Spooktacular Halloween celebration held at Toddlers' World, JKPS Kunjwani

Glimpses of Halloween celebrations at Toddlers' World, JKPS Kunjwani on Friday.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The corridors of Toddlers' World, JK Public School, Kunjwani, were brimming with spooky delight and infectious laughter as the little ones celebrated Halloween with zest and zeal. The school premises were transformed into a land of ghosts, goblins, witches, and pumpkins - a perfect blend of fright and fun!

The day began with the tiny tots arriving in fascinating costumes - from cute pumpkins and friendly ghosts to fairies, superheroes, and even little vampires.

The school corridors were beautifully decorated with cobwebs, bats, balloons, and pumpkins, creating a perfect spooky atmosphere for the day. Various fun-filled activities such as "Trick or Treat," "Monster Freeze Dance," and "Craft-a-Spider" kept the young learners engaged and entertained throughout the event.

The little ones also enjoyed engaging in art and craft sessions, where they made spooky masks, paper bats, and pumpkin cut-outs under the guidance of their teachers. These activities were designed to promote fine motor skills, creativity, and collaborative learning in a joyful, festive atmosphere.

The day concluded with happy smiles, laughter, and a bag full of treats that made it a truly memorable Halloween celebration at Toddlers' World, JKPS Kunjwani.

GCOE Srinagar, Jammu commemorates 150 years of National Song 'Vande Mataram'

Faculty members during the event.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Government College of Education (GCOE) here on Friday organized a district level event to commemorate 150 years of the National Song "Vande Mataram," celebrating its historical, cultural, and patriotic significance.

Additional Chief Secretary, Higher Education, Shantmanu was Chief Guest on the occasion.

Director Colleges, Prof. Sheikh Aijaz Bashir; CEO Srinagar, SDM East, faculty members and large number of students were also present on the occasion.

The programme commenced with the mass singing of "Vande Mataram" led by the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, live streamed from the national event. This was followed by flag hoisting ceremony led by Additional Chief Secretary and singing of National Anthem thereby giving a dignified and patriotic start to the event.

After the flag hoisting, the Department of Music, Government College for Women, M.A. Road, Srinagar in collaboration with the cultural committee IASE presented a melodious rendition of "Vande Mataram." Their performance created a deeply emotional and patriotic atmosphere in the auditorium.

Addressing the gathering, ACS Shantmanu emphasized on the importance of civic responsibility, patriotism, and the role of education in Nation building. He appreciated the efforts of institution in organizing such a meaningful event that connects education with cultural heritage.

Speaking on the occasion, HoD History, Dr. Abdul Rashid Sheikh gave an insightful talk on the history and significance of "Vande Mataram." He traced its origin from Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's novel Anandamath (published in 1882), its role in the Indian freedom struggle, and its enduring relevance as a symbol of unity and patriotism. In her welcome address, Principal, Dr. Seema Naz highlighted the role of the institution for fostering unity, integrity, and spirit of patriotism among the teachers.

The Cultural Committee organized a patriotic song performance by Puran Bakshi and Muneer Shah (B. Ed 2nd Semester), showcasing India's rich musical and cultural traditions. The songs resonated with the spirit of patriotism and collective pride.

The gathering also witnessed the live broadcast of the Prime Minister's national address, as part of the nationwide commemoration programme. The Prime Minister's message focused on national unity, cultural pride, and the values embodied in "Vande Mataram." The address rekindled a sense of national pride and unity among the audience.

Government College of Education Jammu also celebrated the 150th anniversary of the iconic national song Vande Mataram, with great fervor and patriotism.

The celebration began with the mass singing of Vande Mataram, led by the Principal Dr. Jyoti Parihar, followed by teaching, non-teaching staff and students.

The collective rendition of the national song filled the air with patriotism and unity. This was followed by a live broadcast of the Prime Minister's address to the nation on the occasion of the 150th year of Vande Mataram.

The event was a grand success, with students and faculty members participating with great enthusiasm. The celebration concluded with a renewed sense of patriotism and a pledge to uphold the values of unity, integrity and national pride. The entire event was coordinated by NSS team members, Dr. Shubhra Jamwal, Prof. Roopa, Prof. Kiran, Prof. Deepali Kundal and Dr Ambica Kumari.

Satish reviews proposal for Single Window Digital System for Recruitment Rules in J&K Deptts

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a significant step towards promoting administrative efficiency and digital governance, Minister for Administrative Reforms, Inspections & Trainings (ARI & Trainings), Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Youth Services and Sports, IT, Science and Technology, Satish Sharma, on Friday chaired a high-level review meeting to assess the proposal for establishing a Single Window Digital System for framing and amending Recruitment Rules (RRs) across all government departments in Jammu and Kashmir.

