

CM inaugurates Winter Carnival Festival at Pahalgam Club

STATE TIMES NEWS
ANANTNAG: In a grand celebration of Jammu and Kashmir's rich cultural heritage, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah inaugurated Winter Carnival at Pahalgam this evening.

The event, which draws attention to the picturesque beauty of the region and its vibrant cultural landscape, was held in the presence of several dignitaries, including Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Chowdhary, former J&K Chief Minister Dr. Farooq Abdullah, Advisor to CM Nasir Aslam Wani and Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Pahalgam Altaf Ahmad Wani. The evening's proceedings began with an electrifying musical performance by the renowned artist Abha Hanjura, whose mesmerizing tunes and captivating stage presence brought the crowd to life.

The musical acts, combined with traditional cultural performances, set the tone for an unforgettable carnival experience.

The vibrant atmosphere of the event, coupled with the awe-inspiring surroundings of Pahalgam, created a mag-



Chief Minister Omar Abdullah after inaugurating Winter Carnival at Pahalgam on Thursday.

ical experience for both the large gathering of tourists and locals who had gathered to witness the festivities.

The Winter Carnival is not only a celebration of the region's natural beauty but also a vital platform for showcasing the talent of local artists and performers.

This year's edition promises to highlight the region's unique cultural heritage, including traditional music, dance, handicrafts, and culinary delights.

By offering a stage for local talent, the carnival aims to promote Jammu and Kashmir's rich cultural fabric to a wider audience, while also giving local artisans the chance to showcase their

work and foster economic growth in the region.

Speaking at the inauguration, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah emphasized the importance of such events in bolstering the tourism industry in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Pahalgam is a treasure trove of natural beauty, and through events like the Winter Carnival, we aim to position it as a key tourist destination that not only attracts visitors for its scenic landscapes but also provides them with an authentic cultural experience," he said.

The Winter Carnival's timing is perfect for the ongoing winter season, which attracts tourists from across the country and abroad. The

event has been designed to enhance the appeal of Pahalgam, showcasing its capabilities as a year-round tourist hub.

As more visitors flock to the region, local businesses, including hotels, restaurants, and souvenir shops, are likely to experience a boost, contributing to the local economy.

"We are committed to ensuring that Pahalgam and other tourist spots in the region continue to grow as world-class destinations. The Winter Carnival not only provides entertainment and cultural enrichment but also plays an important role in positioning our region as a major player on the global

tourism map," added Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Chowdhary.

With its successful inauguration, the Winter Carnival is expected to attract an even larger turnout in the coming days.

The carnival promises to be a key event on the calendar for both local residents and tourists alike, creating a festive environment in Pahalgam that will run through the winter season.

The anticipated influx of visitors will contribute significantly to the region's tourism potential, especially as the festival provides a unique opportunity to experience Jammu and Kashmir's winter charm in full display.

In addition to the ongoing musical performances, the event will feature a variety of other attractions, including winter sports activities, food stalls offering traditional Kashmiri cuisine, and craft exhibitions that highlight the region's artisanal excellence.

The carnival is set to continue over the next several days, and visitors from all over the world are encouraged to experience the festivities and explore the beauty of Pahalgam and its surroundings.

BJP committed to fulfilling aspirations of common masses: Yudhvir

Listens to public grievances at Pt Prem Nath Dogra Bhawan

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: The people of Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory hold high expectations from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which is steadfast in its commitment to the agenda of Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas and delivering governance directly to the people.

This was emphasized by Yudhvir Sethi, BJP leader and MLA East Constituency, during a public grievances camp held at Pt Prem Nath Dogra Bhawan, Kacchi Chawni, Jammu.

The camp witnessed a significant turnout of individuals and deputations eager to present their issues to the BJP leadership.

Citizens raised concerns related to essential services like ration, education, pensions, water supply, electricity, roads, and other developmental matters. Personal grievances were also brought forward, seeking redress from the BJP leaders present.

Yudhvir Sethi actively engaged with the public, addressing many issues on



MLA East Constituency, Yudhvir Sethi listening to issues at public grievances camp.

the spot by contacting the concerned authorities directly. He assured the gathering that unresolved matters would be pursued diligently to ensure swift resolutions.

