

# Alumni Meet 2026 organized by CDOE, JU

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: The Centre for Distance and Online Education (CDOE), University of Jammu (JU), organized its first-ever Alumni Meet on Wednesday at the Brigadier Rajinder Singh Auditorium as part of the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Centre.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from distinguished alumni, faculty members and invited guests, reflecting the strong and enduring bond between the institution and its former learners.

The programme began with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp, symbolising knowledge and enlightenment, followed by a formal welcome through the presentation of potted plants. Prof. Pankaj K.



JU faculty felicitating Col. Virendra Kumar (Retd.), Vir Chakra awardee.

Srivastava, Director CDOE, welcomed the Chief Guest, Dr. Neeraj Sharma, Registrar, JU, and Col. Virendra Kumar (Retd.), Vir Chakra awardee and noted social activist. Dr. Hina Abrol, Associate Professor and Coordinator, Alumni Cell, CDOE, also felicitated Prof. Srivastava.

In his welcome address, Prof. Pankaj K. Srivastava highlighted the rich legacy of CDOE and its evolution over nearly five decades into a learner-centric hub of distance and online education. Emphasising lifelong association, he remarked, "Once a learner of CDOE, always a part of CDOE," and

announced steps to formally establish the CDOE Alumni Association with an elected body to strengthen alumni engagement.

Dr. Hina Abrol traced the Centre's journey and reiterated its commitment to inclusivity, flexibility and lifelong learning.

Sharing his experiences, Col. Virendra Kumar (Retd.) recalled his student days at CDOE with nostalgia and stressed the importance of giving back to society. Dr. Manoj Bhagat, Principal, Regional Institute of Health and Family Welfare, Nagrota, spoke on the role of education in strengthening healthcare systems and promoting social responsibility.

Alumni Roma Devi, Vice Principal, KC International School, and Pawan Kapur,

Chartered Accountant, also shared their experiences and expressed gratitude to CDOE for shaping their professional journeys.

Chief Guest Dr. Neeraj Sharma appreciated the initiative and acknowledged the achievements of CDOE alumni. He stated that CDOE students are at par with regular students in academic and professional competence and highlighted the growing role of digitalisation in education.

The programme included felicitation of distinguished alumni, cultural performances by students, and concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Rajber Singh Sodhi. The event successfully strengthened alumni ties and opened avenues for future collaboration and growth.

# JPDCL undertakes major drive against illegal agricultural power usage, saves substantial energy, revenue

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: The Electric Sub Division 11, Gandhi Nagar, under the Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited (JPDCL), has conducted a major enforcement drive to curb illegal use of agricultural power.

Launched in the last week of December 2025, the special drive targeted unauthorized pump sets operating on dedicated Agricultural Distribution Transformers (DTs). During the campaign, a total of 245 Agricultural DTs were disconnected after being found to have 100 per cent illegal pump set operations. The disconnected DTs include a range of capacities from 25 KVA to 630 KVA, spread across the Miran Sahib and Bishnah areas. Specifically, 177 DTs of 100 KVA, 41 of 250 KVA, 15 of 63 KVA, and smaller numbers of other capacities were disconnected. This enforcement action has resulted in substantial energy savings of approximately 1,67,680 units per day and revenue sav-

ings of around Rs 7.54 lakh per day.

JPDCL officials emphasized that despite repeated visits and efforts by field staff to regularize illegal pump set connections, many owners have not cooperated. The utility has reiterated that legal connections are crucial not only to ensure uninterrupted electricity supply but also to safeguard farmers from penalties and disconnections. The JPDCL has issued a renewed appeal to all pump set owners to promptly regularize their connections so that the 245 disconnected DTs can be restored and made operational.

The power utility reaffirmed its commitment to providing fair, transparent, and reliable electricity while protecting government revenue and ensuring system stability across the region.

This initiative underscores JPDCL's ongoing efforts to enhance energy efficiency, reduce power theft, and maintain a stable and equitable distribution system for all consumers.

# Tiger Division remains committed in supporting aspirations of local populace



**STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: The Indian Army has always played an important role in connecting the people of Jammu and Kashmir with the mainstream and in bringing various developmental programs to the remote and far flung area. Under Operation Sadbhavana, the Indian Army continues its efforts to provide various facilities and support to the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Through various outreach activities and relief pro-

grams, Tiger Division has been continuously contributing towards welfare and upliftment of the local population.

This year Tiger Division has distributed essential educational aids and stores to include Computer, Printer, Scanner, UPS, RO Water System, Inverter with Battery and Furniture (Computer & Library Table) to the Community Hall at village Chowadi, Jammu (J&K) to enhance its functionality. The efforts by the Indian

Army will not only improve the infrastructure and learning environment of the Community Hall but will further strengthen the bond between the Army and the local community.

Tiger Division, on behalf of the Indian Army, forever remains committed in supporting the aspirations of the local populace. In the future too, similar initiatives will be undertaken to strengthen the bond of trust and cooperation between the local people, youth and the Indian Army.

