

AJKTWA holds meeting on revision of transport tariffs with Transport Commissioner

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: A meeting was convened on Thursday under the chairmanship of the Transport Commissioner, Vishesh Paul Mahajan, to deliberate on the revision of transport tariffs and to finalize the analysis on the cost of operations across the transport sector in Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by the Chairman of the All J&K Transport Welfare Association (AJKTWA), Karan Singh Wazir, along with his team members, and the Regional Transport Officers (RTOs) from across the Union Territory.

During the discussions, representatives of the Association presented their views and recommendations regarding the need for tariff



AJKTWA delegation calling on Transport Commissioner, Vishesh Paul Mahajan.

revision, citing significant increases in operational costs and inflation over the past five years.

The Association emphasized that the last tariff revision was undertaken in 2021, and since then, rising fuel prices and maintenance costs have considerably affected transport operators. Special attention was

drawn to the challenges faced by mini-bus operators, with Vijay Singh Chib, President AJKTWA, highlighting that previous fare adjustments have disproportionately impacted this segment.

The Transport Commissioner addressed these concerns and assured that the points raised would

be duly considered in the final appraisal of the tariff revision.

The meeting concluded with the finalization of the cost of operations, which will form the basis for the upcoming tariff revision proposal to ensure fair and sustainable transport operations across Jammu and Kashmir.

Kashmir to host 5th Kashmir World Film Festival from Nov 1

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: The beautiful city of Srinagar is all set to welcome the 5th edition of the Kashmir World Film Festival (KWFF) from November 1 to 7, 2025. This week-long festival will celebrate cinema, culture, and creativity, bringing together artists, filmmakers, and audiences from across India and abroad.

According to festival director Mushataque Ali Ahmad Khan, about ten well-known Bollywood personalities will attend the event. The list includes Raza Murad, Bhagyashree, Mukesh Rishi, Rahul Rawail, Madhur Bhandarkar, Anil Sharma, Rajit Kapur, Rahul Mittra, Yashpal Sharma, Lalit Parimoo, and Mir Sarwar.

"We are thrilled to host such prominent names this year. Their presence will make the festival more inspiring and memorable," Khan said.

The festival will also feature several popular Kashmiri artists such as Tariq Javaid, Aiyash Aarif, Ashraf Shawl, G.M. Wani, Shahid Lateef, Shahzad Rasool, Waheed Jeelani, and Gulzar Ganai.

A total of 75 films will be screened during the festival, covering both competition and non-competition categories. The highlights include national and international film screenings, interactive sessions, panel discussions, and workshops. There will also be networking opportunities for filmmakers, students, and professionals to share ideas and

collaborate.

A special attraction this year will be a tribute to the 50th anniversary of the classic Bollywood film Sholay. A dedicated session will bring together experts and film lovers to celebrate the legendary movie. Several other classic Hindi films will also be screened during the week.

The Kashmir World Film Festival, launched in 2017, had successfully hosted four editions until 2018. After a long gap of seven years, it is now returning to the valley with new energy and enthusiasm.

The festival invites everyone to be part of this cinematic movement and celebrate the power of storytelling in the heart of Kashmir.

Dr. Pawan Kotwal visits Panchmukhi Hanuman Temple Jammu

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Dr. Pawan Kotwal, IAS, Chief Secretary, Union Territory of Ladakh, along with his wife, paid a devotional visit to the Panchmukhi Hanuman Temple of Jammu Yatri Bhawan, situated at B.C. Road, Jammu, to seek the divine blessings of Lord Hanuman Ji.

During his visit, Dr. Kotwal offered prayers with deep reverence and interacted with Pawan Kumar Shastri, President, Jammu Yatri Bhawan Trust (JYBT), along with Raj Kumar Gupta, Vice President, Gurdas Sharma, General Secretary & Treasurer, and Dr. Mamta Sharma, Member of the Trust.

Dr. Kotwal expressed his immense appreciation for the Trust's selfless service towards society-particularly for its arrangements and facilities provided to local devotees, visiting pilgrims, and the needy sections of the community.

He acknowledged the temple as a spiritual landmark of devotion and service, symbolizing the eternal values of faith, discipline, and compassion that Lord Hanuman embodies.

Dr. Kotwal also commended the



CS Ladakh, Dr. Pawan Kotwal along with his wife paying visit to the Panchmukhi Hanuman Temple of Jammu Yatri Bhawan.

Trust's efforts in maintaining a clean, serene, and spiritually uplifting environment, as well as its charitable initiatives in the fields of education, health, and social welfare.

Dr. Pawan Kotwal specially appreciated the efforts of the Temple Committee and members of Jammu Yatri Bhawan Trust for their commendable social service, particularly highlighting their initiative of providing free meals to

attendants of patients admitted in five nearby Government Hospitals - a noble example of compassion and humanity in action.