Commissioner Secretary ARI & Trainings, Shabnum Kamili; other senior officers of ARI and Trainings department were present in the meeting.

Cabinet minister Satish Sharma chairing meeting in Jammu.

During the meeting, the Minister emphasized the importance of streamlining administrative procedures to ensure time-bound and transparent functioning of government departments. He said that the proposed digital platform would mark a major reform in recruitment, enabling faster decision-making and uniform policy implementation.

The Minister appreciated the efforts of the ARI & Trainings Department for conceptualizing the initiative and directed officers to expedite the design and rollout of the system in consultation with GAD, Finance, Law, and JKPSC, ensuring interdepartmental coordination and accountability at every stage.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister Sharma said, "This digital reform will significantly reduce administrative delays, bring transparency, and ensure uniform implementation of recruitment policies across all departments. The Single Window System will not only enhance efficiency but also strengthen accountability through real-time monitoring and public accessibility."

He further directed that the system be integrated with the existing E-Office framework, besides capacity-building initiatives for departmental nodal officers be organised to ensure smooth transition and effective implementation.

The Minister also stressed the importance of introducing a public reference view to allow citizens and stakeholders to access approved Recruitment Rules online, reinforcing the government's commitment to transparent and citizen-centric governance.

Pertinently, the new initiative will ensure uniform recruitment policy across all departments, substantial reduction in paperwork and file movement with enhanced transparency through online monitoring, quicker processing and filling of vacant posts, and improved coordination between departments and agencies.

The Single Window Digital System aims to replace the existing multi-tiered and paper-based process with a unified online mechanism. The system will have Online Portal & Dashboard Secure departmental logins with standardized digital templates for proposals, simultaneous online routing to ARI & Trainings, Finance, Law, GAD, and JKPSC, centralized archive of all approved Recruitment Rules, amendments, and notifications, real-time updates through SMS/email and escalation mechanisms for delays, real-time monitoring of pendency and performance indicators, strong data protection and audit mechanisms and defined Timelines for faster approvals.

Under the proposed model intending departments will finalize and submit proposals within 30 days. ARI & Trainings, Finance, Law, GAD, JKPSC, and the Standing Committee will process cases within 10 days each and final approval by the General Administration Department (GAD) will be ensured in a time-bound manner.

Secy RDD&PR reviews performance under UT-CAPEX, SASCI

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Secretary, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (RDD&PR), Mohammad Aijaz Asad, on Friday chaired a high-level meeting to review the progress under UT-CAPEX, Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI), and implementation status of PM-SHRI and Samagra Shiksha schemes under RDD.

Secretary, RDD&PR Mohammad Aijaz Asad chairing meeting.

The meeting was attended by DG Rural Sanitation, Anu Malhotra; Mission Director NRLM, Shubhra Sharma; Directors RDD Kashmir and Jammu, Shabir Hussain Bhat and Shahnaz Akhtar; Director Panchayati Raj, Sham Lal; Chief Engineer PWD (R&B) for SASCI projects; Director Finance, Umar Khan; Joint Director Planning, Kamal Kumar Sharma; Additional Secretary, Waseem Raja; Superintending Engineers (REW), ACDs, ACPs, and Executive Engineers of all districts.

The Secretary also reviewed the on-boarding of schemes onto the SNA-SPARSH platform to ensure transparent and efficient management of funds. During the review, the Secretary emphasized the urgent adoption of SNA-SPARSH platform and obtaining of the 'Mother Sanction' for each scheme, terming it crucial for authorizing expenditures and ensuring seamless implementation on the ground. He directed all Scheme Heads to expedite on-boarding and streamline fund flow to avoid delays.

Reviewing UT-CAPEX works, the Secretary instructed that the pace of execution be accelerated with a district-wise review mechanism to bridge gaps between allocations and physical achievements. He laid special emphasis on infrastructure development for PRIs, BDCs, and DDCs, underscoring their vital role in strengthening grassroots governance and enhancing service delivery.

Under SASCI, it was informed that loan assistance of ₹21.10 crore has been sanctioned for RDD projects. The Secretary reiterated the Finance Department's directions mandating utilization of 75% of funds by December 2025, surrender of non-viable projects for reallocation. He directed HoDs to personally monitor SASCI projects and ensure timely completion of all sanctioned works.

While reviewing PM-SHRI and Samagra Shiksha being executed by Rural Engineering Wing, the Secretary directed officials to expedite execution, strengthen monitoring, and ensure timely utilization of funds.

He also called for the establishment of monthly progress reporting mechanism to ensure that all schemes deliver tangible and timely results, benefiting communities, schools, and students across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Secretary reiterated Administration's commitment to efficient public spending, transparency in financial management, and time-bound completion of developmental works to achieve sustainable and inclusive growth across the Union Territory.