# Transport Minister holds meeting with AJKTWA; key issues addressed

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: Minister for Transport, Satish Sharma, on Wednesday held a meeting with representatives of the All Jammu & Kashmir Transport Welfare Association (AJKTWA) to discuss several long-pending and urgent issues affecting the transport fraternity across the Union Territory.

During the meeting, the Association apprised the Minister about the long-awaited revision of transport tariffs, which has been pending approval for a considerable period.

Taking a decisive step, Satish Sharma granted final approval to the tariff revision and informed the Association that the revised tariff proposal will be placed before the upcoming Cabinet meeting. He further assured that once approved, the revised tariff will be announced publicly at the earliest, bringing much-needed relief to transport



AJKTWA members talking to reporters at Jammu on Wednesday.

operators. The Chairman of the Association, Karan Singh Wazir, also highlighted the issue related to the extension of vehicle fitness and passing, which has been discontinued since January 3, 2026, and is presently restricted to a single Automated Testing Station (ATS). He pointed out that the lone ATS is inadequate to handle the large volume of vehicles, resulting in delays, inconvenience and operational difficulties for transporters. Taking serious note

of the concern, the Transport Minister assured the Association that the issue would be resolved on priority. He stated that the matter had already been discussed in an earlier meeting with the

Association and was duly recorded in the minutes. He assured that necessary action would be taken to address the problem and streamline the fitness and passing process. President of

the All J&K Transport Welfare Association, Vijay Singh Chib, expressed gratitude to the Minister for granting time to the Association for patiently listening to the concerns of the transport community. He appreciated the Minister's assurance of timely and effective resolution of the issues.

The Association expressed optimism that the steps assured by the Transport Minister would provide significant relief to transporters and help to improve the functioning of the transport sector across Jammu and Kashmir.

# Apni Party holds protest against unscheduled power cuts

## Kazmi submits memorandum to Chief Engineer JPDCL



Apni Party members led by Provincial Secretary Ajaz Kazmi raising slogans at protest.

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: Apni Party on Wednesday staged a protest against frequent unscheduled power cuts amid the bone-chilling cold in Jammu. The protest was held outside the office premises of the Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited (JPDCL) to draw attention to the worsening electricity crisis being faced by residents during the winter season. The demonstration was led by Provincial Secretary and President of the Trade Union, Apni Party, Ajaz Kazmi. Several party leaders, including provincial and district presidents along with representatives from various party wings, participated in the protest. Protesters raised slogans demanding immediate intervention by the authorities to resolve the power crisis in Jammu. Ajaz Kazmi said that the electricity situation in Jammu has deteriorated

sharply during winter, causing immense hardship to residents. He alleged that the JPDCL has failed to respond to public grievances despite consumers paying their electricity bills regularly. "The JPDCL hardly addresses the genuine concerns of the people," Kazmi said, adding that prolonged and unannounced power outages have disrupted daily life across the city. He pointed out that frequent power cuts in residential colonies have severely affected households and also disrupted the drinking water supply due to the non-functioning of water pump stations. Kazmi further said that during night and early morning hours, large parts of Jammu plunge into darkness, creating serious problems for students preparing for competitive examinations and for families struggling to cope with the harsh cold.

Later, Ajaz Kazmi, accompanied by senior party leaders, met the Chief Engineer of JPDCL and submitted a detailed memorandum highlighting public grievances. After hearing the delegation, the Chief Engineer assured them that the concerns raised would be examined and addressed.

The memorandum urged the JPDCL to ensure uninterrupted and adequate electricity supply to residential areas and water pump stations.

It also demanded enhancement of transformer capacity to prevent overloading and frequent load shedding, speedy replacement of burnt or damaged transformers, and wider publicity of consumer care contact numbers with prompt grievance redressal.

Additionally, it stressed that consumers who regularly pay their bills should not be harassed under any pretext.

# MoPNG organises high-level upstream engagements on Financing, Regulatory Reforms and Promotion of New Exploration Bid Rounds

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

NEW DELHI: The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) organised a series of high-level upstream-focused engagements in Mumbai, aimed at strengthening financing frameworks, clarifying recent regulatory reforms and promoting upcoming exploration bid rounds.

The day-long programme drew wide participation from domestic and international upstream operators, E&P service providers, global consulting firms, financial institutions, insurers, academia and industry experts, reflecting growing interest in India's evolving upstream policy and investment landscape.

