

Educational institutions are key to a self-reliant Nation: Yudhvir Sethi

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: MLA Jammu East, Yudhvir Sethi, today visited Government Higher Secondary School, Jullaka Mohalla, Ward No. 2, where he attended a special programme organised under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat and 150 Years of Vande Mataram initiatives.

The Principal of the School, Rattan Lal Sharma along with faculty members and students extended a warm welcome to the MLA, acknowledging his continued support for academic and infrastructural growth in the constituency.

East Mandal President Adarsh Jathiar, Mahila Morch District President Anuradha Sharma, Ward Sanyojak Ajesh Sharma, Preeti Sharma, Romesh Gupta, Ravindet Baniya, Faiz Sheikh, Ram Krishan Bakshi, Feroz Khan, Sneha Sharma, Shakuntla Nanda, Ruhi Gupta and Sham Sunder Sharma were also present on the occasion.



MLA Jammu East, Yudhvir Sethi with faculty and others during visit to GHSS Jullaka Mohalla.

Addressing the gathering, MLA Yudhvir Sethi highlighted the significance of Aatmanirbhar Bharat in shaping a confident and capable generation.

"Our youth hold immense potential, and programmes like these help them realise their abilities. Strengthening our educational institutions is a key step in building a self-reliant nation," he said.

He encouraged students to focus on skill enhancement, innovative thinking and active participation in nation-building efforts. He also praised the efforts of the

school staff for their dedication in nurturing young learners.

Yudhvir Sethi praised the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, stating that the Modi government has given a new direction to the nation through its vision of self-reliance.

He said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision goes beyond schemes-it is rooted in empowering every citizen. Today, India is witnessing unprecedented progress in every sector, whether it is education, technology, skill development or employ-

ment."

During the visit, the MLA interacted extensively with teachers and students, listening patiently to their issues and suggestions. The concerns raised ranged from infrastructure. Responding to them, Yudhvir Sethi assured timely action and emphasized that improving educational standards remains one of his top priorities.

"Whatever issues you have highlighted will be addressed on priority. Ensuring a better academic environment for students is

our shared responsibility," he assured.

Expressing gratitude to the MLA, the Principal said that the presence of MLA Yudhvir Sethi was highly encouraging for both students and staff, as it reflected the MLA's commitment toward strengthening educational institutions.

The Principal highlighted the school's continuous efforts to promote quality learning, skill development and cultural values among students.

He added that Centre Govt's initiatives like Aatmanirbhar Bharat and the commemoration of 150 Years of Vande Mataram provide students with meaningful exposure and help build confidence, discipline and a sense of national pride.

Rattan Lal Sharma assured that the school would keep working toward academic excellence and holistic development with the support of the administration and community.

Chairman DLSA Jammu visit of District Jail Amphalla, reviews prisoners' conditions, assess facilities



Chairman DLSA, R.N Wattal interacting with Jial inmate.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: R.N Wattal, Chairman District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) (Pr. Distt. & Sessions Judge) Jammu and Maleeka Sharma, Secretary DLSA Jammu along with Anil Sharma, Chief Legal Aid Defense Counsel Jammu visited District Jail Amphalla, Jammu to review the conditions of prisoners and assess jail facilities provided to the inmates.

Dharminder Katoch, Superintendent of District Jail Amphalla Jammu was also present during the visit.

During the visit, the dignitaries inspected various sections of the jail, including

the barracks, kitchen, medical unit, vocational training centers, and legal aid clinic. Detailed interactions were held with jail authorities, staff, and inmates to assess living conditions, healthcare facilities, sanitation, and the availability of legal aid to undertrial prisoners.

The Chairman emphasized the importance of ensuring speedy trials and effective implementation of legal aid schemes for inmates who lack proper legal representation. The team also took note of grievances raised by inmates and assured appropriate follow-up through the concerned authorities.

The jail administration

briefed the visiting dignitaries about ongoing welfare programs, skill development initiatives, and measures taken for inmate rehabilitation and reintegration into society. The Chairman appreciated the efforts of the jail staff and encouraged continued coordination between the prison authorities and the DLSA to uphold human rights and improve correctional facilities.

