

Dr Jitendra reviews preparations for Patels’s 150th birth anniversary commemoration campaign

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NEW DELHI: Union Minister and Member of Parliament from Udhampur, Dr. Jitendra Singh, on Sunday chaired a review meeting through video conference to assess the ongoing preparations for the Sardar@150 Campaign - the nation-wide commemoration campaign marking the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

The Minister is personally overseeing the campaign's rollout across five districts in Jammu and Kashmir to ensure that the event becomes a people's movement celebrating unity and national integration.

The review meeting was attended by senior officials and representatives including Baldev Singh Billawaria, Babu Ram, Darshan Kumar, Tripathi Narian Dutt, Athar Hussain, Vishal Singh Thakur, Arjun Rana, Ranuka Katoch, Mahan Singh, Rakesh Anthal, Juhi Manhas, Kushal Gupta, Raghunandan Singh, and Shagun Parihar.

Dr. Jitendra discussed district-level activities and coordination mechanisms to ensure effective community



participation in the coming weeks.

As the Sardar@150 campaign is already underway online since October 6, Dr. Jitendra had earlier formally launched it from Kathua in J&K through a press conference on October 16. The next major phase will begin on October 31, coinciding with Rashtriya Ekta Diwas - the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel - when district-level Unity Marches will take place across the Union Territory. These marches will continue until mid-

November, engaging schools, colleges, youth clubs, and local panchayats to spread Patel's message of national integration.

The campaign will culminate on November 25 at Karamsad, the birthplace of Sardar Patel, from where participants will embark on the National Unity March to Ekta Nagar, Gujarat, on November 26, observed as Constitution Day.

Dr. Jitendra emphasized that Sardar@150 is not just a ceremonial observance but a "whole-of-nation" exercise, reflecting the values of unity, integrity, and collective responsibility that Sardar Patel stood for.

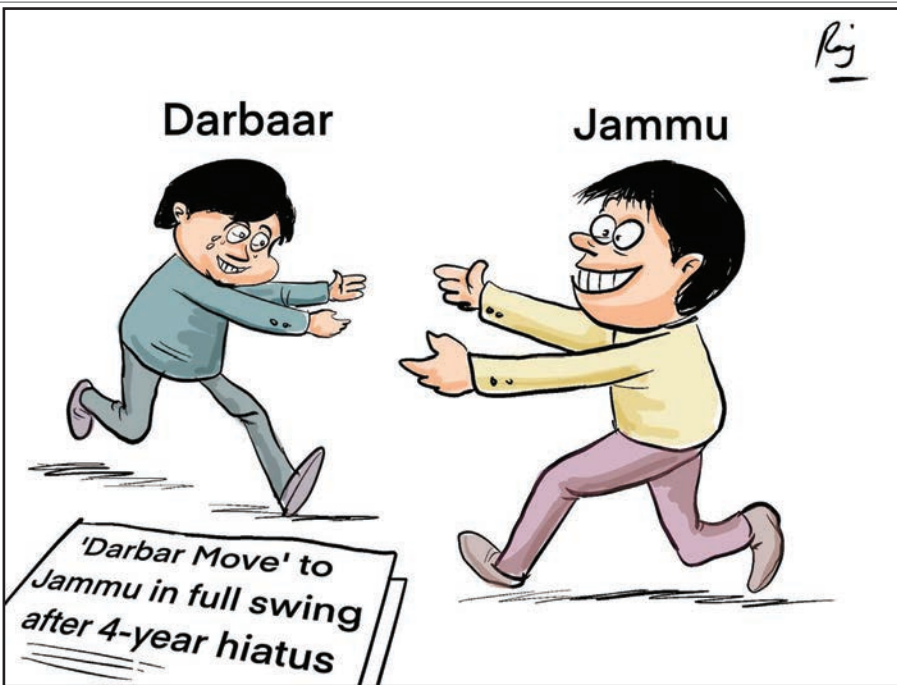
He noted that district-level teams have already been formed under the leadership of local administration, while civil society groups, elected representatives, and members of District Development Councils are working in close coordination to make the event a grand success.

As both a Union Minister and Member of Parliament, Dr. Jitendra has been holding daily follow-ups with officials, youth organizations,

and volunteers to monitor progress and ensure smooth implementation of every activity - from Unity Marches and essay competitions to the digital engagement drives on the MY Bharat portal. He stressed that the involvement of the youth from Jammu and Kashmir in this national movement will serve as a strong message of inclusivity and empowerment.

The Minister appreciated the proactive efforts of the district authorities and volunteers, urging them to sustain the momentum as the campaign progresses toward its national culmination. He said that the Sardar@150 celebrations will serve as a reminder of Patel's vision of a united India and reinforce Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat.

