

Suresh Kumar inaugurates Chhau workshop at GCW Parade

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Principal Secretary Culture and School Education, Suresh Kumar Gupta, on Monday inaugurated a week long workshop on 'Chhau' at Government College for Women (GCW), Parade Ground, Jammu.

Secretary, Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL), Harvinder Kour, Chairperson of Governing Body, GCW Parade Ground, Professor Lalit Magotra, Nodal Principal, PSPS Government PG College for Women, Gandhi Nagar, Dr. S.P. Sarswat, Principal GCW, Parade, Dr. Ravender Kumar Tickoo and Director Rangyug, Deepak Kumar also attended the event.

The workshop, being organised by the Skill Development Cell of GCW Parade and Rangyug in collaboration with the Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, marks the beginning of a pioneering initiative aimed at enriching students' understanding of India's rich performing arts heritage.



Principal Secretary School Education, Suresh Kumar Gupta posing with other dignitaries and students.

A total of 50 participants, including aspiring actors, dancers, and theatre enthusiasts from GCW Parade, GGM Science College, GDC Akhnor, and other institutions across Jammu, will participate in the week-long workshop.

In his address, Suresh Kumar Gupta highlighted the importance of preserving and promoting traditional art forms like Chhau, which beautifully blend martial arts, dance, and folk theatre. He applauded the College's efforts to integrate cultural education into academic courses and introduce Theatre as a Skill Development course. He also commended the collaborative efforts of JKAACL and Rangyug for their significant role in bringing such initiatives to life and providing students with opportunities to engage deeply with traditional art forms. He further emphasized the importance of such workshops in empowering students through both physical and mental growth.

Dr. Ravender Kumar Tickoo, Principal of GCW Parade, highlighted that the workshop aims to empower students by enhancing physical strength, expressive abilities, and confidence. She emphasized that Chhau prepares them for theatre roles while also teaching valuable skills like self-defense and physical coordination. She stated that the workshop reflects the College's commitment to skill-building and personal development, with the introduction of Theatre as a Skill Development course reinforcing its vision of fostering artistic excellence and empowering women students the opportunity to enhance their physical strength, expressive abilities, and confidence. She emphasized that Chhau prepares them for theatre roles while also teaching valuable skills like self-defense and physical coordination. She stated that the workshop reflects the College's commitment to skill-building and personal development, with the introduction of Theatre as a Skill Development course reinforcing its vision of fostering artistic excellence and empowering

through both physical and mental growth.

He expressed gratitude to Rangyug and JKAACL for their support. Dr. Ravender Kumar Tickoo added that the workshop, held from

November 25 to December 01, introduces participants to the Chhau dance form, blending martial arts, dance, and self-defense techniques.

The program is designed to enhance students' physical fitness, endurance, mental resilience, and self-confidence, while offering them the chance to engage deeply with this significant part of India's cultural heritage. In her welcome address, Dr. Alpna Vohra highlighted GCW Parade's initiative to integrate Chhau into its Skill-Based Course in Performing Arts, offering women students the opportunity to enhance their physical strength, expressive abilities, and confidence. She emphasized that Chhau prepares them for theatre roles while also teaching valuable skills like self-defense and physical coordination. She stated that the workshop reflects the College's commitment to skill-building and personal development, with the introduction of Theatre as a Skill Development course reinforcing its vision of fostering artistic excellence and empowering

students through creative education. Renowned and internationally acclaimed Classical Indian Drama Director Bhumikeshwar Singh and Chhau exponent and yoga teacher Raudri Singh are the resource persons of the workshop. On the occasion, a short play Watna Ve was also performed by the students of GCW Parade, which captivated the audience with its poignant storytelling and powerful performances.

Among others, prominent figures, including Suresh Kumar Sharma (Retd. Judge), Convener of SPIC-MACAY J&K Chapter; Ravinder Koul, Theatre Critic; Dr. Lalit Gupta, Art Historian; Ashish Sharma, Coordinator Rangyug as well as Prof. Anuradha Kalsi, Dr. Sukriti Sharma, Dr. Randheer Kaur; Dr. Mamta Sharma, Prof. Arti Devi, Prof. Neetu Bala, Dr. Sukhwinder Kour; Dr. Neetu Sharma, Dr. Amardeep Kour; Prof. Pooja Saroj, Prof. Qayoom Chouhan, Prof. Arif, Dr. Priya Dutta, Raj Kumar Behrupia, Vijay Goswami were present on the occasion.

