

Valedictory Programme of 'Yuvtarang'

Sinha calls upon youth to develop, create new values to forge developed society

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, on Wednesday, called for the Revolutionary Innovations from the younger generation. He asked the youth to work with dedication and commitment to change not just their own destiny but also shape a new destiny of the world.

"The focussed and fearless spirit that achieves the goal can only be found in youth. This fearlessness and the courage of youth is like rocket fuel that brings disruptive change for significant social transformation and rapid development of new tools of technology," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor was speaking at the Valedictory Programme of 'Yuvtarang', a cultural and literary festival organised by Cluster University of Jammu.

The Lieutenant Governor called upon youth to develop and create new values to forge the developed society. He said the fresh perspectives of youth and their innovativeness are powerful force for building a bright future.

"As catalysts for change, youth with moral courage, energy and conviction should turn the tide of history and prepare a new path for the coming generation," the



Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at valedictory programme of 'Yuvtarang', a cultural and literary festival being organised by Cluster University of Jammu.

Lieutenant Governor said, The Lieutenant Governor felicitated the students who cially curated documentary showcasing YUVTARANG's vibrant journey and a capti- the week. The Guest of Honour, Shantmanu (IAS),

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exelled in different categories.

Earlier, the programme commenced with the traditional lighting of the lamp, symbolizing knowledge and enlightenment, followed by a welcome address delivered by Prof. K.S. Chandrasekar, Vice Chancellor of Cluster University of Jammu. A spe-

rating cultural performance set an inspiring tone for the occasion.

Prof. D.S. Manhas, Dean Students Welfare, presented an insightful and detailed report on the festival, highlighting the spirited participation of students across a wide spectrum of cultural and literary events held over

Additional Chief Secretary, Higher Education Department, lauded the University for fostering creativity, innovation, and holistic development among students. He commended YUVTARANG for providing a dynamic platform that nurtures emerging talent and strengthens cultural bonds.

We don't believe in selling sentiments, but addressing to sentiments of people: Andrabi



Chairperson JKWB, Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi inaugurating Noor Khana and Sanitary Complex at Dastgir Sahib Shrine in Srinagar.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Newly constructed Noor Khana was inaugurated today by the Chairperson of Jammu & Kashmir Waqf Board Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi at the famous shrine of Peer Dastgir Sahib at Khanyar in Srinagar.

She was accompanied by the Board members Dr Ghulam Nabi Haleem, Syed Mohammad Hussain Haqqani, Executive Magistrate of the Board Ishfaq Mohiuddin and the Executive Engineer Qazi Mushtaq and others.

Dr Andrabi also inaugurated Ladies Sanitary Complex also on the occasion. Both the infrastructural projects were completed by the Board within the allocated time frame.

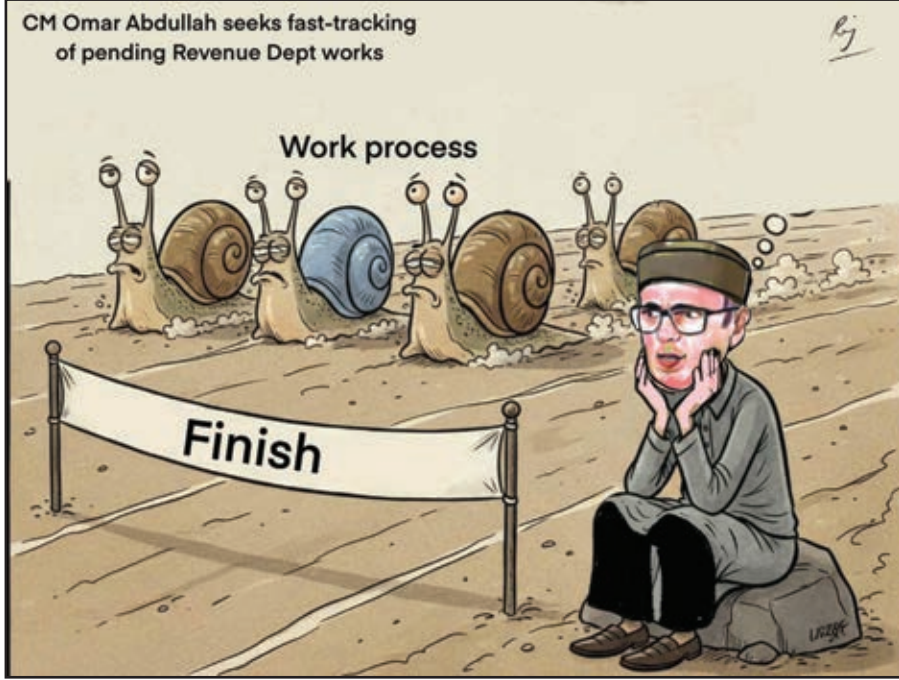
Addressing a gathering on the occasion, Waqf Chairperson said that the work done by us during the past three years has set a higher standard for us too and public expectations have increased manifold