Dr. Jitendra concluded by reaffirming his commitment to personally oversee every stage of the campaign's execution in his constituency, adding that the enthusiasm and participation of people from Jammu and Kashmir will stand as a symbol of national unity and shared purpose.



IIPA J&K Regional Branch organises lecture on ‘Emerging Trends in Public Policy and Public Administration’

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JAMMU: Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), J&K Regional Branch organized a lecture on the theme "Emerging Trends in Public Policy and Public Administration".

The lecture was delivered by Prof. Sushma Yadav, Member, KG Balakrishnan Commission, Former Vice-Chancellor, Bhagat Phool Singh Mahila Vishwavidyalaya, Sonapat, and Former Professor of Public Policy & Governance, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi.

Prof. Sushma Yadav while giving historical and philosophical perspective on the evolution of public policy and public administration highlighted that the global trends in public administration includes digital governance, Gov-Tech, algorithmic accountability & AI, citizen co-production & participatory administration, social equity & inclusive policy, Green governance & climate planning.

She said that India's policy landscape through its innovative initiatives like Digital India Mission, JAM Trinity, UPI, PM Jan Dhan Yojna has promoted digital governance setting global benchmarks. Further policy initiatives like Ayushman Bharat, NEP 2020 has aimed at creating public value through collaborative governance.

Highlighting various challenges for ensuring Vikshit Bharat by 2047, Prof Yadav made strategic recommendations like inclusive digital transformation, focusing on outcome oriented performance



IIPA J&K Regional Branch members presenting memento to Prof. Sushma Yadav, Member KGBC.

management, need for responsible technology & data governance, focusing on citizen engagement through decentralization, building capacity of administrators and mainstreaming sustainability and resilience.

She further emphasized that there is need to understand and implement Indie view on Governance and that Bharat can emerge as a global example of creating public value by being rooted in civilization values. Dr. Ashok Bhan, IPS (Retd) Patron, IIPA JK Regional Branch in his address civil servants who are now viewed as Karamyogi's should spread head the implementation of various policy initiatives which can help India emerge as Vikshit Bharat. He further emphasized that it is critical to understand the mind of Karamyogi and institutional reforms should be introduced that enables the civil servant to constantly innovate and contribute towards the growth of the nation. B R Sharma, IAS (Retd), Chairman, IIPA JKRB in his address said that with evolving citizen expectations the administrative system has to be more responsive

towards the needs of a common man.

He laid emphasis on increased civic engagement, strong governance redressal mechanism, social audits. Further he said that there is a need to foster ethics, promote integrity and encourage servant leadership.

K B Jandial, IAS (Retd), Vice-Chairman, IIPA JK RB in his welcome address introduced the speaker and laid the context of the lecture. Prof Alka Sharma, Secretary, IIPA JKRB presented the formal vote of thanks and Prof Anil Gupta, Joint Secretary, IIPA JKRB conducted the proceedings of the function.

The programme was attended by Officers from J&K Police, J&K Armed Police, J&K Forest Department, Civil Administration, Faculty, Scholars and Students from the Department of Political Science & DSRS, University of Jammu, and the Department of Public Policy and Public Administration, Central University of Jammu, along with Members of IIPA J&K Regional Branch and Members from The Central Pensioner Welfare Association, Jammu.

CSIR-IIIM, NMPB organise Buyer-Seller Meet on Medicinal and Aromatic Plants

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SRINAGAR: The CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (CSIR-IIIM), in collaboration with the National Medicinal Plants Board (NMPB), Ministry of AYUSH, organized a day-long Buyer-Seller Meet on the Medicinal and Aromatic Plant (MAP) sector at the CSIR-IIIM Branch Laboratory, Srinagar.

The event brought together growers, startups, researchers, and industry stakeholders from across the country to deliberate on opportunities, challenges, and market linkages in the MAP sector.

The program witnessed the participation of over 100 farmers from various districts of the Kashmir region and several buyers representing industries and organizations from across India.

The chief guest on the occasion was Dr. Zabeer Ahmed, Director, CSIR-IIIM, while Dr. Suresh Sharma, Director AYUSH J&K and CEO, J&K Medicinal Plant Board, was the Guest of Honour. Other dignitaries on the podium included Kavita Tyagi,



Director, CSIR-IIIM Jammu presenting award to an entrepreneur at Buyer-Seller Meet.

Consultant (Medicinal and Agronomy), NMPB, Prof. T.H. Masoodi, Nodal Officer, RCFC North NMPB-II, and Prof. Mansoor Wani, Head, Department of Botany, University of Kashmir.

In his inaugural address, Dr. Zabeer Ahmed emphasized the immense potential of medicinal and aromatic plants in drug discovery and sustainable livelihood generation.

He noted that cultivating MAPs can significantly uplift the farming community by providing new income avenues and reducing dependence on conventional crops.