Keshav calls on LG, discuss several issues



Chairman Samvedna Society Keshav Chopra calling on Lt Governor J&K UT Manoj Sinha.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Chairman Samvedna Society Keshav Chopra called on Lt Governor JKUT Manoj Sinha and briefed him about the activities and work done by the Society for the needy sections.

Keshav also discussed several issues of the locals including PM-JAY Ayushman Bharat Scheme and informed the Lt Governor that most of the private hospitals are not covering the people under the scheme. He also discussed

that Under State Marriage Assistance Scheme people should get the benefits timely. Keshav briefed Lt Governor about the future endeavours of the Society and said that Samvedna Society is committed to work for the common masses.

The Lt Governor said that the top priority of his government is to ensure that basic facilities and services are delivered to the common man in an efficient and time bound manner.

SKUAST-J to host National Symposium on 'Climate Change Impact on Animal Health'

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: SKUAST-Jammu is all set to host the 41st Annual Conference of the Indian Association of Veterinary Pathologists (IAVP) and the 15th Annual Meeting of the Indian College of Veterinary Pathologists (ICVP) from November 28 to 30, 2024, at its Chathia campus.

The event will be held under the theme "Exploring Veterinary Pathology and Diagnostic Innovations in Animal and Poultry Disease Amidst Climatic Challenges." Prof. B.N. Tripathi, Vice Chancellor of SKUAST-Jammu, who also serves as the President of IAVP, expressed his enthusiasm for the event, highlighting the importance of the symposium in shaping the future of animal health management. He shared that more than 300 delegates from across India would be attending, contributing to nine technical sessions** over the three-day event. Prof. Tripathi also acknowledged the full support of the Jammu and Kashmir government, emphasizing the symposium's role in strengthening the region's livestock and poultry sectors. The conference will be inaugurated by Dr. Sanjay Kumar, Chairman of the Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board (ASRB), who will grace the occasion as the Chief Guest. Additionally, Dr. Naveen Kumar, Director of the ICMR-National Institute of Virology, Pune, will also participate as the Chief Guest. The event will feature keynote addresses and interactive sessions with three internationally recognized Veterinary Pathologists from Auburn University, University of Wisconsin, and the Anderson Cancer Institute, Texas, USA. This National Symposium will bring together pathologists, scientists, researchers, and representatives from the veterinary pharmaceutical industry, aiming to foster collaboration and innovation in veterinary sciences. The conference will focus on addressing the challenges posed by climate change on animal health, highlighting the vital role of veterinary science in tackling emerging diseases, safeguarding food security, and supporting rural livelihoods.

region's livestock and poultry sectors. The conference will be inaugurated by Dr. Sanjay Kumar, Chairman of the Agricultural Scientists Recruitment Board (ASRB), who will grace the occasion as the Chief Guest. Additionally, Dr. Naveen Kumar, Director of the ICMR-National Institute of Virology, Pune, will also participate as the Chief Guest. The event will feature keynote addresses and interactive sessions with three internationally recognized Veterinary Pathologists from Auburn University, University of Wisconsin, and the Anderson Cancer Institute, Texas, USA. This National Symposium will bring together pathologists, scientists, researchers, and representatives from the veterinary pharmaceutical industry, aiming to foster collaboration and innovation in veterinary sciences. The conference will focus on addressing the challenges posed by climate change on animal health, highlighting the vital role of veterinary science in tackling emerging diseases, safeguarding food security, and supporting rural livelihoods.

Gaurav urges for holistic tourism circuit in Jammu region

Lauds LG Sinha's visit to Tawi River Front project

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Gaurav Gupta, former Secretary General of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, has lauded the visit of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to the Tawi River Front Project, commending the administration for achieving 90 percent completion of 1st Phase and likely completion of the said Phase in January 2025. In a statement issued here on Monday, Gaurav Gupta, who recently held a meeting with LG Manoj Sinha, emphasized the need for the project's timely completion, urging prioritize completion of this project in

January 2025, having much potential to bring tourism downfall in Jammu. Highlighting its importance, he stated, "The Tawi River Front Project has immense potential to boost tourism and the economy of Jammu. It will serve as a key attraction for visitors and elevate Jammu's status as a tourism destination." He said that today's visit by the LG to the artificial lake site demonstrates his seriousness toward the early completion of this much-awaited project, which holds immense potential to transform Jammu's tourism landscape and bolster the region's economy. While appreciating ongoing development initiatives, he expressed concern over the economic challenges faced by Jammu, particularly in light of the upcoming direct train connectivity to Srinagar and the near exhaustion of Rs 28,400 crore Central Package. He remarked, "Jammu's economy is under stress, and the region risks being overshadowed unless robust steps are taken to capitalize on its unique tourism potential."