The President and Trustees of Jammu Yatri Bhawan Trust extended their heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Kotwal for his visit and kind words of encouragement. They reaffirmed their resolve to continue serving society in the true spirit of "Service is Worship."

BJP appeals people to support Devyani Rana, calls her symbol of women empowerment and people's faith



BJP Spokesperson Adv. Purnima Sharma briefing media.

MLA Devender Singh Rana, Devyani did not step back but chose to stay connected with the people of Nagrota. "Even without holding any position, she remained available to the public, shared their joys and sorrows, and worked tirelessly for their welfare," she said.

Nagrota as her family and has vowed to serve them with full dedication, she said while appealing to the voters to give her their support, votes, and blessings.

Purnima Sharma emphasized that BJP represents women's empowerment in true sense by ensuring 33 percent reservation and creating leadership opportunities for women across India.

Dr. Pardeep Mahotra said that the BJP has always stood for women empowerment and clean politics, and Devyani's candidature is a shining example of that commitment. He asserted that Nagrota has the chance to make history by

electing a young, honest, and visionary leader backed by the strong organizational ethos of BJP and the commitment of the Modi government, which has already delivered unprecedented development in Jammu & Kashmir.

Dr. Pardeep urged people to see through the false promises of NC and Congress and vote for truth, trust, and progress vote for BJP.

He lambasted the Congress, NC of repeatedly deceiving the people with hollow promises and claimed that only BJP has delivered on its commitments with sincerity and vision.

Natrang honours outstanding artists for exceptional contributions to theatre

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: In a grand and heartwarming ceremony held at Natrang Studio Theatre, Natrang Jammu honoured some of its most outstanding artists for their exceptional contributions in the fields of acting, production, and allied areas of performance. The glittering event brought together the vibrant community of Natrang artists and well-wishers to celebrate the spirit of creativity, commitment, and excellence that has defined the organization for over four decades.

The highlight of the occasion was the felicitation ceremony, during which Padmashri Balwant Thakur, Director of Natrang, presented souvenirs and mementos to the artists in recognition of their invaluable artistic contributions. In his address, Mr. Thakur spoke passionately about the journey of each honouree, emphasizing how their relentless dedication, disci-



Natrang Jammu honouring its most outstanding artists.

pline, and creative brilliance have enriched Natrang's artistic legacy and helped the institution achieve national and international acclaim. The artists who were honoured on this special occasion included Suraj Singh, Neeraj Kant Sharma, Anil Tickoo, Sanjeev Gupta, Sumeet Sharma, Suraj Ganjoo, Subhash Jamwal, Mohd. Yaseen, Pawan Verna, Shivam Singh, Meenakshi Bhagat, Parvinder Singh,

Kananpreet Kaur, Kushal Bhat, Vandana Thakur, Kartik Kumar, Aryan Sharma, Prerna Sharma, Simran Bhagat, Vansh Pandotra, Krishiya Bhatia, Suhani Sareen, Lovish, and Tanisha. Each of them has made significant contributions to Natrang's diverse range of productions-whether through stellar performances on stage, innovative production work, or consistent support in backstage and creative operations.

Speaking on the occasion, Padmashri Balwant Thakur shared insights into Natrang's 43-year journey, recalling its humble beginnings and its evolution into one of India's foremost theatre and performing arts institutions. With over 7,500 productions, performances, and cultural events to its credit, Natrang has consistently pioneered new creative expressions while nurturing countless artists who have gone on to make a

mark in theatre, television, and film. Balwant Thakur highlighted that the recognition of artists was not just a token of appreciation but a reaffirmation of Natrang's commitment to acknowledging and supporting creative talent. He also shared Natrang's future vision, which includes expanding its training programs, fostering youth participation in theatre, and enhancing international collaborations to showcase Indian theatre on a global platform.

The event concluded with a resounding applause from the audience as the honourees expressed gratitude for the recognition and reiterated their dedication to Natrang's mission of promoting meaningful, socially relevant, and artistically rich theatre.

The event truly reflected the spirit of Natrang, a celebration of art, passion, and collective creativity that continues to inspire generations.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: The festival of Bhaiya Dooj - a celebration of the sacred bond between brothers and sisters - was observed with great warmth, love, and emotional connection at the Home for the Aged & Infirm (Vridh Ashram), Ambhalla, Jammu. The event brought an atmosphere of joy and familial affection, reminding everyone that love knows no age or boundaries. The celebration was beautifully coordinated under the guidance of Dr. Dinesh Gupta, Secretary of the Home for the Aged & Infirm, who ensured that every detail of the event was thoughtfully planned and gracefully executed. His efforts and dedication in managing the arrangements added a special charm to the occasion, making the elderly residents feel truly cared for and valued.

