

# MLA Marh inaugurates Dragon Fruit Mother Block

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
MARH: MLA Marh Surinder Kumar on Tuesday inaugurated Dragon fruit Mother Block besides launching the plantation drive at Horticulture Fruit Plant Nursery Raipur, Marh.

The MLA was accompanied by Director Horticulture Jammu Gul Sayed, Chief Horticulture Officer Rakesh Kotwal and other Horticulture officers.

MLA said that presently Horticultural advancements have become indispensable to navigate the farming sector towards progress and prosperity. "Our primary responsibility is to make the Horticulture sector more vibrant, and productive in order to encourage and promote Horticultural practices and activities on modern patterns with scientific and technological orientations," added the MLA.



MLA Marh Surinder Kumar speaking during the programme.

Surinder Kumar MLA Marh said that after introducing High-Density and innovative farming in the Horticulture sector, it has become imperative to propagate true-to-type quality fruit plant material at par with the imported fruit plant material locally. In this direction, it is of paramount importance that we must possess dedication and commitment along with scientific and technological know-how to deal with the

challenges, he said.

MLA said that Dragon Fruit plantation and High-Density farming is a game changer and it will uplift the socio-economic status of the farming community in terms of better returns. Besides, it will upgrade the quantity manifold with quality production.

As a growing demand for establishing High-Density orchards, the MLA said we have to cater to the demand by providing quality high-

density fruit plant material.

Later, the MLA also kick-started a plantation drive by planting a sapling in the fruit plant nursery Raipur. He emphasized that we must protect our fauna and flora and plant more and more plants to safeguard the ecology and environment.

Further, the Director Horticulture Jammu Gul Sayed also interacted with farmers and provided valuable technical guidance to the staff on best Horticultural practices, emphasizing modern nursery management techniques, plant propagation methods, effective pest and disease control, marketing and value added initiatives.

In addition, the CHO Jammu Rakesh Kotwal and HDO Jammu Dr.Nazran Khan also highlighted the importance of promoting fruit plant cultivation and other necessary

Horticultural components to make better use of available land to contribute to the growing demand for present fresh fruit and value added product market.

The MLA and Director appreciated the efforts of the Horticulture staff and encouraged them to maintain high standards of plant health and nursery hygiene. They also assured full support for enhancing nursery infrastructure and capacity-building of the staff through training and workshops in future.

The visit reflects the commitment of Horticulture Department to strengthening plant production units and promoting sustainable and innovative horticultural practices across the region.

Dr.Nazran khan HDO, Jammu handled the proceedings of the programme and also concluded the function with vote of thanks.

## Pahari Tribe ST Forum hails renowned actor's Romi Sharma efforts for visiting the border areas

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
RAJOURI: The Pahari Tribe ST Forum on Tuesday hailed the efforts of renowned activist, actor, and social media influencer Romi Sharma for visiting the border areas of Rajouri-Poonch district. During her 5-day visit, Romi Sharma met with several aggrieved families affected by the recent intensified shellings across the Indo-Pak border. She expressed solidarity with the war-affected families and praised the government's immediate relief efforts, including job letters for family members of those who lost their lives.

Romi Sharma emphasized the need for concrete community bunkers in different towns of Rajouri-Poonch districts, citing the changing dimensions of warfare. She also appealed to the locals to construct perma-



Forum members honouring actor Romi Sharma.

nent personal bunkers in their homes, anticipating potential future conflicts. The Pahari Tribe ST Forum appreciated Romi Sharma's concern and commitment to the welfare of the border community.

During her visit, Romi Sharma honored Vikrant Sharma, State Coordinator of the Pahari Tribe ST Forum, with a sacred chuni and flower bouquets, congratulating him on his elec-

tion. The forum is a pioneer organization dedicated to the socio-ethnic empowerment of the Pahari ethnicity in Jammu and Kashmir. Romi Sharma's visit and gestures have been seen as a significant show of support for the border.

Prominent Executive Members of PT ST Forum who were also present includes Shakti Sharma, Nadeem Mir and Shafait Shah.

## Seminar on Pahari culture Held at Sunderbani

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
SUNDERBANI: A seminar on the cultural traditions and historical contributions of the Pahari communities was organized under the joint aegis of Sadguru Baba Kanshi Giri Ji Charitable Trust, Banpuri Bhajwal, and the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) at Sunderbani. The event saw the participation of Abhishek Sharma, Deputy Commissioner of Rajouri, as the Chief Guest. The seminar aimed to engage in a meaningful discourse on the Pahari communities' folk traditions, beliefs, and their deep-rooted connection with the environment. The event opened with Gaddi Darshan, offering spiritual insight into the region's rich cultural lineage. IGNCA's Regional Director, Shruti Awasthi, in her inaugural address, highlighted the Centre's upcoming cultural initiatives, especially those focused on women's folk traditions and the preservation of hill communities'



cultural expressions. In his address, DC Rajouri Abhishek Sharma emphasized the government's efforts to preserve the region's cultural heritage. He also underlined the importance of promoting Pahari communities' unique cultural identity on global platforms. Guru Gosain Brij Bhushan Ji Maharaj, a key speaker, described the Pahari spiritual tradition as a symbol of social harmony and resilience, particularly post-Partition. Other notable speakers included Dr. Nitin Sharma, Assistant Professor at the University of

