Kashmir was known for across the globe. On the occasion, Education Minister also

praised GGHSS Kothibagh for academic excellence, highlighting that Government institutions are at par with Private schools in these days. She added that the position holders of various government institutions felicitated today reflect this. The Minister also said that selections in prestigious examinations like IAS and KAS as well as professional exams like NEET, GATE and others are usually alumni of Government institutions. She added that the Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah is giving more impetus to education and health sectors as they form the pillars of any developed society.

Sakeena Itoo on the occasion, also praised the young students of GGHSS Kothibagh for their proactive role in promoting green initiatives and urged them to become lifelong ambassadors for nature. In her wel-

come address, Principal GGHSS Kothibagh, spoke on the broad contours of this programme. She also expressed gratitude to Minister for continuous support. On the occasion, Education Minister felicitated the 10th and 12th class examination toppers of various institutions. She also felicitated the students of Bal Raksha Bharat on the occasion. The Minister also unveiled the school tarana of GGHSS Kothibagh during the event.

On the occasion, students presented various cultural performances, reflecting vibrant culture and ethos of our valley.

Earlier, Sakeena Itoo inspected the stalls established by students of Green School Eco-club showcasing varied products and innovations for environmental preservation and protection. She also inspected the Biodiversity wall of the school.

# Secy RDD visits Sheshnag; reviews preparations for Amarnathji Yatra

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

PAHALGAM: Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, on Thursday conducted an extensive tour of Pahalgam to assess the sanitation facilities being put in place along the axis for the upcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY), 2025.

He also visited different camps along the route, starting from Nunwan Base camp, Chandanwari and trekked upto Sheshnag to oversee the sanitation arrangements for the upcoming yatra.

The Secretary took stock of arrangements of men and machinery at Pissu top, Zojibal and Wawbal upto Sheshnag.

He was accompanied by Director General (DG) Rural Sanitation, Anoo Malhotra; Assistant C o m m i s s i o n e r Development (ACD) Anantnag, Shafiq Ahmad; BDO Pahalgam and other district officers.

The Secretary emphasized that the department



Secretary RDD&PR, Mohammad Aijaz Asad conducting tour of Pahalgam.

remains fully committed towards ensuring the highest standards of facilities and services for the pilgrims.

During his visit, the Secretary reviewed installation and functionality of various sanitation infrastructures including the toilets, washrooms, dustbins, drainage for grey water disposal, segregation of wet waste site, plas-

tic waste management site and related facilities along the Pahalgam axis.

The Secretary also examined the installation of dustbins around the Nunwan base camp and yatra route to ensure effective waste disposal, segregation of waste at source and promote cleanliness among the pilgrims.

He stressed the importance of maintaining high-

est standards of cleanliness and called for implementation of a zero-land-fill policy along the entire pilgrimage route.

Pertinent to mention here that toilets and baths are to be installed along both the Pahalgam and Baltal axes and on yatra route. Besides, the department is also responsible for the operation and maintenance of 1,576 already installed toilets.

The Secretary issued specific directions for effective grey water management, including construction of adequate soak pits and drainage systems to prevent water logging and ensure environmentally sustainable waste disposal practices. He emphasized the need to ensure clean, safe and efficient facilities for pilgrims, particularly in areas such as sanitation, water supply, accommodation and medical support.

Inspecting the arrangements on the ground, the Secretary underscored that quality service delivery and hygienic condi-

tions are non-negotiable. He asked the officials to adopt a pilgrim-centric approach and ensure that all necessary arrangements are made promptly for the convenience and well-being of devotees.

Aijaz Asad called for immediate redressal of complaints, especially those related to hygiene, through a real-time response system. He informed that a QR code-based feedback system had been introduced at toilet points to enable pilgrims report cleanliness status, provide feedback and support centralized tracking for improving the service delivery.

The Secretary also interacted with the field staff, sanitation workers and ground-level officers. He instructed the concerned officials to ensure that every pilgrim has access to the best possible sanitation facilities.

The Secretary, later, in the evening visited the helipad at Pahalgam to review the preparations for the Yatra.

# Secy in APD reviews implementation of HADP projects

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Secretary in Agriculture Production Department (APD) and Mission Director, Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP), Sandeep Kumar, on Thursday said that successful implementation of HADP will play a pivotal role in transforming Jammu and Kashmir's agriculture and allied sectors into a sustainable and vibrant Rs 1 lakh crore agri-economy.

