

Community Health and Diagnostic Outreach Camp

Among the Gujjar-Bakarwal Tribal Population of Warwan Valley, District Kishtwar

Organized by

Department of Clinical Biochemistry, University of Kashmir

(Sponsored Under ANRF project)

Organized by	Prof. Fouzia Rashid and Dr. Syed H. Mir (Under ANRF Project) and the research lab members
Duration	One week
Location	Warwan Valley, District Kishtwar including villages of Sukhnai, Mulwarwan, Margi, and Inshan
Population Served	Gujjar-Bakarwal transhumant tribal population
Samples Collected	150 biological samples across four villages
Local Facilitation	Dr. Muzaffar, local resident, Warwan Valley

Overview

The Department of Clinical Biochemistry, University of Kashmir, conducted a week-long community health and diagnostic outreach camp in the Warwan Valley of District Kishtwar, targeting the Gujjar-Bakarwal transhumant tribal population a cohort central to the Department's ongoing research on the physiological, genetic, and clinical effects of high-altitude living. The camp combined biological sample collection for research and health-monitoring purposes with direct community engagement, welfare support, and awareness generation among some of the region's most geographically remote and underserved populations.

Team Composition

The camp was undertaken by a multidisciplinary team comprising:

- A team of doctors providing on-site medical assessment
- A trained phlebotomist responsible for sample collection
- Research scholars from the Clinical Biochemistry laboratory
- Faculty members, Prof. Fouzia Rashid and Dr. Syed Hussain Mir, Department of Clinical Biochemistry

The camp was carried out with the valuable assistance of Dr. Muzaffar, a local resident of Warwan Valley, who played an instrumental role in identifying tribal settlement locations and communicating with the local population regarding the objectives and benefits of the health camp. Over the course of approximately one week, the team traversed multiple villages of Warwan Valley: Sukhnai, Mulwarwan, Margi, and Inshan to reach the dhoks (seasonal settlements) of the Gujjar-Bakarwal population. Given the terrain, several of these settlements were accessible only after treks of at least 6-7 km on foot, underscoring the logistical challenges involved in extending healthcare access to this transhumant community. A total of 150 samples were collected across the four villages, contributing valuable data towards the Department's research on tribal population health and high-altitude physiology.

Community Engagement

At each site, the team engaged directly with tribal heads and community elders to explain the purpose and value of body profiling and health check-ups, addressing questions and concerns to build trust and encourage voluntary participation.

This grassroots engagement was essential in a setting where formal healthcare access is otherwise limited, and it ensured that participation in the camp was well-informed and community-endorsed. As a gesture of goodwill towards the host community, the team distributed essential rations including sugar, dal, and tea leaves along with basic hygiene kits to the Gujjar-Bakarwal families visited during the camp. These contributions were intended to complement the diagnostic outreach with tangible, immediate benefit to the community.

Conclusion

The health camp in Warwan Valley reaffirms the Department of Clinical Biochemistry's commitment to combining scientific research with meaningful community service, particularly among tribal and transhumant populations whose remote geography often limits their access to healthcare and diagnostic facilities. The successful collection of 150 samples across four villages, achieved despite considerable logistical and terrain-related challenges, represents a significant contribution to the Department's ongoing research, while the accompanying welfare support and community engagement reflect the Department's broader ethos of responsible, community-oriented outreach. The Department looks forward to building on this initiative through continued engagement with the Gujjar-Bakarwal population of the region.

