

# LG Kavinder charts roadmap for a self-reliant & Green Ladakh

## Drives transformative initiatives for greenhouse expansion, Pashmina goat welfare, carbon-neutral growth in line with PM Modi's vision

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
LEH: The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, has laid out an ambitious roadmap to make Ladakh self-reliant and environmentally sustainable, with a strong focus on expanding polycarbonate greenhouses under the award-winning Ladakh Greenhouse Project. This flagship initiative, which earned the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration (Innovation State category) in April 2022, is aimed at ensuring round-the-year local vegetable production, especially



Lieutenant Governor Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta chairing a meeting.

during Ladakh's severe winter months, thereby cutting dependency on imports from other states. Chairing a high-level review meeting at the LG Secretariat, the Lt Governor meticulously assessed the progress and implementation of key schemes and projects in Industries & Commerce, Handicraft/ Handloom, Geology & Mining, Animal Husbandry & Fisheries, Sheep Husbandry, Horticulture, Agriculture, Cooperative, Transport and Motor Garages departments. Administrative Secretary, Rudra Goud PT, IAS, briefed the Lt Governor on ongoing and upcoming projects, major initiatives, policies, manpower status and challenges. Special emphasis was placed on the promotion of world-famous Pashmina wool and welfare measures for Changthang nomads. In the post-lunch session, Administrative Secretary,

Blupesh Chaudhary, presented updates on Horticulture, Agriculture, Cooperatives, Transport and Motor Garages departments, including their 100-day action plans and key challenges. The Lt Governor directed urgent upgradation of existing pashmina kid pens to achieve zero mortality during harsh winters and called for promoting camel milk as a high-value, health-beneficial product. He also instructed a comprehensive dog population census followed by targeted sterilisation drives. Highlighting the economic potential of sea buckthorn, the Lt Governor urged commercial plantations along the Indus banks and adoption of advanced processing and packaging methods for dried apricots to fetch higher returns for growers. Pushing forward PM Narendra Modi's vision of a carbon-neutral Ladakh, he emphasised the installation of EV charging stations at intervals of 30 km to accelerate e-vehicle adoption.

# BKS National President visits J&K, discusses farmers' issues and upcoming training camps

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: For the first time after assuming office, Bharatiya Kisan Sangh (BKS) National President K. Sai Reddy visited Jammu & Kashmir, meeting the provincial executive along with presidents and secretaries of eight districts at Trikuta Yatri Niwas, Ambphalla.



BKS National President K. Sai Reddy talking to reporters.

During the meeting, discussions focused on ongoing and upcoming training camps across the country. A plan was finalized to organize camps in eight districts of Jammu & Kashmir-Kathua, Samba, Rajouri, Reasi, Udhampur, Akhnoor, RS Pura, Doda, and Kishtwar under the aegis of the Kisan Sangh. The session also included deliberations on key issues faced by farmers in the Union Territory and possible solutions. The Jammu & Kashmir workers raised three major concerns with the National President including continuous crop damage caused by wild animals, timely availability of fertilizers and seeds,

and maintenance of government-constructed irrigation canals. Speaking to journalists, K. Sai Reddy expressed support for the central government's stance in its tariff dispute with the United States, emphasizing protection of farmers' interests. He highlighted that the Kisan Sangh had already apprised the government regarding farmers' demands, including restrictions on GM seeds, preventing US companies from entering the dairy sector, and promoting traditional and organic farming. Reddy also indicated that Bharatiya Kisan Sangh is considering a plan to boycott products of American companies engaged in the trade of fertilizers, seeds, and pesticides in India. Bharatiya Kisan Sangh has established active village committees in 60,000 villages nationwide, representing 4.2 million farmers. In Jammu & Kashmir, the organization has over 15,000 members and 100 village committees. The meeting was attended by All India Executive Member Puran Chand, Provincial President Balkar Singh, Provincial General Secretary Jagdish Thakur, Provincial Secretary Sanjeev Kumar, and Provincial Organization Secretary Balveer Kumar.

# 67th Meeting of Empowered Committee on MSMEs held



Regional Director RBI Jammu, Chandrashekhar Azad chairing a meeting.