Dr. Ahmed highlighted

CSIR-IIIM's pivotal role in scientific research, technological outreach, and its contribution to phytopharmaceutical drug discovery.

He remarked that Jammu & Kashmir, with its rich biodiversity of over 3,000 medicinal plant species, holds vast potential for developing standardized herbal products that can compete in global markets.

He also appreciated the efforts of NMPB and AYUSH in strengthening collaboration between government bodies, research institutions, and private stakeholders.

Delivering his keynote address, Dr. Suresh Sharma shared success stories of

progressive farmers and startups working under the Medicinal Plant Board.

He detailed various central and state-level schemes and projects being implemented by AYUSH and NMPB to promote MAP cultivation, processing, and marketing in the region.

Earlier, Dr. Waheed Ul Hassan welcomed the participants and provided an overview of the day's agenda. He expressed gratitude to Dr. Ahmed and all stakeholders for their active involvement and continued support in promoting the MAP sector. During the technical session, five expert lectures were delivered on diverse aspects of MAP

entrepreneurship and value addition. Dr. Qazi Pervaiz Hassan spoke on Entrepreneurship Opportunities in MAPs, while Dr. Waheed Ul Hassan discussed the Development of Coordinated Linkages in the MAP Sector for Successful Entrepreneurship. Dr. Phalsteen Sultan highlighted CSIR-IIIM's initiatives in promoting MAP cultivation, processing, and value addition. Manzoor Javaid, Managing Director, SJT Biotech Innovations Pvt. Ltd., shared insights into Startup Development Opportunities through MAPs in J&K.

The program concluded with a formal vote of thanks delivered by Dr. Mushtaq Ahmad Payer, District AYUSH Officer, Srinagar, who lauded the collaborative efforts of CSIR-IIIM and NMPB.

The proceedings of the event were conducted by Dr. Shazia Mukhtar, Medical Officer, AYUSH, who commended the participants for their enthusiasm and commitment to advancing the MAP sector in the Union Territory.

IIM Jammu students visit local families on Day 2 of Bandhan Program

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JAMMU: The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu, under the visionary leadership of Prof. B. S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu, continued its flagship Bandhan Cultural Immersion Program across the Jammu region on October 25-26, 2025.

The two-day initiative aimed at fostering cultural understanding and strengthening the bond between students and the local Dogra community witnessed overwhelming participation and enthusiasm from both sides.

As part of this unique initia-

Inaugurated earlier on July 25, 2025, by Prof. Sahay, the Bandhan Cultural Immersion Program is the first-of-its-kind initiative in India, designed to turn society into a living classroom. Four students were hosted by each family, allowing them to experience grassroots culture, traditional Dogra values, community bonding, and the essence of value-based living.

Speaking about the initiative, Prof. B. S. Sahay stated that Bandhan is not merely an academic activity but a "soulful bridge" connecting people and cultures.

He emphasized that IIM

During their visits, students interacted with a wide cross-section of society- Army veterans, gallantry awardees, artists, entrepreneurs, social activists, educationists, sportspersons, and administrators. They learned about Dogra folk traditions, family values, and cultural heritage while enjoying authentic local cuisine. One student group even witnessed a traditional Dogra wedding, gaining firsthand insight into local customs and rituals.

Host families appreciated the initiative and expressed pride in sharing their traditions with the future leaders



IIM Jammu students with others at Day 2 of Bandhan Program.

tive, 81 Dogra families from Jammu graciously hosted IIM Jammu students for a one-day cultural immersion experience spread across two days.

On Day 2 (October 26), 180 students from the MBA and MBA (Healthcare) programs visited 35 Dogra families, engaging in deep cultural learning and heartfelt interactions.

On Day 1 (October 25), 236 students visited 46 Dogra families, experiencing the warmth, hospitality, and cultural richness of Jammu's Dogra heritage.

Jammu embodies a "Mini India with a Global Vision" - rooted in Dogra heritage and aligned with the national mission of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat.

Prof. Sahay underlined that education must extend beyond classroom walls and that true leadership emerges from understanding people, society, and culture. The initiative, he said, seeks to nurture socially responsible leaders through cultural immersion, social sensitivity, community engagement, and emotional development.

of India. Students reflected that the experience left a profound emotional impact, enriching their understanding of India's cultural fabric and diversity.

The Bandhan Cultural Immersion Program reinforces IIM Jammu's commitment to holistic, value-based education, bridging academia and society while promoting cultural harmony and national integration. The program was effectively coordinated by Ankush Varma, Chief Innovation Officer, IIM Jammu Srinagar Campus.