"The BJP has earned the trust of the people through its unwavering dedication to addressing public concerns. The large number of visitors to our office reflects their faith in the party's capability to resolve issues," Sethi stated. He further highlighted the party's sincere efforts to bridge the gap between the administration and the public, ensuring that people's genuine grievances are addressed effectively.

Yudhvir Sethi reaffirmed the BJP's commitment to resolving day-to-day challenges faced by the people, particularly in Jammu City. He underscored that the public grievance camps are a vital platform to connect with the masses and provide solutions to their problems, reinforcing the party's mission of inclusive development and responsive governance.

Among others present included Ex Corporator Anil Masson, Arun Sethi, Chaksu Kapoor and others.

Sakeena conducts surprise inspection of LD Hospital, reviews facilities

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Ito, on Thursday conducted surprise inspection of LD Hospital to review healthcare facilities being extended to the patients there.

The Minister visited various sections of the hospital including emergency ward, outpatient department (OPD), inpatient wards, operation theatres, NICU and PICU wards and reviewed their functioning.

Interacting with the doctors and paramedics on the occasion, Sakeena Ito impressed upon them for timely medical intervention of referral patients owing to criticality of expecting mothers. She also stressed for optimal utilisation of available resources at this premiere maternity health facility to ensure that patients receive best possible care.

"It is crucial for healthcare facilities to operate with highest standards of medical care and hygiene, especially in government hospitals that serve the



Health Minister, Sakeena Ito conducting surprise inspection of LD Hospital.

majority of population", Sakeena maintained. She added "our government is committed to ensure that medical services are efficient, well-managed and patient-centric across all peripheral and tertiary care hospitals as well as other institutions.

During the inspection, the Minister also took note of several critical areas where improvements are needed. She assured the hospital administration that immediate corrective measures would be taken up to address these issues.

Sakeena Ito also interacted with the patients and their attendants to seek

feedback on the condition of facilities and medical care being provided at the facility. She assured them the present government led by Omar Abdullah is determined to strengthen the healthcare system in the region.

CS reviews progress on construction of highways across J&K

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, on Thursday convened a meeting with NHAI, NHIDCL, Beacon and Project SAM-PARK to review progress on construction of different highways across all districts of Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary, APD, Commissioner Secretary, Forest Department, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu/Kashmir, Secretary, R&B, Deputy Commissioners, Chief Engineers of PWD besides other concerned officers.

The Chief Secretary impressed upon the project implementing agencies to expedite progress on the ongoing works so that the fixed deadlines are met

without any fail. He observed that the repeated slippage in timelines for completion of these projects should be avoided as it questions the professional standards of the organisation.

The Chief Secretary directed the Secretary PWD and concerned divisional administrations to take monthly assessment of these projects besides visiting the sites to remove any bottlenecks hampering their progress. He also urged them to extend full cooperation to the concerned executing agencies for speedy completion of these projects.

Dulloo also had a project wise appraisal of progress achieved, so far, in each of the work. He enquired about the expected date of

completion of work on each phase of these projects along with the current status of physical progress registered in each of them.

Some of the significant projects of NHAI reviewed during the meeting included different phases of Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway, remaining work on the tunnel on Ring Road Jammu, tunnels and viaducts on Udhampur-Ramban section including Dalwas and Cafeteria Morh.

The Chief Secretary also assessed progress on Marog to Digdol tunnel and Digdol to Khuni-Nallah tunnels under the Ramban-Banihal section of NH-44. In addition, opening of Banihal Bypass besides ongoing work on different phases of Ring Road Srinagar were

discussed in detail. The concerned divisional and district administrations were asked to assist the construction company in extending the working hours so that the work on this prestigious projects progresses on expected lines.

The road projects of NHIDCL, reviewed during the meeting, included progress on completion of Zojila Tunnel, Z-Morh Tunnel, Jammu-Akhnoor Road, Chenani-Sudhmahadev Road, Gohakhellani, Khellani-Khanabal Highways and Singhpoora-Vailoo tunnel which is part of this project.

The projects being executed by BRO under project Beacon and Sampark which came up for discussion included Akhnoor-

Poonch Highway, Srinagar-Baramulla-Uri Highway, Sangrama flyover, Pattanaand Baramulla Bypass, Raffiabad-Kupwara-Trehgam Highway, Khanabal-Pahalgam Road, Rajouri-Thanamandi-Surankot Roads besides others. Various projects of R&B including construction of Flyovers at Bemina and Sanat Nagar; Rehabilitation of Chanapora and Tengpora bridges Srinagar-Budgam-Pulwama-Shopian-Kulgam-Qazigund Highway (NH-444), construction of by-passes for three main towns of Pulwama, Kulgam and Shopian besides other road safety and strengthening works currently going on in different parts of the UT were also reviewed in the meeting.