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: The 67th Meeting of the Empowered Committee on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) for the UTs of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh for the quarter ended June 30, 2025, was held on Wednesday, at Reserve Bank of India, Jammu. The meeting was chaired by Chandrashekhar Azad, Regional Director, Reserve Bank of India, Jammu and was attended by Joint Director, Industries and Commerce Department, Jammu; Assistant Director, MSME-Development and Facilitation Office; Controlling heads of J&K Bank, State Bank of India, Punjab National Bank, J&K Gramene Bank, Canara Bank, HDFC Bank, Axis Bank and ICICI Bank; officials from convenorbanks of

UTLBC, J&K and UTLBC, Ladakh; office-bearers of PHD Chamber of Commerce, Indian Chamber of Commerce and Bari Brahmana Industries Association. The Regional Director in his opening remarks stated that the recent India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), signed on July 24, 2025, has identified Small and Medium Enterprises as a focus area for bilateral cooperation, aimed at creating new opportunities for Indian MSMEs through enhanced trade facilitation and market access. Reflecting on the regional scenario, he shared that growth in number of registered MSMEs in UTs of J&K and Ladakh has been significant, with the number of registered MSME units expanding around 24 times and

22 times over the last four years, reaching 7.47 lakh and 18,708 units respectively. He further urged the stakeholders to embrace formalisation, ensure credit discipline and prioritise registration of MSMEs on Udyam Portal and onboarding on TReDS. Subsequently the Committee reviewed the performance of banks on the subjects of TReDS, Udyam Registration, review of flow of credit to MSME sector; achievement of targets recommended by the Prime Minister Task Force on MSMEs, position of NPAs, CGTMSE coverage, review of sponsored cases under PMEGP; review of rehabilitation of stressed units as per Framework for Revival and Rehabilitation (FRR) of MSMEs, review of banking facilities in MSME clusters etc.

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: In a long-overdue and welcome decision, the Jammu and Kashmir administration has ordered the forfeiture and ban of 25 books that openly propagate secessionism, glorify terrorism, and undermine national integrity. This move is not only timely but essential to safeguard public order and protect impressionable minds from malicious propaganda, said Girdhari Lal Raina, Former MLC & BJP Spokesperson, Jammu & Kashmir UT. A notification (S.O. 203) issued by the Home Department on August 5, under Section 98 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, declared these books "forfeited," citing their false

narratives and dangerous influence in misguiding the youth of Jammu & Kashmir, recalled Raina. The decision followed a detailed content review and intelligence inputs that revealed their systematic distortion of historical facts, vilification of security forces, and promotion of violence. These findings are not speculative—they are evidence-based, rooted in thorough investigations and credible security assessments, he added. It is a matter of record that decades of death and destruction in Jammu & Kashmir have been fuelled by a well-oiled propaganda machinery that thrives on falsifying history, manufacturing grievances, and romanticizing terrorism,

Ex MLC underlined. Such literature does not merely reflect opinion; it strategically implants a culture of victimhood and heroism for those who take up arms against the state. The sustained internal circulation of such material has been a significant driver of radicalization among sections of Kashmiri youth, he stressed. Unsurprisingly, the affected individuals and their broader ecosystem have reacted with predictable outrage, invoking freedom of speech and expression as an absolute right. They conveniently overlook the fact that Article 19 of the Constitution of India guarantees this freedom subject to reasonable restrictions in the interest

of sovereignty, integrity, security of the State, public order, decency, morality, contempt of court, defamation, incitement to an offence, or the protection of the interests of Scheduled Tribes. Free speech in any constitutional democracy is never a license to promote secessionism, glorify violence, or wage psychological warfare against the nation, GL Raina asserted. Those who are now lamenting the ban would do well to examine their own record. They remained silent-or worse, complicit-when books like Genocide of Hindus in Kashmir, Lajja, Gandhi Vadh Kyon, or works by authors such as Ram Swarup, Salman Rushdie, and Taslima

Nasrin were banned. Even films and serials, songs and poems critical of earlier regimes were banned on flimsy grounds, he reminded. The booklet Genocide of Hindus in Kashmir, published by Suruchi Prakashan for the Jammu Kashmir Sahayata Samiti, documented the horrific atrocities committed against religious minorities in Kashmir during 1989-90. Yet not a single self-proclaimed defender of free speech raised a voice against its suppression, Raina regretted. This selective outrage is not about constitutional morality-it is about preserving a narrative monopoly, he opined. The hypocrisy is glaring, and unfortunately, it has a long shelf life.

# Ban on pro-secessionist literature long-overdue and welcome: GL Raina

# DB upholds CAT order, quashes Dr Mushtaq's posting as Director Family Welfare

## Bench says appointment violated cadre rules; Govt rapped for bypassing in-service officers

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: The High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh has upheld the Central Administrative Tribunal's (CAT) decision to set aside the Government order assigning Dr Mushtaq Ahmad Rather additional charge as Director, Family Welfare, MCH & Immunization, J&K, ruling that the posting was in violation of cadre eligibility rules. A Division Bench of Justice Sanjeev Kumar and Justice Sanjay Parihar dismissed in limine Dr Rather's writ petition, observing that he belongs to the J&K Medical (Gazetted) Service and is not part of the feeder cadre under the J&K Health and Family Welfare (Gazetted) Service Recruitment Rules, 2013. The Division Bench underlined that the post of Director, Family Welfare can be filled only from Class-II Categories "A" and "B" of the Health and Family Welfare Service through promotion or direct recruitment, and there is no provision for transfer from another service. Under the 2013 Rules, the post of Director, Family Welfare, is to be filled from within the Health & Family Welfare (Gazetted) Service, either by direct recruitment or promotion from designated "feeding cadres" in a prescribed ratio. Appointment by transfer from another service is not recognised under the rules. Dr. Rather belongs to the J&K Medical (Gazetted) Service, a separate cadre, and was holding the post of Director, Coordination, New Medical Colleges at the time of his additional charge appointment. The Bench noted that the Government's decision to bring in an officer from outside the service cadre, overlooking in-service