A special felicitation ceremony was held to honour distinguished dignitaries, including Shantmanu (IAS), Dr. Gitanjali Andotra, Principal, PSPS GCW Gandhi Nagar, Dr. Rajinder Singh, Former Principal, SPMR College of Commerce, and Brigadier Anil Gupta, Member, JKCA.

The Prize Distribution Ceremony witnessed GCW Gandhi Nagar lifting the prestigious Rolling Trophy of YUVTARANG 2025, while Govt. MAM College secured the Runner-up Trophy, earning loud applause from the audience.

The event was attended by senior Officers of the Higher Education Department, Registrar, Dean Academic Affairs, Controller of Examinations, Deans of CIUJ, Principals and staff of Constituent Colleges, Directors, members of the DSW team, along with enthusiastic students and winners. The ceremony concluded with a heartfelt Vote Of Thanks proposed by Dr. Revika Arora, followed by the National Anthem. The event was seamlessly anchored by Sugandha Mahajan.

Senior officials, heads of educational institutions, teachers and students in large attended the valedictory programme.



Ladakh must prepare for climate challenges with strong watershed systems: LG

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

LEH: The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, on Wednesday launched the State Level Watershed Mahotsav under the Watershed Development Component-Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC-PMKSY) 2.0 at the DC Conference Hall, Leh. The event underscored the importance of community participation, sustainable water management and long-term ecological balance in Ladakh's cold-arid Himalayan region.

The programme aims to strengthen water conservation, improve irrigation facilities and optimise land use to enhance agricultural productivity in drought-prone and desert areas. Marking National Constitution Day, the Lt Governor also administered the Constitution Day pledge, reaffirming collective commitment to national integrity and constitutional values.

Addressing the gathering, Kavinder Gupta highlighted the transformative role of watershed-based planning for Ladakh's development. Given Ladakh's fragile geography characterised by glaciers, snowmelt-fed water systems and minimal rainfall, he stressed that watershed development offers a reliable model for water security, climate-resilient agriculture and livelihood enhancement.

He noted that the Mahotsav symbolises a jan-andolan, driven by active community involvement rather than merely a government programme. The Lt Governor appreciated



LG Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta launching State Level Watershed Mahotsav.

the enthusiastic participation of farmers, women self-help groups, youth volunteers, PRI members and cultural groups. He encouraged their continued involvement through Shramdaan, plantation drives, rejuvenation of traditional water sources and maintenance of watershed assets. Community-led decision-making in site selection, design feedback and future upkeep, he said, ensures long-term sustainability.

Kavinder Gupta also reiterated the vision of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who emphasises that water conservation must become a people's movement. He stated that initiatives such as Catch the Rain, Amrit Sarovar Mission, Jal Jeevan Mission and PMKSY reflect this national commitment, and affirmed Ladakh's dedication to advancing water-secure villages and balanced ecology.

Reaffirming the UT Administration's resolve, he announced an integrated model combining PMKSY, MGNREGA and Rural Development programmes to strengthen water harvesting

structures, expand irrigation capacity and reduce soil erosion. He added that Ladakh will continue to work toward doubling farmers' income under WDC-PMKSY 3.0.

He further stated that youth-focused activities-awareness rallies, expert sessions, technical demonstrations, Pani ki Pathshala and plantation drives-will deepen environmental responsibility among young residents.

Earlier, RDD Secretary Shanshanka Ala, informed that WDC-PMKSY 2.0 will conclude in 2026, followed by a more locally adaptive WDC-PMKSY 3.0. State Coordinator Shahnaz shared that 11 watershed projects-six in Leh and five in Kargil-are underway, along with 36 micro-watershed projects focusing on greenhouses, reservoir tanks, percolation tanks, irrigation khuls and spring-spring development.

