

CM reviews functioning of H&P Dept, stresses on optimum utilization of assets and upkeep of facilities

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday called on Hospitality & Protocol Department to focus on the optimal utilization, upgradation, and renovation of departmental assets both inside and outside Jammu and Kashmir.



Chief Minister Omar Abdullah chairing a meeting of Hospitality and Protocol Department.

He stated this while chairing a review meeting of the Hospitality and Protocol (H&P) Department here at Civil Secretariat today. The meeting was attended by Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary to Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Commissioner Secretary H&P Rashmi Singh, Director H&P, and other concerned officers. During the meeting, Commissioner Secretary Rashmi Singh gave a detailed presentation on department's assets, including those located outside Jammu & Kashmir, such as properties in Delhi, Chandigarh, Amritsar, and Mumbai.

Discussions during the meeting covered revenue realization, rate revision, and facelifting of prized properties, particularly 5-Prithvi Raj Road in New Delhi. The Chief Minister called for the creation of new assets at strategic locations within and outside J&K to meet future needs and generate additional revenue. Abdullah also directed immediate renovation and upgradation of the Banquet Hall in Srinagar, including improvements to the audio system, furniture, bath-

rooms, and other amenities. He stressed the importance of fire safety measures and fire audit in properties especially heritage sites where invaluable items are stored, ensuring these assets are protected against potential risks. The meeting also addressed the augmentation of existing assets, strengthening manpower to fill up various categories of posts and revisiting recruitment rules to improve efficiency and operational capabilities of the department. The Chief Minister reiterated the importance of maximizing the potential of H&P assets while ensuring their upkeep and modernization to reflect the government's commitment to efficiency and resourcefulness.

The Minister flagged off the heritage walk from Kala Kendra to Abhinav Theater, Jammu being organised by Department of Archive Archaeology and Museum in collaboration with J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages and Department of School Education. A large number of students from different schools participated in the event.

Govt keen to preserve J&K's cultural, historical heritage: Satish Sharma



Sports Minister Satish Sharma speaking during flagging off ceremony of heritage walk.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Youth Services & Sports, Satish Sharma, on Tuesday flagged off a heritage walk besides inaugurating an archival exhibition at Kala Kendra here. Principal Secretary Culture, Suresh Kumar Gupta, Secretary in Culture Department, Deepika Sharma, Director Archives, Archaeology & Museums, Kuldeep Krishan Sidha, Secretary Academy of Art Culture and Languages, Harvinder Kour, Director School Education, Jammu, Ashok Sharma were present on the occasion.

The Minister stressed the goals of World Heritage Week is to inspire the younger generation to take pride in and actively participate in heritage conservation. These initiatives not only educate but also empower the younger demographic, encouraging them to serve as ambassadors of J&K's rich legacy, he added. He added that it highlights the value of natural and cultural heritage, encouraging respect and understanding between various communities. He emphasized that it motivates action to safeguard and conserve these priceless locations, guaranteeing their continued existence for upcoming generations. Satish Sharma stressed

the progress of investigations, charge sheets filed, and convictions secured. The ADGP further instructed officers to coordinate closely with the Prosecution

Dr Jitendra felicitates foreign Trainees in 'Ocean Exploration', underlines India's 'Blue Economy' initiatives



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh posing for group photograph with foreign trainees from six countries after formally felicitating them at Ministry of Earth Sciences, New Delhi.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: In a move underscoring India's commitment to sustainable ocean development, Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister, felicitated international trainees from six countries-Nigeria, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Ghana, and Jamaica-who completed a specialized training program in Ocean Exploration. The event, organized in collaboration with the International Seabed Authority (ISA), celebrated the completion of advanced seabed exploration training, focusing on Polymetallic Nodules (PMN) and Polymetallic Sulphides (PMS). In his address at New Delhi's Ministry of Earth Sciences, Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted India's role as a leader in responsible seabed exploration, positioning the