Gaurav proposed the establishment of a comprehensive tourism circuit in Jammu region, akin to the popular circuits in Srinagar, which include Pahalgam, Sonmarg, Gulmarg and other tourism places. "Tourists visiting Jammu must have a well-structured circuit encompassing destinations like Shiv Khori, Utterbehni - Purmandal, Patnitop, Mansar, Bagh-e-Bahu, Suchetgarh Border and several other tourism destinations in Doda-Kishtwar-Bhadarwah and Kathua," he said, stressing the need to create an itinerary that encourages longer stays and greater economic engagement in the region. Gaurav called for proactive efforts to connect Jammu's travel agents with counterparts in other states to promote the region's attractions. "Collaborations between Jammu's travel operators and those in other parts of the country will help position Jammu as a must-visit destination on the national tourism map," he suggested.

With the Tawi River Front nearing completion, Gaurav remains optimistic about its transformative impact but reiterated the need for consistent efforts to sustain Jammu's economy. "This is a step forward, but a larger vision is needed to truly harness Jammu's tourism potential and secure its economic future," he added.

With the Tawi River Front nearing completion, Gaurav remains optimistic about its transformative impact but reiterated the need for consistent efforts to sustain Jammu's economy. "This is a step forward, but a larger vision is needed to truly harness Jammu's tourism potential and secure its economic future," he added.

Urgent attention needed for completion of important projects

■ MASROOR AHMAD

SRINAGAR: Many key projects in the Kashmir Valley are in pipeline for completion and so far these have missed several deadlines which include All India Institute of Medical Sciences Awantipora and Noor-Jahan Bridge Qamarwari Srinagar, Srinagar Jammu National Highway Four Lane Project and Srinagar Baramulla Udhampur Rail Project.

All these are key projects for the people of Kashmir, as they are facing several issues in the health sector and road connectivity during peak winters.

The STATE TIMES highlighted these issues several times, despite assurances from authorities that the projects are repeatedly

jumping deadlines.

The Noor Jahan Bridge is under construction for over a decade and yet incomplete. December 2024 is now another deadline for its completion.

AIIMS Awantipora is another project, which has been under construction for the last several years and the project is still incomplete. The project is likely to miss its January 2025 deadline, as approximately 30 per cent of the project remains incomplete.

The Union government approved two AIIMS projects for Jammu and Kashmir in 2019. While AIIMS Jammu has been completed and inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the progress on AIIMS Awantipora has been

slower, with 30-35 per cent of the work still pending.

Officials said that 70 per cent of the work on AIIMS Awantipora has been completed, but the remaining 30 per cent cannot be finished within the one-month window left before the deadline. Despite a commendable pace of work, they said it is not feasible to complete the project by January 2025.

People of Kashmir Valley have urged the government to expedite the completion of the project, saying there is a dire need for healthcare infrastructure in the region.

Abdul Rashid Dar, resident of Bijbehara told STATE TIMES that AIIMS projects were approved simultaneously but have not been completed at the same pace. The people of Kashmir, who

have limited healthcare options compared to Jammu, are more in need of AIIMS Awantipora, he said.

Rashid said: "The healthcare system in the Kashmir valley is limited; SKIMS is the only medical institute with state-of-the-art machinery and specialists, all other hospitals are facing shortage of specialist and health workers, so how can we expect good care from these government hospitals. We are requesting the government to speed up the work so that people can benefit from this institute".

Meanwhile, according to reports 30 per cent work will be complete by June 2025. Officials cited several reasons for the delay, including legal disputes over land acquisition for the access

road, challenges posed by a nearby army base and erratic weather. These factors collectively hindered the progress of this mega AIIMS project, they said.

The Central government approved AIIMS Awantipora in 2019 at an estimated cost of Rs 1,828 crore. The project includes the construction of approximately 57 buildings, encompassing a hospital, hostels, residential quarters, a football ground, tennis courts, gardens with medicinal plants, and other state-of-the-art facilities.

Upon completion, the institute will have a strength of 1,000 beds, including 300 super-specialty beds, which is expected to bolster Kashmir's healthcare infrastructure. The project also includes a medical college with a capacity for 100 students and a nursing college for 60 students.