DC Udhampur pays tribute to martyr Raj Kumar

STATE TIMES NEWS
UDHAMPUR: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Saloni Rai paid heartfelt tributes to Martyr Raj Kumar Shaurya Chakra Awardee on the solemn occasion of his martyrdom anniversary.

The Shradhanjali ceremony was organized at the Police Martyr Memorial, Domail Chowk, Udhampur, to honor the supreme sacrifice of the brave heart who laid down his life in service to the nation on January 2, 2004.

During the ceremony, DC along with the parents of the martyr offered floral tributes and lit candles to commemorate his valiant contribution. DC lauded the supreme sacrifice made by Martyr Raj Kumar, emphasizing that his valor and dedication continue to inspire generations. She reiterated the administration's commitment to ensuring the welfare of the families of martyrs and honoring their contributions to the nation.

Among others, Additional Deputy Commissioner Prem Singh, Additional Superintendent of Police Sandeep Bhat, CEO Municipality, Rajinder Digra DySP HQ, SHO Udhampur along with other officers were present to pay their respects.

In this regard, a meeting was chaired on Thursday by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat here at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner directed the officers to plan proactively and enhance preparedness in light of the snowfall forecast for the following week. He instructed officials to improve action plans so that people do not suffer during snowfall.

The DC stressed the need to prioritize snow clearance on major roads, link roads, inner lanes, and bylanes to ensure accessibility to public. Similarly, he timely measures to address water logging in low lying areas. He emphasized on full utilization of machinery and available resources to ensure prompt road clearance and restoration of connectivity.

Likewise, PDD and PHE authorities were asked to take all required measures to ensure uninterrupted supplies of water and power in the District.

The Mechanical Engineering Department was also given directions for prompt and swift measures for snow clearance.

The DC also stressed the



Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat chairing a meeting in Thursday.

In addition, the DC stressed the Officers of Health Department to maintain details of all pregnant ladies in the District particularly in far flung areas so that they do not face any difficulty during inclement weather.

Likewise, PDD and PHE authorities were asked to take all required measures to ensure uninterrupted supplies of water and power in the District.

The Mechanical Engineering Department was also given directions for prompt and swift measures for snow clearance.

The DC also stressed the

Officers to ensure utmost coordination and proper liaisoning with District Emergency Operation Centre/Winter Control Room.

He emphasized on round the clock operationalisation of the Control Room to address the winter related complaints of the public on fast track basis.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr Khalid Hussain Malik, Officers of R&B, SMC, PHE, PDD, Health, District Disaster Management Authority and other Departments.

Labour Department extends welfare measures for labourers: ALC Mohd Arif

STATE TIMES NEWS
POONCH: The Labour Department organized a press conference today, where Assistant Labour Commissioner (ALC) Mohd Arif outlined the department's commitment to the welfare of laborers and the various services available to them.

Speaking to the media, ALC Mohd Arif stated, "The Labour Department is here to listen to and address the grievances of laborers. Most laborers are already registered with us, and I encourage those who are not to apply for their labour cards at the earliest."

Highlighting the facilities available, he mentioned that laborers from far-flung areas who need accommodation can avail free lodging at the Labour Sarai. "The only requirement is a character certificate and a valid labour card," he added.

ALC Mohd Arif also dis-



Assistant Labour Commissioner Mohd Arif interacting with medal persons at Poonch.

ussed financial assistance for registered laborers who are sick or injured. "If any laborer provides a rest certificate from a doctor to the Labour Department, they are eligible to receive monthly assistance of ₹90,033. These services are exclusively for registered laborers, and we urge all laborers to register with the department to avail these benefits." The conference reinforced the Labour Department's focus on ensuring the welfare and well-being of laborers, particularly those

from remote areas, and stressed the importance of registration to access the full range of services provided by the department.