The visit concluded with directions to take corrective steps wherever necessary and to ensure that all inmates receive proper legal assistance and humane treatment in accordance with law.

NAUP protests against admission process at Vaishno Devi medical institute

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The National Awami United Party (NAUP) has registered a protest over the admission list of the newly established Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Institute of Medical Excellence (SMVDIME) after 42 Muslim students were selected in the first MBBS batch of 50 for the 2025-26 academic session.

The issue surfaced shortly after the institute released its maiden seat-allocation list, prompting questions from various groups regarding the transparency of the admission process.

NAUP senior leader Shikha Bandral said the matter required immediate



scrutiny, noting that institutions built from the offerings of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi pilgrims must function in accordance with the Shrine's ethos. She called for reforms in the Shrine Board Act and the University Act to prevent

similar controversies in the future.

The NAUP has urged the administration to conduct a fresh verification of the admission process and clearly outline the criteria used for seat allotment to restore public confidence.

NOPRUF calls for restoration of Old Pension Scheme

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The National Old Pension Restoration United Front (NOPRUF) organized a landmark one-day convention at Tagore Hall, Srinagar, renewing the call to restore the Old Pension Scheme (OPS). The event saw spirited participation from employees across departments and a wide range of prominent trade union leaders, reinforcing a united resolve to secure government workers' financial future.

B. P. Singh Rawat, National President of NOPRUF, presided as Chief Guest. The gathering was graced by distinguished guests including Jeelani Naik (President, JKADCS [Ministerial Federation]/Chief

Spokesperson, NOPRUF J&K), Ramesh Sanga (Incharge South Zone NOPRUF), and Rajesh Sharma (President, NOPRUF J&K). In his keynote, Rawat described the Old Pension Scheme as the "backbone of financial security post retirement," highlighting its role in providing fixed, stable benefits as compared to the market-based National Pension Scheme (NPS).

He called the restoration of OPS a moral responsibility to all public service employees.

Rajesh Sharma urged greater unity among the UT's trade unions, appealing particularly to employees under NPS to lead the movement, as OPS restoration was a mission for all.

Jeelani Naik also called upon the Prime Minister to uphold "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas" by reinstating OPS and thanked the Chief Minister for working towards OPS as per the party manifesto.

Numerous leaders addressed or attended the event, including: Sakoon Manir Wani, UT General Secretary (NOPRUF), Zaheer Younus, Publicity Secretary JK UT (NOPRUF), Binny Tandon, Provincial President Kashmir (NOPRUF), S. Gurmeet Singh, Provincial President JKADCS (Ministerial Federation)/Provincial Spokesperson Jammu (NOPRUF), Sachin Tickoo, President Jammu & Kashmir

Electrical Engineering Graduates Association/Convener JK Power Employees and Engineering Coordination Committee, Khaleed Rafeeq Bhat, Chairman JKRETFE, Sanjay Koul, President All Minority Employees Association Kashmir, Basharat Saleem, Chairman SEN-TEF JKUT, Abu Huda, President MTS Association, Gazi Abdul Aziz, Ex Chairman JKT-JAC, Mohd. Yaseen Bhat, President JKDEA Kashmir, Mr. Farooq Mattoo, Senior Leader JKPDD, Imtiyaz Ahmad Lone, Provincial President ATA, Muzaffer Masroor Shah, Senior Trade Union Leader, Kamal Chandpuri, District President

Srinagar (NOPRUF), Jaseem Hussain Mir, District President (NOPRUF), Sajad Khan, District President Ganderbal, Latif Nazki, District President Kupwara, Sadarat Hussain, District President Baramulla, Nazir Ahamed, District Vice President Kupwara, G.R. Wani, District Organizer Kupwara, Nasir, Tehsil President Karna.

The convention concluded with a firm resolve to escalate the movement for OPS restoration, asserting it as fundamental to employees' rights and welfare.

Rajesh Sharma declared, "The Old Pension Scheme is a cornerstone of dignified retirement, and we will continue our fight until it is restored."