Accession Day symbolises J&K’s eternal bond with India: LG Kavinder



Lt Governor Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta lighting ceremonial lamp. (Pic by Ashok Anand)

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JAMMU: The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, on Sunday emphasised that Accession Day is a celebration of Jammu and Kashmir's eternal bond with India, a day that reminds every citizen of the farsighted leadership, patriotism, and courage of Maharaja Hari Singh Ji, whose historic decision ensured that Jammu and Kashmir became an inseparable part of Bharat. "On this sacred day, we bow in reverence to Maharaja Hari Singh Ji - a visionary monarch and true nationalist - whose determination, wisdom, and love for his people guided Jammu and Kashmir towards unity, progress, and national integration," the Lt Governor said while addressing the 'Adhivlan Utsav - 2025' organised by Samadhaan Foundation in Jammu to mark the historic occasion of Accession Day - the day when Maharaja Hari Singh Ji, the last Dogra ruler of Jammu and Kashmir, took the momentous decision to accede to the Union of India in 1947.

The Lt Governor described Maharaja Hari Singh Ji as a reformer, moderniser and symbol of India's unity, who rose above political compulsions to act in the best interest of his people and the nation. "His decision to sign the Instrument of Accession was not merely a political act but a pledge to uphold India's civilisational and cultural ethos.

It was an affirmation that Jammu and Kashmir's destiny lies with India," he added.

Recalling the Maharaja's remarkable contributions, the Lt Governor said that his reign laid the foundation of a modern and progressive Jammu and Kashmir. "He introduced landmark reforms in education, justice, and social welfare, promoted women's empowerment, abolished child marriage, and worked for equality and justice at a time when such measures were rare," he noted. Quoting former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Lt Governor said that India is not merely a piece of land, but a living entity that we revere as Bharat Mata. He said that the accession of Jammu and Kashmir completed the nation's spiritual and civilizational unity, fulfilling the idea of Bharat as a living motherland, not just a geographical entity. "The Instrument of Accession signed by Maharaja Hari Singh Ji was an act of faith - a declaration that Jammu and Kashmir would always remain an inseparable part of India's soul," he said.

Highlighting the historical neglect faced by Ladakh, the Lt Governor highlighted that for decades, the people of Ladakh faced discrimination and developmental deprivation despite their immense contribution to national unity and security. "For years, Ladakh

Yudhvir demands Bharat Ratna for Maharaja Hari Singh

JAMMU: Yudhvir Sethi, MLA from Jammu East, has demanded the country's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna, for Maharaja Hari Singh. Sethi highlighted that Maharaja Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession on October 26, 1947, enabling the princely state of Jammu & Kashmir to join the Union of India. He emphasized the historical significance of this act, describing it as a landmark decision that ensured Jammu and Kashmir's integration with the nation. Sethi urged the central government to recognize Maharaja Hari Singh's contribution to the country's unity and sovereignty.



remained ignored in policy priorities, its people struggling for representation and recognition," he said.

He emphasised that this discrimination ended under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who ensured justice and empowerment for Ladakh through the abrogation of Article 370 and the creation of Ladakh as a separate Union Territory. "This historic step corrected a long-standing injustice and gave Ladakh the rightful opportunity to chart its own path of progress and prosperity," he said.

The Lt Governor said that unprecedented development is now being witnessed in Ladakh, with projects worth thousands of crores underway in infrastructure, tourism, renewable energy, and education sectors. "The completion of the world class Zojila Tunnel project will further transform connectivity, boost tourism, and strengthen economic growth in the region," he said, adding that Ladakh is emerging as a model of sustainable development and ecological balance. The Lt Governor emphasised that the Union Territory Administration is fully committed to the vision of an 'Akhand Bharat' - a strong, united, and inclusive India where every region prospers equally. "From the Himalayas of Ladakh to the plains of Jammu and the valleys of Kashmir, we are bound together by a

shared history, culture, and national spirit. The dream of Maharaja Hari Singh Ji, of a united and empowered Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, is now taking shape under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi," he said. Kavinder Gupta also commended the Samadhaan Foundation for organizing Adhivlan Utsav and said such events play a vital role in reconnecting the younger generation with the region's glorious Dogra legacy. "This celebration is not only about remembering our history but also about inspiring the youth to build the future with the same sense of pride and dedication," he said.

Concluding his address, the Lt Governor said, "Maharaja Hari Singh Ji's decision of accession was not just a historic event - it was a declaration of faith in India's unity. Let us pledge to uphold his legacy by making Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh symbols of peace, development, and harmony."

During the programme, artists of Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture & Languages also presented a captivating cultural performance celebrating Dogra Heritage, Art & culture.

Among others who addressed the programme included Pawan Sharma, Chairperson, Samadhaan Foundation; MLA Yudhvir Sethi, Dr. Meenakshi Kilam, Bhai Kusum Hindu and members of civil society were also present.