The celebration was organized with the heartfelt intention of bringing festive cheer to the elderly residents, many of whom are away from their families. Young volunteers and well-wishers joined hands to make the occasion special by perform-



ing traditional tilak ceremonies, tying sacred threads, and offering sweets to the senior residents, symbolizing the spirit of togetherness and care.

The residents, overwhelmed with emotions, shared fond memories of celebrating Bhaiya Dooj with their siblings in earlier days. Their eyes sparkled with nostalgia as the young visitors affectionately played the role of their brothers and sisters, bridging generations through compassion and love.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Dinesh Gupta expressed that festivals like Bhaiya Dooj are not merely about rituals but about spreading love, care, and a sense of belonging among those who have given so much to society. He emphasized that

such celebrations help bring smiles to the faces of the elderly and remind us of our collective duty to cherish and support them. The management of the Home for the Aged & Infirm extended heartfelt gratitude to all volunteers, donors, and well-wishers for their continued support. The program concluded with the distribution of sweets, light refreshments, and a cultural segment featuring songs and heartfelt interactions, filling the atmosphere with warmth and festive spirit.

The celebration of Bhaiya Dooj at the Vridh Ashram served as a gentle reminder that while time may age the body, it can never fade the heart's capacity to love, feel, and rejoice.

Secretary Health reviews Operational Efficiency and Procurement Processes of JKMSCL

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Secretary Health and Medical Education Department, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, chaired a review meeting of the Jammu & Kashmir Medical Supplies Corporation Limited (JKMSCL) to assess its operational efficiency and procurement processes.

The meeting focused on strengthening the operational efficiency of JKMSCL, particularly through the Drug & Vaccine Distribution Management System (DVDMS) portal, and ensuring strict adherence to procurement guidelines and Rate Contracts (RCs).

The Chair underscored the importance of maintaining transparency, accountability, and timely procurement through established processes.

The Secretary directed JKMSCL to implement DVDMS at all healthcare facilities, from GMCs to sub-centers, to track drug requirements and con-



Secretary Health and Medical Education Department, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah speaking in a meeting.

sumption. He also emphasized the need to execute tenders for Machinery & Equipment in a time-bound manner and formulate an Essential Equipment List (EEL) for scientific planning of future procurements to align procurements strictly to patient care and public welfare.

Dr. Shah stressed the importance of implementing penal clauses for any delays in executing supplies and taking strict disciplinary action against defaulters.

He also emphasized the need for statutory audits and quality testing of drugs, and the operationalization of the modern testing laboratory at Kathua.

"All officers must gear up for improved performance, clear all legal pendency without delay, and ensure timely and effective implementation of projects and contracts. JKMSCL must maintain the highest standards of transparency and efficiency in its operations," said Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
SAMBHA: Reinforcing the vision of self-reliant India, BJP Jammu & Kashmir Vice President and Prabhari District Samba Advocate Rekha Mahajan, emphasized the vital role of women in nation-building in a programme held in Ghagwal Mandal of district Samba.

District President Samba and DDC Asha Rani, State Vice President Rashpal Verma, State Secretary Arun Sharma, Sarpanch Geetanjali also spoke on the occasion.

District General Secretaries Rakesh Sambyal, Amit Dubey, BJP Karyakartas and a large number of Mahila Shakti were present in the programme. The event brought together women entrepreneurs, self-help groups, and youth to discuss opportunities for empowerment, innovation, and economic self-sufficiency.

Addressing the gathering, Rekha Mahajan said that empowering women is central to the idea of a truly Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India). "No nation can progress unless its women are empowered to contribute equally to its economic and social development," she stated.

She urged women to take full advantage of various government schemes and initiatives such as PMEGP, Mudra Yojana, NRLM, and Stand-Up India, which provide financial and technical

Self-Help Groups, start ups are engine of rural development, community upliftment: Rekha



BJP J&K Vice President Rekha Mahajan with others at a programme.

support to aspiring entrepreneurs.

Rekha highlighted that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, several transformative initiatives have been launched to uplift women across sectors - from financial inclusion and digital literacy to skill development and entrepreneurship.

"The vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat is incomplete without Atmanirbhar Nari. Women today are not just homemakers but nation-makers," she remarked, encouraging participants to take pride in their talents and contribute to India's economic growth.

She also appreciated the growing number of women-led start-ups and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in Jammu and Kashmir, noting that they have become engines of rural development and community upliftment.

Rekha called upon educated women and youth to explore avenues in agriculture, handicrafts, food processing, and e-commerce, where government support and market potential are immense.

The workshop featured interactive sessions and success stories of local women entrepreneurs who shared how government schemes helped them start

small ventures and achieve financial independence. Rekha assured them of the BJP's continued commitment to supporting women's empowerment at every level.

Concluding her address, she said, "The strength of our society lies in the empowerment of women. When women stand strong, the nation stands stronger."

The event ended with a vote of thanks and a renewed pledge to work collectively towards realizing the dream of an Atmanirbhar Bharat through women-led development.