The event was attended by DC Leh Romil Singh Donk, ADDC Leh Sonam Nurboo, ADC Leh Ghulam Mohd, departmental heads, BDOs, community representatives and watershed members.

DIPR commemorates Constitution Day; Dir Information leads celebrations

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Director Information, Nitish Rajora on Wednesday led the celebrations of Constitution Day at Directorate of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) by reading out the Preamble of the Constitution at Conference Hall of Media Complex here.

Joint Director Information Headquarters, Dr. Zahoor Ahmad; Joint Director Information Jammu, Deepak Dubey; Deputy Director PR/AV, Javid Ahmad Rather; Deputy Director Information Jammu, Ashu Kumari; Administrative Officer, Renu Sharma; Accounts Officer; Information Officers and officials of the department also took part in the celebrations.

Speaking on the occasion, the Director underlined that the Constitution is the soul of our democracy and is the document of our National Pride. He added that by commemorating this day



we are acknowledging and paying glowing tributes to Founding Fathers of our Constitution.

The Director called upon the officers and officials of the department to rededicate themselves to uphold the values that express the soul of our Constitution like justice, liberty, equality and dignity.

Amend J&K Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji Shrine University Act 1999 to provide right of admission to believers of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi: BJP



BJP Chief Spokesperson Sr. Advocate Sunil Sethi talking to reporters.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) today addressed a press conference on the recent controversy surrounding the selection of 42 Muslim candidates in the medical college established and funded by the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji Shrine Board.

The briefing was addressed by BJP Chief Spokesperson Sr. Advocate Sunil Sethi, Sr. Advocate Abhinav Sharma, Advocate Ankur Sharma, and Zorawar Singh Jamwal, who also moderated and introduced the subject of the press conference.

Sr. Advocate Sunil Sethi cautioned against politicising or communalising the matter. He criticised Chief Minister Omar Abdullah for what he described as attempts to project the issue as a Hindu-Muslim conflict.

Sethi said the sensitivities associated with Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Ji Shrine, being a revered Hindu religious institution, must be respected. At the same time, he added that "the rights of the selected candidates can be protected through several available legal and administrative avenues," urging responsible handling of the situation.

Sr. Advocate Abhinav Sharma pointed to what he called inadequate publicity of the

admission process. According to him, limited dissemination of information deprived many meritorious Hindu students of an opportunity to opt for the college during counselling.

He alleged that Omar Abdullah was "playing to the galleries of a particular political constituency," and said that the former CM's remarks were politically motivated rather than aimed at constructive resolution.

Advocate Ankur Sharma strongly criticised Omar Abdullah for "mocking the sentiments of the Hindu community" by what he described as a "deriding and trivialising" response to the concerns raised.

Sharma argued that the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University Act, 1999 should be revisited by the legislature. He stated that the University and the upcoming medical college have their origins, funding, and institutional purpose rooted in the Hindu religious tradition, and therefore possess a distinct religious identity.

On that basis, he asserted that the Act could be amended by the competent authority to reflect and preserve this identity, including exploring legally viable provisions related to admissions consistent with the institution's founding purpose. He emphasised that any such consideration must be within the constitutional and statutory framework. He slammed Omar Abdullah for his statements justifying and rationalising terror and termed him a terror sympathiser.

BJP spokesperson Zorawar Singh Jamwal concluded the press conference by challenging what he called Omar Abdullah's "bluff" on the issue. Jamwal criticised the former Chief Minister's attacks on the Leader of Opposition, terming them baseless and politically motivated.

He said the BJP would continue to raise the concerns of the community while urging that the matter be approached with seriousness and sensitivity rather than politicisation.

CGPWA, IIPA hold SBI's DGM's lecture on DLC and services for pensioners

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: At a first ever interaction of pensioners and senior citizens with State Bank of India officers at an event at IIPA auditorium today, the Deputy general Manager, State Bank of India, Business & Development, J&K Module, Jayant Mani listed Bank's schemes for the convenience of pensioners and said that the SBI is serving over 44 lakh pensioners in the country through 18 Central Pension Processing Centres.