GPF Awareness/Grievance camp held at ZPHQ Jammu

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A three-day GPF Awareness and Grievance Camp has been inaugurated at the Zonal Police Headquarters (ZPHQ), Jammu, under the supervision of Sania Ahmad, Chief Accounts Officer, ZPHQ GPF Cell. This initiative aims to address the grievances and issues of serving and retired police personnel regarding their General Provident Fund (GPF) accounts, while also spreading awareness about the management and utilization of these funds.

The camp was inaugurated by Mohd Yaqoob Itoo, Director General Fund, Jammu & Kashmir, in the presence of distinguished dignitaries including: Shiv Kumar, DIG JSK Range, Smt. Poonam Makhnotra,



Mohd Yaqoob Itoo, Director General Fund, J&K inaugurating a camp.

Joint Director Funds, Reena Verma, District Fund Officer, Jammu, Vishal Manhas, SO to ADGP Jammu, Mukesh Sharma, Accounts Officer, ZPHQ Jammu.

This comprehensive three-day program is a special initiative designed to facilitate meaningful interaction between fund authorities and police personnel, addressing long-standing concerns related

to GPF accounts such as account discrepancies, loan approvals, withdrawals, and settlements post-retirement.

The camp also aims to educate police personnel and the general public about the importance of financial literacy and the benefits of proper fund management, provide on-the-spot solutions for common GPF-related issues to avoid delays and ease procedural formalities, ensure that retired personnel receive the benefits they are entitled to without unnecessary hurdles, and to Foster transparency in fund management by bridging communication gaps between stakeholders. The event includes interactive sessions where experts address queries and concerns of attendees. Special focus is being laid on creating awareness about digital solutions for fund management to simplify processes for all stakeholders.

The event will continue until November 27, 2024, and all concerned personnel are encouraged to attend and make the most of this opportunity.

Power shutdown

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Chief Engineer (Distribution) JPDCL, Jammu has informed that the power supply to Prable, Humble and Marmat will remain affected on November 26 from 9 am to 2 pm.

Similarly, the power supply to Battal Manwal, Jagnu, Ramnagar and Basant Garh will remain affected on November 27 from 8 am to 2 pm.

Transporters' convention held to congratulate newly elected president of Bus Owners Cooperative



AJKTWA Chairman Karan Singh Wazir with others at a programme.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

R S PURA: A convention of transporters from the R.S. Pura group was held on Monday at Suchetgarh, where they gathered to congratulate* and facilitate the newly elected President, Labh Singh, of the Bus Owners Jammu R S Pura Area Cooperative Ltd. The event was attended by key figures including the office

bearers of the All Jammu & Kashmir Transport Welfare Association (AJKTWA), with Chairman Karan Singh Wazir also present.

The convention primarily focused on discussing pressing issues related to the R.S. Pura route, particularly the impact of E-rickshaws and E-buses that have been operating on the main area routes for the last two years.

Originally intended for link routes, the operation of these vehicles on the main routes has created significant operational challenges for the R S Pura group buses.

The AJKTWA Chairman, Karan Singh Wazir, took note of these concerns and assured the transporters that the matter would be raised with the Smart City Authority. He committed to

holding detailed discussions to resolve the issue and ensure smoother operations for the buses serving the R S Pura region.

During the convention, the AJKTWA office bearers, including Mohinder Singh, Vijay Singh Chib, Bharat Bhushan Sharma, Kuldeep Singh, Ranjit Singh, Gurdeep Singh, K.D. Singh, Deepak Sharma, Inderpal Singh, Vijay Dogra, and Harasis Singh, also congratulated Labh Singh on his election and wished him success in his new role. The event served as a platform for collaboration and unity among the transport community, aiming to address challenges and improve the overall functioning of the transportation network in the region.

Sanskrit Scholars, Students submit memorandum to Divisional Commissioner

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Sanskrit scholars and students from Jammu Kashmir submitted a memorandum to the Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, highlighting the pressing issue of the omission of Sanskrit subject posts in the preferred posts to JKPS.

The scholars and students expressed their deep disappointment and concern over the neglect of Sanskrit education in the region.

They emphasized the significance of Sanskrit as a vital part of India's cultural heritage and its importance in preserving the region's rich history and traditions. Rannik Sharma, Ph.D scholar urged the Divisional Commissioner to take immediate action to address the issue, requesting the inclusion of Sanskrit subject posts in the notification.

"We expect a prompt resolution to this

matter within a stipulated time frame of 4 days. If our demands are not met within this timeframe, we will be forced to take further action, including organizing protests and rallies," Rannik said and added, "We hope that the administration will take our demands seriously and work towards finding a solution to this pressing issue. The future of Sanskrit education in Jammu & Kashmir depends on it."