Verification of PDS beneficiaries database reviewed

STATE TIMES NEWS
PULWAMA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom, chaired a meeting for review and verification of beneficiaries enrolled in the Public Distribution System (PDS) database. During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the current status of the PDS database, ensuring the accuracy of records and identifying discrepancies, if any. He stressed the importance of streamlining the system to ensure that all deserving beneficiaries receive their entitlements under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) and other welfare schemes in alignment with the latest population projections as mandated by rules for inclusion of beneficiaries in existing households and exclusion as per the criteria laid down by rules. DC outlined a multi-tiered approach to verification, involving the District-Level Committee, the Tehsil-Level Committee and the Village-Level Committee.

These committees will work in coordination to thoroughly verify beneficiaries and weed out ineligible individuals, ensuring that only deserving citizens receive the benefits and inclusion of eligible left out members in the Households.

MLA Gulabgarh reviews development, governance scenario in Sub Division Dharmari

STATE TIMES NEWS
REASE: Member Legislative Assembly (MLA) Gulabgarh, Er. Khurshied Ahmed today chaired an introductory meeting with local administration here at Dakbanglow, Sub Division Dharmari.

The primary focus of the meeting was to enhance governance and accelerate service delivery for the public in Sub Division Dharmari.

The meeting saw the participation of key officials, including Tariq Aziz, SDM Dharmari, Tehsildar Thuroo, BDO Thuroo, XENS, PDD, PMGSY, PWD, DFO, ZEO, BMO, DAE, Livestock development officer, SDAO, HDO, VASO, Sheep Husbandry, TSO, Tehsil Social welfare officee, AEEs, JE, Bank Manager, and various sectoral officers.

MLA, Er. Khurshied Ahmed urged all departments to work in harmony, address public grievances promptly, and ensure the effective implementation of development projects. The participants pledged to strengthen coordination and uphold accountability to deliver better services to the people. This initiative marks a significant step towards improving governance and fostering development in the region.

SFCAC approves 23 new cases in Kishtwar

STATE TIMES NEWS
KISHTWAR: In a significant step towards ensuring welfare for orphaned children, District Magistrate (DM) Kishtwar, Rajesh Kumar Shavan chaired a meeting of the Sponsorship and Foster Care Approval Committee (SFCAC) today. The meeting focused on deliberations and approvals of new cases under the welfare schemes aimed at providing financial support to orphans.

The committee approved 23 new cases, taking the total number of beneficiaries under these schemes to 223, against a target of 201. The committee had earlier approved 200 cases following a meticulous verification process.

The focus of the discussion revolved around saturating the target and ensuring that no eligible child is left out of the benefits provided under these schemes.

The Sponsorship and Foster Care Schemes, implemented under the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS), aim to provide financial assistance to children in need of care and protection. The Sponsorship Scheme provides monetary support to families or guardians to ensure

proper upbringing of children, while the Foster Care Scheme allows children to live with foster families, ensuring a nurturing environment for their holistic development.

DM Kishtwar emphasized the importance of achieving 100% saturation of the target to extend the benefits of these schemes to all eligible orphans in the district. He directed the committee to ensure the inclusion of every orphan in Kishtwar under the schemes and instructed for robust verification to eliminate any discrepancies.

Besides the participants discussed strategies for effective implementation and evolving workable follow-up mechanisms for the schemes. The committee decided to streamline the application process further and ensure timely disbursement of benefits.

The meeting was attended by the District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO) Zubair Ahmed, Chairperson of the Child Welfare Committee (CWC), and other committee members. Representatives from stakeholder agencies and NGOs running orphanages in the district were also present.

Awareness program on cleanliness held in Doda town



STATE TIMES NEWS
DODA: The District Administration and Municipal Council Doda, under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh organised an awareness program to educate residents of Sadiqabad Mohalla, Ward No 8 about cleanliness and waste disposal. The program was attended by ACR Sunil Kumar Bhutyal; Tehsildar Dr Subuh Ahmed Shad; EO MC, Ravi Kumar along with sanitation workers, NGOs, and community members. The officials and NGOs actively interacted with the public, emphasizing the importance of maintaining cleanliness and proper waste disposal. Sanitation workers carried out cleaning drives, including clearing drains and other areas, setting a practical example for the residents.

During the interaction, officers and NGOs urged people not to throw garbage in drains or on roads. Instead, they encouraged residents to use dustbins within their homes and dispose of waste responsibly.

These committees will work in coordination to thoroughly verify beneficiaries and weed out ineligible individuals, ensuring that only deserving citizens receive the benefits and inclusion of eligible left out members in the Households.