The Central Govt. Pensioners Welfare Association (CGPWA) and Indian Institute of Public Administration, J&K Regional Branch (IIPA JK RB) have jointly organised an awareness lecture for the benefit of pensioners and senior citizens. The function was presided over by the President, CGPWA Kuldeep Khoda. The Patron of IIPA J&K RB Dr Ashok Bhan was the Chief Guest while the Chairman of the IIPA J&K RB, B R Sharma was the

Guest of Honor.

Mani said that the SBI provides Doorstep Banking Services to Pensioners with special facilities for physically challenged ones. It also provides Non Home Branch Pension Loan for SPARSH Pensioners. All pensioners up to the age of 70 are covered by personal accident insurance of Rs 30 lakh on request. He said that the Bank has a special scheme for Senior Citizens viz. SBI Patrons ke Saath under which an FDR with higher rate of interest for citizens of above 80 years. Another scheme for pensioners, Senior Citizen Saving Scheme, under which 8.20% rate of interest for deposits up to Rs 30 lakhs is available for retired civilian & retired defence personnel of the age of 55 to 60 years and 50 to 60 years respectively for five years, extendable in the block of another three years. He said that the SBI also provides Pension Loan up to Rs 5 lakhs at low interest rate of interest, with enhanced Loan



Patron of IIPA J&K RB Dr Ashok Bhan speaking at a SBI's DGM's lecture.

limit up to Rs 20 lakhs, adding that dreams never retire.

Talking about overall Bank's profile, Mani said that SBI serves over 52 cr. customers through 22,937 branches with global footprints in 36 countries with 244 overseas offices. The SBI has recorded digital transactions of 98 %. Its role in economic development can be assessed by the fact that it made advances of Rs 4163312 cr. with deposits touching Rs 53,82,190 Cr. It spends over Rs 600 cr. on CRS in a year to benefit the community through social initiatives.

Mani also spoke about the increasing Cyber frauds including Digital Arrest scams and cautioned the depositors against these crimes. He said that in the event of such crimes, people should immediately inform the concerned Branch and Cyber police besides registering the complaint at number 1930. He said that the people should only respond to Bank calls prefixed with 1600 which is safe.

Speaking on the occasion, Khoda complimented Mani for delivering a very useful lecture which will benefit the pension-

ers and senior citizens immensely. Most of the senior citizens are not aware of useful Govt and SBI schemes which Mani shared today with the audience of senior citizens. He also complimented the SBI for fulfilling social responsibility. He referred to the increasing incidents of cyber crimes and said that these are mostly occurring due to fear and greed. One has to remain alert and should not press any link or take calls from unknown numbers or click links.

Dr Ashok Bhan, in his address, said that the SBI rep-

resents excellence in monetary governance besides taking up community initiatives through CRS. Impressed upon creating a trust with customers, he gave his own example of having trust with SBI, and said that the Bank becomes a favorite institution with the entire family who remain loyal to it from one generation to another. He complimented SBI for being a partner in India's journey towards the chosen goal of Viksit Bharat.

Dr Bhan categorized the bank customers into four categories, based on use of digital

platforms. He described those who are born in the digital era and are very comfortable with digital banking operations while the second category is the one who are migrating from earlier systems to the new digital era. The third category is of the fence sitters who do not go deep into it and the fourth ones are those who are averse to use of digital facilities. He said that it is the responsibility of Banks to focus on the third and fourth categories of customers and motivate them to fall into the new digital era. In this context, he also called for bridging the urban rural divide in use of digital applications.

B R Sharma also lauded the SBI for leading the bank's digital journey in India and said that today's awareness lecture and interaction should be continued for the benefits of the pensioners and senior citizens. He said it is good that SBI is focusing on containing Cyber crimes in banks by creating

awareness among the customers.

Earlier, in the welcome address the General Secretary CGPWA, K B Jandial said that the SBI stands today as the nation's largest bank playing a pivotal role in the national economy displaying exemplary dedication for senior citizens and pensioners through technological innovations and commitments.

The Joint Secretary IIPA J&K RB, Prof Anil Gupta presented the formal vote of thanks and said that the engaging session of question answers proved that today's lecture was immensely useful. Jayant Mani was honoured by Kuldeep Khoda, Dr Bhan and BR Sharma.

Senior officers of SBI-Ajay Singh Kamli, C M Bhat, Deepak Bhat and Vimal Bajaj were among others who were also present and took part in the Question Answer session.