North Zone YUVA PEDICON 2025 concludes at SMGS Hospital

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Department of Pediatrics, SMGS hospital, Government Medical College Jammu in collaboration with Indian Academy of Pediatrics (IAP) Jammu Branch conducted North Zone YUVA PEDICON 2025 from 21st to 23rd November 2025 at SMGS Hospital, here.

On 21st November, a workshop on Pediatric Echocardiography was conducted at GMC Udhampur under the supervision of Dr Deepak Gupta, HOD Pediatrics GMC Udhampur.

The main conference commenced on 22nd November morning with energizing sports events, in which delegates enthusiastically participated. This spirited start set a positive tone for the entire conference, promoting camaraderie, wellness, and motivation among delegates.

A grand inaugural ceremony was graced by Dr. Vasant Khalatkar, National President, Indian Academy of Pediatrics 2025, as the Chief Guest.

In his address, Dr. Khalatkar encouraged young pediatricians to pursue excellence backed by knowledge, ethics, and innovation.

He also emphasized the



importance of IAP's ongoing national initiatives, including impactful campaigns such as 'Bye Bye Anemia', aimed to raise awareness and strengthen preventive measures against anemia in children.

One of the key highlights of the conference was the bestowal of Lifetime Achievement Awards to three distinguished pediatricians for their exemplary contributions to the field of child health: Prof. Dr. Rekha Harish, Former HOD, Department of Pediatrics, SMGS Hospital, GMC Jammu, Prof. Dr. G. S. Saini Former HOD, Department of Pediatrics, SMGS Hospital, GMC Jammu, and Prof. Dr. Ravinder K. Gupta, HOD, Department of Pediatrics, ASCOMS, Jammu.

Their decades of service, commitment, and leadership in pediatrics were acknowledged with great

respect and admiration.

The gathering was also honoured by the presence of Guests of Honour namely Prof. Dr. Ashutosh Gupta, Principal, GMC Jammu, Prof. Dr. Harish K. Pemde Vice President North Zone IAP, Dr. Dara Singh, Medical Superintendent, SMGS Hospital, and Prof. Dr. Ashok K. Gupta, former HOD Pediatrics, GMC Jammu.

During the ceremony, Dr. Harish K. Pemde extended thanks to Dr. Khalatkar for initiating the concept of YUVA PEDICON and for motivating young pediatricians to take leadership roles in academic initiatives.

Dr. Anuj Bhati, Organising Chairperson, welcomed all delegates with a warm and heartfelt address, setting the stage for two days of academic sessions, discussions, and interactive learning.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Sanjeev K. Digra, Professor & Head, Department of Pediatrics, thanked Dr. Vasant Khalatkar and Dr. Harish K Pemde for giving this opportunity to Yuvateam of IAP Jammu to organise NZ- YUVA PEDICON at Jammu.

He praised the collaborative efforts of Dr. Anuj Bhati, Dr. Surjit Kumar, and the entire Organising Committee for successfully bringing together a conference that beautifully blended academics, culture, and sports to inspire overall growth and enthusiasm.

The valedictory ceremony was graced by Dr. Suraj Gupte as the Chief Guest and Dr S S Slathia as Guest of honour. In his address, Dr Gupte applauded the efforts of Dr. Sanjeev Digra, Dr. Anuj Bhati, Dr. Surjit Kumar and their team for successfully organising a conference that truly embodied the spirit of YUVA PEDICON-balancing knowledge with culture, recreation, and teamwork.

During the conference, deliberation were done on current topics on child health in form of seminars, panel discussions and poster presentations by the young pediatric Faculty and delegates from all over the North India including Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Uttarakhand and Delhi.

The event concluded with a sincere vote of thanks delivered by Dr. Surjit Kumar, Chief Organising Secretary.

Dr. Navneet Kaur, an eminent Social Reformer, lauded the YUVA PEDICON organisers and stated, "It is a call to action for more such initiatives that combine professional excellence with social responsibility".