officers, could not be sustained. The petition was argued by Jahangir Iqbal Ganai, Senior Advocate, with Ahtsham Hussain, Advocate for Dr Rather; Sunil Sethi, Senior Advocate, with Kunal Saini, Advocate appeared for respondent Dr Poonam Sethi, while Raman Sharma, Additional Advocate General represented the UT Government. The dispute arose after the Government, through Order No. 893-JK(HME) of 2024 dated December 23, 2024, gave Dr Rather additional charge of the post. Dr Poonam Sethi, then Deputy Director (Schemes) in the Health Department, challenged the move before the CAT, which on March 26, 2025, quashed the order and directed that the charge be given to the senior-most eligible officer within the cadre. The Government defended its choice citing Dr Rather's previous stints as Director Health Services Kashmir, Director AIDS Control Society, and Director Coordination of New Medical Colleges. However, the Bench said that "administrative convenience cannot override statutory provisions" and criticised the Health Department for failing to convene timely Departmental Promotion Committee meetings, leading to a shortage of eligible officers. In a significant observation, the Division Bench held that even an ineligible officer within the cadre can challenge the appointment of another ineligible outsider if the decision appears arbitrary or shows favouritism. "When the Government has to pick an ineligible person to manage the post, it should prefer one from within the service rather than importing from a different service," the Bench remarked. The petition was accordingly dismissed.

view on the grounds that his tenure as Casualty Medical Officer at GMC Anantnag did not qualify as the prescribed "experience of running a hospital" under the J&K Medical Education (Gazetted) Service Recruitment Rules, 1979. After multiple hearings since September 2024, the CAT had repeatedly directed the constitution of an expert committee to interpret the eligibility requirement and examine experience certificates. Despite strict timelines - including an order on November 5, 2024, man-

# Embrace Dental Clinic organises dental camp

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: Embrace Dental Clinic, a prominent dental care center in Channi Himmat, Jammu, organised a free dental camp at Panchayat Ghar, Patli Morh, Bari Brahmana, in collaboration with SIBA Event Management and Innovations Cooperative Ltd, and Sarwan Kumar, former Sarpanch. The initiative aimed to raise awareness about oral health and offer quality dental services to indi-

Ankit Vermani, the camp saw a strong turnout, with 120 participants availing of free check-ups and expert advice. Dr. Astha Mahajan emphasized the importance of adopting good dental habits from an early age. "Dental hygiene among youth is a growing concern. Many young people overlook minor dental issues, which can escalate into serious conditions. Regular brushing, timely check-ups, and proper awareness are key to prevent-



Embrace Dental Clinic team at a camp.

viduals from both urban and remote areas. The camp's core objectives were to educate the public on the significance of oral hygiene, provide free dental consultations, and promote preventive dental care practices. Led by Dr. Astha Mahajan and supported by her dedicated team, including Dr. Ankit Vermani, the camp saw a strong turnout, with 120 participants availing of free check-ups and expert advice. Dr. Astha Mahajan emphasized the importance of adopting good dental habits from an early age. "Dental hygiene among youth is a growing concern. Many young people overlook minor dental issues, which can escalate into serious conditions. Regular brushing, timely check-ups, and proper awareness are key to prevent-

ing most dental diseases," she said. "Most dental problems are painless initially and go unnoticed. By the time symptoms appear, treatment can be more complex. Early detection through such camps can save time, money, and discomfort," Dr. Ankit Vermani noted. In its order, the Tribunal emphasised that "arbitrariness is an anathema to the rule of law" and reminded public authorities of their constitutional obligation to act fairly and predictably, in compliance with Articles 14 and 16. The case is scheduled for further hearing on October 13, 2025.

# ICC Jammu presents MSME concerns, recommendations in RBI's 67th Empowered Committee Meeting



ICC Jammu Chairman Rahul Sahai speaking during a meeting.