Chairing a review meeting held at the Directorate of Agriculture, Lal Mandi, Srinagar, Sandeep Kumar emphasised the importance of output-based monitoring and real-time progress tracking to maximise the impact and efficiency. The review meeting focused on 13 major HADP projects.

Director Agriculture Jammu, Director Agriculture Kashmir, Director Horticulture Jammu, Director Horticulture Kashmir, Director Animal Husbandry (Jammu/Kashmir), Director



Secretary APD, Sandeep Kumar chairing a meeting.

Sheep Husbandry (Jammu/Kashmir), representatives from SKUAST-Jammu and SKUAST-Kashmir, Directors of Sericulture, CAD, Fisheries and other allied sectors besides concerned PGMCs and technical teams attended the meeting while officers from outside the station joined the meeting virtually.

The Mission Director stressed the need for robust and measurable outcome tracking over 92,000 units already established at the grassroots level under HADP schemes. He also

underlined that output-led project governance, efficient inter-departmental coordination, and strategic bottleneck resolution are vital for achieving the goals of HADP.

Sandeep Kumar called for stronger last-mile delivery, data-driven monitoring systems and greater accountability in implementation. He reaffirmed the government's commitment towards empowering the farmers, improving productivity and creating sustainable livelihood opportunities through HADP.

# JKMC condoles demise of former member

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir Medical Council (JKMC) has condoled the sad demise of its former member Dr. Romesh Khajuria.

Dr Khajuria was the member of the Jammu & Kashmir Medical Council from 2019 to 2021.

Recalling the contribution of Dr. Romesh Khajuria, the board members described him as a well learned, decent and cultured person, always devoted to his cherished job.

All the members and staff prayed to almighty to bestow peace to the departed soul and give strength to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss.

# World Day against Child Labour; series of awareness events held

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: To mark the World Day against Child Labour, office of the Labour Commissioner, J&K Government on Thursday organized a series of awareness events to draw the attention of the employers and workers' organizations as well as civil society towards ending child labour menace.

The observance began with a webinar followed by a panel discussion, highlighting key issues and collaborative strategies to combat Child Labour under the Theme "Progress is clear, but there's more to do: let's speed up efforts". The theme reflects both the progress achieved and the

urgency to intensify action to meet global targets.

speakers and stakeholders shared insights on child labour laws, reforms and challenges being faced to eradicate this menace of Child Labour. Labour Commissioner J&K Charandeep Singh underlined the efforts to eliminate the child labour and required measures to help them.

A Walkathon was organised to spread the message "Stop Child Labour" among the civil society, while a Nukkad Natak was staged at Bahu Plaza to raise public awareness and reinforce the collective responsibility towards making the region child labour free.

Speaking on the occa-



Labour Commissioner J&K Charandeep Singh and others witnessing a play.

sion, the Labour Commissioner said "Child Labour is a curse, it cannot be accepted. Let us, on this World Day Against Child Labour, pledge to connect every child with education, safety, dignity and values". He urged common masses, stake-

holders and employers and workers' organizations to unite against the practice by ensuring that every child receives education, security and dignity. "The Labour Department is organizing awareness camps from time to time to make the people aware

about the rights of the Children and consequences of Child Labour and also taking effective measures in connivance with other departments to eradicate this curse of Child Labour and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms

of Child Labour", he added. In addition, he said, the Department of Labour is making every effort to plug the loopholes which are being faced while enforcing the laws with respect to prohibition of Child Labour to make the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir free from child labour.

He added that Child Labour is robbing many children of their basic right to live with dignity, enjoy their childhood and attain their full development potential, so, it is the responsibility of each and every person to make effort in this regard to eradicate this Child Labour.

Observed annually on June 12, the World Day

Against Child Labour was launched by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2002 to highlight the plight of child labourers worldwide.

The day aims to generate awareness and action to eliminate all forms of child labour, especially its worst forms, which include hazardous work, forced labour and exploitation. The Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated the situation for many underprivileged children, when their schools closed and their parents lost their jobs/wages. Many children who dropped out of school and who were forced to work to supplement their family income, have not returned to school.