DHSJ organises workshop on Bio-Medical Waste Management

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Directorate of Health Services Jammu (DHSJ) on Monday organised a Skill Enhancement Workshop on Bio-Medical Waste Management at its Conference Hall to promote safe waste handling practices across the Jammu Division.

The programme witnessed participation of Nodal Officers, paramedical staff from different health institutions and was inaugurated by Assistant Director Health Education Bureau, Dr. Simmi.

In her inaugural address, Dr. Simmi highlighted the importance of proper segregation, storage, transportation, and disposal of biomedical waste in ensuring



patient and staff safety, as well as environmental protection.

A team of expert resource persons consisting of Dr. Anju Sidha Coordinator Pollution Control Board, Manglesh Kumar, Finance Head Anmol Health Care and Ayaz Ali conducted detailed sessions on Bio Medical Waste Management Act 2016, updated Bio-

Medical Waste Management Rules, segregation protocols and colour-coding, on-site handling and safe transportation, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), Common errors and corrective actions, documentation, reporting and compliance requirements.

The resource persons delivered practical demonstrations and engaged participants in interactive discussions to enhance hands-on understanding. They emphasized adherence to regulatory norms and the need for continuous monitoring to ensure compliance at all health facilities. At the end, certificates of participation were given to all the participants by Director Health Services Jammu.

Aviation Safety Awareness Week inaugurated at Jammu Airport



■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Aviation Safety Awareness Week 2025 was formally inaugurated on Monday at Jammu Airport by Devender Yadav, Airport Director, who commenced the event by lighting the traditional lamp, symbolizing the beginning of a week dedicated to reinforcing a strong aviation safety culture.

The Airports Authority of India (AAI) is observing Aviation Safety Awareness Week from 24th to 28th November 2025 across all airports and Air Traffic Service units nationwide. The initiative aims to enhance safety awareness, strengthen reporting culture, and promote proactive participation of all stakeholders in aviation safety management.

The Chairman of AAI, Vipin Kumar, in his message emphasized the importance of adopting a proactive and data-driven approach towards the implementation of the Safety Management System (SMS).

He highlighted that AAI has recorded significant improvements in operational safety,

including reduction in runway excursions and wildlife strikes in 2024, along with enhanced transparency in safety reporting.

Aligning with the DGCA's National Aviation Safety Plan (NASP) 2024-2028, AAI has undertaken major digital initiatives such as predictive analytics, real-time surveillance, and improved stakeholder coordination.

At Jammu Airport, a series of awareness programmes, safety workshops, training sessions and safety-related activities will be conducted throughout the week as per the directions of AAI Corporate Headquarters (CHQ). Employees and stakeholders will participate in sessions aimed at identifying hazards, addressing safety challenges, and reinforcing a positive safety culture.

Speaking at the inauguration, the Airport Director reiterated AAI's commitment to maintaining the highest standards of safety and urged all personnel to actively participate in the initiatives planned during the week to enhance operational safety and passenger confidence.

Ritika led Beti Bachao Beti Padhao J&KUT team meets BJP leadership

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Ritika Trehan, newly appointed Convener of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao J&K UT, along with her team, including Co-Convenors Indu Wazir and Sarojini Sharma, met with BJP J&K President Sat Sharma and Organizational General Secretary Ashok Koul on Monday.

The team sought the leadership's blessings and presented them with a shawl as a token of respect.

They expressed gratitude



for the trust placed in them and assured their commitment to working diligently towards their responsibilities in Jammu and

Kashmir, following the guidelines and new designations entrusted to them.

During the meeting, Ritika Trehan highlighted

the key objectives of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao initiative and discussed ways to strengthen the movement in the region.

She emphasized on the importance of women's empowerment and girls' education, and assured that the team will work tirelessly to promote these values.

Sat Sharma appreciated the team's enthusiasm and commitment, and assured them of the party's full support. He emphasized on the need to work collectively to

promote the welfare of women and girls in the region.

The meeting was also attended by other senior BJP leaders, who appreciated the team's efforts and assured their support.

The newly appointed team is confident that with the blessings and support of the leadership, they will be able to make a significant impact in promoting the cause of women's empowerment and girls' education in Jammu and Kashmir."