country as a hub for sustainable marine resource management and capacity building. He congratulated the trainees, emphasizing that they were not just participants but "ambassadors of a sustainable future" and encouraged them to use their expertise to advocate for marine conservation in their home countries. Dr. Singh outlined India's principles for seabed mining, which include sustainable utilization of marine resources, strict environmental protection, and compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). India's commitment to environmental stewardship is evident through its two ISA exploration contracts for PMN and PMS, ensuring stringent environmental impact assessments throughout the

mining process. The Minister also linked the training program to India's broader Blue Economy initiative, which prioritizes the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, job creation, and livelihood enhancement, while safeguarding marine ecosystems. He reiterated that true progress is rooted in balancing development with environmental conservation. Dr. Singh encouraged the trainees to build networks with their Indian peers, fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing for a sustainable marine future. He concluded by reaffirming India's commitment to deeper international cooperation in ocean exploration, positioning the country as a global leader in environmentally responsible seabed mining and marine science.

ADGP Jammu zone reviews UAPA Cases of Jammu District

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Jammu Zone, Anand Jain, chaired a high-level review meeting to assess the status of cases registered under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA) in Jammu district. The meeting was attended by senior police officers, including DIG JKS Range, SSP Jammu, Sr PO ZPHQ Jammu and all the SDPOs of district



ADGP Jammu Zone Anand Jain chairing a meeting.

Jammu. The ADGP took a detailed review of each UAPA case, focusing on

the progress of investigations, charge sheets filed, and convictions secured. The ADGP further instructed officers to coordinate closely with the Prosecution

Department to ensure effective prosecution of UAPA cases. He underscored the importance of presenting compelling arguments and evidence in court to secure convictions. The ADGP expressed satisfaction with the overall progress made in UAPA cases in Jammu district. He commended the efforts of the police officers involved in investigating and prosecuting these cases.

EPCH elevates India's handmade crafts at global sourcing Expo Melbourne, Australia 2024

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: The Global Sourcing Expo Melbourne, Australia 2024got underway from 19th to 21st November 2024 at the Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre, Australia. This event is a significant opportunity to strengthen bilateral trade between India and Australia, showcasing India's vast array of handicrafts, apparel, and sustainable lifestyle products. The EPCH India Pavilion got inaugurated by Dr. Sushil Kumar, Consul General of India, Melbourne, Australia along with member exhibitors informed by R. K. Verma, Executive Director - EPCH. Dr. Sushil Kumar, while inaugurating appreciated the continuous efforts of the Council for bringing Indian



The EPCH India Pavilion got inaugurated by Dr. Sushil Kumar, Consul General of India, Melbourne, Australia along with member exporters during Global Sourcing Expo Melbourne, Australia 2024.

Handicrafts to the world markets and promotion of handicrafts exports from the country. CGI also interacted with member participants and assured all support in future business promotions. Dileep Baid, Chairman - EPCH said the Global Sourcing Expo Melbourne is Australia's premier trade

event, bringing together international manufacturers, wholesalers, and designers with key retail chains, fashion labels, and institutional buyers from Australia, New Zealand, and beyond. The Expo's focus on sustainable fashion, home décor, and consumer goods perfectly aligns with India's strengths in pro-

ducing high-quality, ethically sourced products. He further added India's participation in this year's Expo will strengthen the recently signed India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA). This landmark agreement is expected to significantly boost trade between the two nations, creating new opportunities for exporters from both countries. R.K. Verma said that the EPCH has set up a vibrant India Pavilion featuring 16 member exporters from key craft clusters, including Moradabad, Jaipur, Noida, Delhi, West Bengal, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka. The pavilion will display a curated range of products such as apparel,

leather goods, cotton and jute bags, home décor, kitchenware and more. EPCH is a nodal agency for promoting exports of handicrafts from the Country to various destinations of the world and projecting India's image abroad as reliable supplier of high quality of handicrafts goods & services. The handicrafts exports during the year 2023-24 was Rs. 32,759 Crores (US \$ 3,956 Million) registering a growth of 9.13% in rupee term & 6.11% in dollar terms over the previous year. The exports of handicrafts items to Australia during the year 2023-24 is Rs. 737.83 Crores (US \$ 89.11 Million)informed by R. K. Verma, Executive Director-EPCH.