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: The Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Jammu, led by Chairman Rahul Sahai and accompanied by Sanjay Aggarwal, presented a comprehensive representation on the challenges faced by Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Jammu & Kashmir during the 67th Empowered Committee Meeting of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) held in Jammu. The meeting was chaired by Chander Shekhar Azad, Regional Director, RBI Jammu, Kashmir & Ladakh, and served as a crucial platform for dialogue between industry stakeholders and the banking sector. Extending greetings ahead of India's 79th Independence Day, ICC

Jammu expressed its appreciation for the RBI's role in facilitating this vital discussion. Rahul Sahai highlighted the challenges arising from global trade tensions, particularly the tariff measures imposed by the USA on countries like India, which have impacted sectors such as pharmaceuticals, textiles, and yarns in J&K. He urged the RBI to guide banks towards a more liberal and supportive approach for MSMEs during this period of economic strain. Key recommendations included liberal renewal of credit limits, the introduction of special loan schemes for stressed MSMEs, and collaboration with credit agencies to offer workshops on improving CIBIL scores for entrepreneurs. The

Chamber also proposed new lending avenues for hospitals and nursing homes facing delays in Ayushman Bharat payments and simplified loan products for affected sectors. ICC Jammu welcomed the successful disbursement of collateral-free loans under CGTMSE and recommended that the Government of India ensure that all eligible MSMEs register on TReDS platforms like RXIL and M1 Exchange to improve cash flow. Additionally, ICC Jammu submitted a separate representation addressing concerns specific to the automobile sector. Sahai reaffirmed ICC Jammu's commitment to supporting the Government and RBI in fostering economic growth and stability for J&K's MSMEs.

# Body of intruder shot by BSF handed over to Pakistan Rangers

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: The body of an Pakistani intruder, who was killed by BSF after he ignored warning and tried to enter India from across the International Border, was handed over to Pakistan Rangers on Wednesday, officials said. The intruder was fired upon by the BSF two days ago after he ignored repeated warnings and aggressively approached the border fence in the Hiranagar sector of Kathua district, they said. He later succumbed to his injuries during treatment at AIIMS Jammu. Pakistan Rangers identified the deceased as Siraj Ali (51), a resident of Sarhali village in Narowal district.

# CAT tears into PSC over 10-month defiance, smells a rat in Dy MS selection

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: The Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT), Srinagar Bench, has issued a strongly worded order against the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (PSC) and the Health & Medical Education Department for prolonged non-compliance with court directions in a recruitment case. The matter concerns Dr. Kulbir Singh Jatt, who had successfully cleared the written examination for the post of Deputy Medical Superintendent but was denied an inter-

view on the grounds that his tenure as Casualty Medical Officer at GMC Anantnag did not qualify as the prescribed "experience of running a hospital" under the J&K Medical Education (Gazetted) Service Recruitment Rules, 1979. After multiple hearings since September 2024, the CAT had repeatedly directed the constitution of an expert committee to interpret the eligibility requirement and examine experience certificates. Despite strict timelines - including an order on November 5, 2024, man-

dating completion within ten days - the PSC failed to act promptly. The committee was only constituted in April 2025, prompting the Tribunal on May 13, 2025, to remark, "we smell a rat." The expert panel, headed by the Director, SKIMS, with principals of GMC Jammu and GMC Srinagar as members, submitted its final report on July 25, 2025, concluding that all previously declared eligible candidates, including Dr. Jatt, met the required qualifications and experience. Accepting these findings,

the CAT has directed the PSC to conduct Dr. Jatt's interview within four weeks and barred the Commission from declaring results for the post until his marks are submitted before the court in a sealed cover. In its order, the Tribunal emphasised that "arbitrariness is an anathema to the rule of law" and reminded public authorities of their constitutional obligation to act fairly and predictably, in compliance with Articles 14 and 16. The case is scheduled for further hearing on October 13, 2025.

# HC raps PSC, restores candidate's chance in Combined Services Exam

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: The High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh has dismissed a petition by the J&K Public Service Commission (JKPSC) and upheld the Central Administrative Tribunal's (CAT) order directing the Commission to conduct the interview of a candidate for the J&K Combined Competitive (Services) Examination, 2023, who missed her viva-voce after a last-minute merit list revision. A Division Bench of

Justice Sanjeev Kumar and Justice Sanjay Parihar held that the absence of Deveani Suri from the interview could not be fully blamed on her. The court observed that after removing 13 ineligible candidates, the PSC added the next in merit order, including Suri, but the updated list was only posted on the PSC's website and never published in newspapers, as claimed. "Had the notice been published in a daily with wide circulation, there was every likelihood of the information reaching the respon-

dent," the bench said, noting that Suri's name was absent from the original list and she had no reason to re-check the site. The judges endorsed the CAT's finding that such last-minute changes could cause genuine candidates to miss important notifications. The PSC has been ordered to hold Suri's interview as per its October 16, 2024 notice. Advocate Farooq Ahmad Natnoo represented the JKPSC, while Advocate Kunal Saini appeared for the respondent.