Jammu, who shared insights into the historical significance of the Guru Gaddi, and social activist Romi Sharma, who reflected on evolving cultural values. Dr. Ali Akbar Shah, University of Delhi, praised the event as a step toward cultural resurgence, calling the Pahari region a model of equality and diversity. The seminar, moderated by cultural analyst Vinod Raina, concluded with discussions on preserving the region's language, attire, cuisine, and rituals, emphasizing the need for continued cultural commitment and youth engagement.

## DB directs BOPEE to admit respondent for MBBS course in GMC Jammu in next academic year

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: DB directed BOPEE to admit Eva Kumari for MBBS course in Government Medical College (GMC), Jammu in the next academic year.

This order has been passed in an appeal filed by Chairperson J&K, Board of Professional Examinations Jammu challenging the order of Writ Court whereby Writ Court directed BOPEE to accommodate the Eva Kumari for the ongoing MBBS course in the Government Medical College, Jammu, so as to

save her, suffering not only loss of seat which she has deservedly earned on the basis of her merit but also a loss of precious one year.

A Division Bench of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court Comprising Chief Justice Arun Palli and Justice Rajnesh Oswal, after hearing both the sides, observed that if we accept the contention of the appellants and deprive respondent No. 1 a Scheduled Tribe female student, an opportunity to undergo MBBS course, just because of technical failure of online transaction, we would be failing in our con-

stitutional obligation to uphold the majesty of the Constitution, and more particularly Article 14 and 15 of the Constitution of India.

After having gone through the judgment passed by the learned writ court, we find that the writ court has rightly considered the matter but at the same time, we find that in view of the judgment of the Apex Court in S. Kishna Sradha v State of Andhra Pradesh and others, respondent No. 1 was required to be admitted for MBBS course in Government Medical College, Jammu in the next

academic year, as the admissions stand already completed and the students have already undergone the course for more than 8 months.

Accordingly, DB modified the judgment of the writ court to the extent that the appellants are directed to admit respondent No. 1 for MBBS course in Government Medical College, Jammu in the next academic year and they are further directed to take up the matter with the concerned authority to increase one seat of MBBS under the ST(ii) category for the next academic session.

## PTTI Vijaypur organises drug de-addiction programme



**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
VIJAYPUR: PTTI Vijaypur, organized an awareness programme on "Drug De-addiction" at the Institute in collaboration with JKSPYM State Level Coordinating Agency J&K and Ladakh, supported by Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India. On the occasion, Ranjit Singh Sambyal,IPS, Principal PTTI Vijaypur invited the guest speaker Pallavi Singh, Project Director JKSPYM who

delivered a lecture on "Drug Abuse Prevention" which was attended by about 200 trainees/staff.

Principal paid his sincere gratitude to the visiting guest for sparing her valuable time to deliver the lecture on the subject. Thereafter continuing the programme, a rally in a departmental vehicle was flagged off by the Principal who visited at the prominent locations of Vijaypur town viz., Vijaypur main market, Govt. HSS

Vijaypur, GurhaSlathia, Gurha Morh etc for wide spreading of awareness about the drug addiction or drug abuse among the locals particularly the youth of the area by way of displaying/installation of informative banners. They also distributed the pamphlets containing important advice of drug de-addiction among the general public. Besides trainees, all the staff of the Institute took active part in the awareness programme.

## DDC Poonch reviews performance of Rural Development Department

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
POONCH: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Vikas Kundal today chaired a meeting with the officers of the Rural Development Department (RDD) to review the implementation of Centrally Sponsored Schemes and progress of developmental works.

The meeting focused on evaluating the physical and financial progress of key RDD schemes, such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G)- a rural housing scheme, and other vital community projects. The meeting also assessed the status of sanitation projects under the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) and the construction of Panchayat Ghars and bunkers in the district.

After a thorough review, the

District Development Commissioner asked for speeding up estimation of MGNREGA works. He stressed on timely payment of wages to Job card holders and Aadhar seeding of their accounts to maintain transparency.

To expedite project completion, the Deputy Commissioner directed Block Development Officers (BDOs) to immediately start all new works and ensure completion within the set timeframe. He further stressed on speedy completion of the remaining PMAY-G houses to ensure 100% saturation of the rural housing scheme.

The Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD) was asked to closely monitor the departmental projects to ensure timely completion.

The meeting was attended by ACD, ACP, XEN REW, BDOs, and other concerned officers.

## JKAP-8th Bn carries out plantation drive



Suram Singh SSP and others planting saplings.

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
MIRANSAHIB: A plantation drive was carried out in JKAP-8th Battalion Miran

Sahib Jammu in in order to Promote Environmental Awareness.