CCI delegation meets CM, discuss issues

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: A delegation from the Chamber of Commerce & Industry (CCI) Jammu met Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday to discuss various issues concerning the region's development. Arun Gupta, President of the Chamber urged the Chief Minister to expedite the beautification work of the Tawi River banks and the Mubarak Mandi Heritage Complex, which have been progressing slowly. He also proposed the rejuvenation of the Patnitop Development Authority, aiming to develop Patnitop into a tourist hub by allowing commercial activities and constructing 5-star hotels. Addressing the region's religious tourism potential, Gupta requested the government to promote the religious tourist circuit in Jammu, encompassing significant sites such as Mata Vaishno Devi, Raghunath Mandir, Shivkhori, and others. He also suggested the development of untapped tourist spots in areas like Poonch, Rajouri, Bani, Bhaderwah, and Sanasar. Gupta further raised concerns about pending issues, including the execution of allotments at



CCI Jammu delegation calling on CM Omar Abdullah.

Shiv Market Railway Station and the expiration of lease deeds at Sabzi Mandi and Fruit Mandi Narwal. He requested the renewal of these deeds with minimal premium charges and the expedited execution of lease deeds for some commercial properties in Bahu Plaza. Gupta also highlighted the challenges faced by the residents of Gandhi Nagar Housing Colony, where the original owners' descendants face difficulties in transferring plots due to bureaucratic delays. He proposed that NOCs from the JDA and Housing Board should not be required for construction purposes on freehold properties. The delegation discussed the need for

improved infrastructure, including the removal of damaged water pipes and the installation of new ones for potable water. Gupta also called for a power amnesty scheme for commercial consumers and raised concerns over inflated power bills due to faulty smart meters. Other issues discussed included relocation of businesses affected by construction projects like the Kunjwani-Satwari fly-over and the Jammu-Akhnour road widening, and challenges faced by flour millers due to high mandi fees and insufficient local wheat production. The delegation was accompanied by senior members of the Chamber, including Anil Gupta, Rajeev Gupta, Manish Gupta, and Rajesh Gupta.

State Taxes Dept holds investiture ceremony for newly promoted Inspectors

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: The State Taxes Department conducted an investiture ceremony on Tuesday at its Head Office in Panama Chowk, celebrating the promotion of Sub-Inspectors to the rank of Inspectors. The ceremony, held in the Mini Conference Hall, was graced by Commissioner State Taxes, P.K. Bhat, as the Chief Guest. Addressing the gathering, P.K. Bhat congratulated the newly promoted Inspectors and their families, acknowledging their dedication and successful tenure as Sub-Inspectors. He emphasized the importance of innovative think-



Commissioner State Taxes, P.K. Bhat and others at investiture ceremony.

ing in achieving organizational goals and urged the newly promoted officers to

leverage their diverse skill sets for effective service delivery. "The responsibilities of an Inspector are pivotal in ensuring the smooth functioning of the department. Out-of-the-box thinking and the ability to adapt to evolving challenges are essential traits for achieving excellence," Bhat remarked during his address. The newly promoted Inspectors are Raghav Sharma, Aman Kumar Bhagat, Sharaz Murtaza Kazmi, Rajneet Singh, Siddhant Singh Deonain, Nishan Singh, Arjun Singh Sambyal and Nazia Sadeeqi. The ceremony concluded with a note of encouragement from the Commissioner, inspiring the inductees to uphold the highest standards of integrity and professionalism in their new roles.