

International rafting competition begins in Kashmir

Sixteen teams, including two from abroad, are participating in a three-day international white water rafting competition that began Wednesday at the picturesque north Kashmir tourist resort of Sonamarg.

'We have teams from the Ukraine and the Czech Republic, as also from Rajasthan, Karnataka, Punjab, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, the Indian Air Force and the Indian Army, among others,' tourism department head Farooq Ahmad said.

During the competition, the different teams will demonstrate their steering skills and negotiating capacities over a 10-km stretch of the roaring Sindhu river.

Declaring the competition open, Jammu and Kashmir chief secretary S.S. Kapoor said: 'The state has immense potential for adventure tourism, trekking, rafting and mountaineering. This potential needs to be fully exploited to build a strong local economy,'

The tourism department and the Indian Rafting Foundation have sponsored the event.

Situated 76 km north of Kashmir's summer capital [Srinagar](#) on the banks of the Sindhu river, Sonamarg is a favourite destination for mountaineers, trekkers, rock climbers and now, white water rafters.

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