Suram Singh-JKPS(SSP)

## Govt committed to save old industrial units, promote new ventures: Dy CM



Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary chairing a meeting at Srinagar.

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
SRINAGAR: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary on Tuesday chaired a meeting with representatives of Federation of Chamber of Industries Kashmir (FCIK) in presence of senior officials from the concerned department at Civil Secretariat Srinagar.

President FCIK, Shahid Ahmad Kamili, apprised the Dy CM of various pressing issues. These included revival of industrial policies, grant of amnesty for regularisation of lease deeds, uniform disbursement of SGST reimbursement, strengthening of industries department, delayed payment, power amnesty, bank related issues and non availability of basic infrastructure like road connectivity, power availability, drainage system as well as financial constraints.

The Deputy Chief Minister gave a patient hearing to the concerns raised by the stakeholders while assuring speedy redress of the same.

The Deputy Chief Minister said Jammu and Kashmir is an ideal place for investments and the government has undertaken several measures for ensuring that the industrial sector gets the requisite boost. This would result in boosting the economy besides opening employment avenues for the youth, he maintained.

He exhorted that the primary objective of present dispensation is to explore investment and business opportunities, showcase the immense economic potential of Jammu & Kashmir and foster collaborations and partnership for building global pathways for J&K economy.

Surinder Choudhary asserted that the Omar Abkullah led government is working hard to save the old industrial units while promoting the new ventures. We will leave no stone unturned in supporting them who are crucially instrumental in providing livelihood and employment to thousands of

people.

He directed the MD SICOP visit the industrial estates to access the on ground situation. He asked him to expeditiously resolve the issues raised by the stakeholders.

Reiterating government's commitment towards the growth and protection of local industries in J&K, the Dy CM said that all due benefits and incentives under their control as UT will be released promptly. Commissioner Secretary Industries and Commerce Vikramjeet Singh; Additional PCCF Forests T. Rabi, Secretary in Industries and Commerce Department, Khalid Jahangir; MD KPDCI Mehmood Shah; Director Industries and Commerce Kashmir Khalid Majeed; MD SIDCO/ SICOP Pradeep Kumar, besides other senior officers from concerned department along with representatives from various Industrial Estates were present in the meeting.

## Food Safety Department conducts extensive checks in Poonch, Surankote markets



Deptt officials carrying out inspection.

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
POONCH: Under the supervision of Assistant Commissioner Food Safety Tariq Mehmood, the Food Safety Department conducted a comprehensive inspection drive in Poonch city and Surankote tehsil. The team, including Headquarter Inspector Zafar Iqbal and Surankote Inspector Rais

Ahmed Malik, meticulously reviewed the quality and standards of food items sold in the areas.

During the drive, the department found six traders in violation of food safety norms due to unhygienic conditions and the sale of sub-standard goods. These traders were promptly challaned (penalized). Furthermore, several other vendors received strict warnings to ensure they sell only clean and quality products. The department emphasized that stringent legal action will be taken against anyone failing to comply with food safety regulations in the future.

This initiative aims to ensure public health and safety by maintaining the quality and hygiene of food items available to consumers in the Surankote.

## New Road, Tunnel projects will play crucial role in border security and movement of security forces: Sat

**■ STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: Sat Sharma, President of the Jammu and Kashmir BJP, hailed the Central Government's historic approval of 19 mega road and tunnel projects worth Rs 10,637 crore, aimed at boosting infrastructure in the strategically vital Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. He described the move as a transformative step that strengthens regional connectivity, border security, and socio-economic development.

Speaking at a meeting held at the BJP headquarters, Sat

will decisively bolster India's defence preparedness and serve as a backbone for anti-terror and logistic operations in difficult terrains," he said.

The meeting was attended by party General Secretary and MLA Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal, Headquarters Incharge Priya Sethi, All Cells Incharge Rakesh Mahajan, and senior leaders including Naresh Singh Jasrotia, Baldev Singh Billawaria, Ved Sharma, Balbir Ram Rattan, Gourav Gupta, Dr. Pradeep Mahotra, Prof. Kulbhushan Mohtra, and Gourav Balgotra.

logistical and security challenges have long hindered swift military access, particularly in snowbound regions. The new projects will address these issues and instill a sense of security among residents of border villages.

He also underlined the broader benefits, stating that improved road connectivity will open new avenues for tourism, trade, investment, and employment. "This initiative not only supports our armed forces but also strengthens the developmental fabric of Jammu and Kashmir," he said.



highlighted the strategic significance of the projects, stating that the new infrastructure will ensure all-weather access to remote areas, enhance road safety, and allow swift movement of troops and supplies to border zones. "These projects

Sharma lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari for their visionary leadership, which made the approval possible. He emphasized that the border state's

Sat noted that party MPs and leaders have persistently raised the issue of all-weather connectivity with the Centre, and this approval reflects the Modi government's commitment to the policy of Development with Security.

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