Addressing participants virtually, Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri said recent legislative, regulatory and policy reforms mark



MoPNG Secretary Neeraj Mittal speaking at a workshop.

a landmark transformation of India's upstream sector. He noted that these reforms, supported by data-driven exploration initiatives, have unlocked significant investment opportunities, particularly in offshore and frontier areas, and reiterated the government's commitment to a stable, transparent and globally competitive framework to attract sustained domestic and international investment. A key component of the

programme was a workshop on "Financing India's E&P Growth", which examined the preparedness of India's financing ecosystem to support the expanded scale of exploration and production activities, including initiatives such as Samudra Manthan. Global consulting firms such as S&P Global, Deloitte, A.T. Kearney and EY shared international perspectives on upstream financing models, capital mobilisation and risk allocation. Financial institutions

and insurers, including State Bank of India, New India Assurance and Bajaj Allianz, discussed risk assessment frameworks, exposure norms, bank guarantee structures and emerging instruments such as insurance-backed surety bonds. Participants highlighted that as upstream activity scales up, capital requirements will rise sharply and become increasingly front-loaded, necessitating financing structures aligned with upstream risk profiles. In his remarks, MoPNG Secretary Neeraj Mittal stressed that timely and adequate availability of capital would be critical for execution and called for continued engagement among policymakers, operators and financiers.

Another session focused on familiarising stakeholders with the amended Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Act, revised Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules and the updated Model Revenue Sharing

Contract (MRSC). MoPNG and the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) explained that the reforms aim to reduce interpretational ambiguities and provide policy certainty, with emphasis now on consistent and effective implementation.

The concluding bid promotion event showcased new upstream opportunities. DGH presented details of forthcoming rounds, including OALP Bid Round X with 25 blocks, DSF Bid Round IV covering nine contract areas, and CBM bid rounds for 2025-26. Presentations by the University of Houston and Schlumberger highlighted India's hydrocarbon prospectivity and the role of digital technologies in unlocking frontier basins. The session underlined India's significant untapped resource potential, improved data access and policy support for enhancing domestic production and energy security.

# Rashtriya Bajrang Dal asks LG to take strong action against Pakistan-sponsored terrorism in Jammu



Rashtriya Bajrang Dal staging protest against Pakistan.

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: The Rashtriya Bajrang Dal on Tuesday staged a strong protest at bus stand and burnt the Pakistan flag to express their anger against terrorism and Pakistan-sponsored activities. The protest was led by the State President of Rashtriya Bajrang Dal, Rakesh Bajrang, who addressed the gathering and condemned the recent terrorist incident in the Singhpura area.

Speaking on the occasion, Rakesh Bajrang said that based on intelligence inputs received by the Army, Police, CRPF and other paramilitary forces, a search operation was

launched in Singhpura around four to five days ago. During the operation, terrorists carried out an attack in which one brave soldier, Havaldar Gajendra Singh, attained martyrdom, while eight other personnel were injured.

He further informed that during the search operation, security forces recovered a terrorist hideout located at an altitude of about 12,000 feet, where a large quantity of supplies including flour, rice, pulses, desi ghee, gas cylinders, cooking stoves, Maggi, biscuits and other items were found. This, he said, clearly indicates that the terrorists had planned

to stay in the area for a long duration. Rakesh Bajrang alleged that such activities are impossible without local support, stating that transporting such a large amount of material to such a high altitude proves the involvement of anti-national elements. He demanded strict action against those providing shelter and assistance to terrorists, calling them the biggest traitors of the nation.

He also urged the Lieutenant Governor to take firm action against Pakistan-sponsored terrorism in the Jammu region, similar to the steps taken in Kashmir. Bajrang said that repeated incidents of Pakistan sending weapons and narcotics through drones have come to light and stressed that it is time to teach Pakistan a strong lesson.

The Rashtriya Bajrang Dal also demanded the Central Government to immediately launch "Operation Sindoor-2" against terrorism.

Several activists participated in the protest, including Rahul, Jatini, Abhirudh, Divyanshu, Raju, Raja, Vikas, Anku, Mannu, and others.

# Chief Secretary inaugurates Basant Panchmi Mahoutsav at Mathwar Devsthaan

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: The three-day Mahoutsav, organised in connection with the forthcoming festival of Basant Panchmi, commenced today with deep devotion and spiritual fervour at Babaji Ballo Maharaj Devsthaan, Mathwar, attracting a large gathering of devotees from across the region. The Basant Panchmi festival will be observed on its auspicious day, while the related religious and cultural programmes have begun in advance. The celebrations began with Kanjak Poojan, performed under the guidance of Baba Yash Pal Ji, at Thathi in the presence of devotees. This was followed by the inauguration of the newly constructed Aghore Road, marked by a ribbon-cutting ceremony conducted by Baba Yash Pal Ji.

Thereafter, the programme continued at Mathwar Ashram, where Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary, Jammu and



CS Atal Dulloo inaugurating Basant Panchmi Mahoutsav at Mathwar Devsthaan.

Kashmir, arrived and was accorded a warm welcome by thousands of devotees. Baba Yash Pal Ji, along with the Chief Secretary, jointly performed the ribbon-cutting ceremony, formally inaugurating the Mahoutsav and Mela.

As part of the spiritual observances, a Yagya was performed to invoke peace, prosperity, and well-being for the nation. Prashaad was distributed through a community langer, promoting the spirit of unity, service, and devotion.

# J&K Secretariat Retired Employees Welfare Forum meets Principal Secretary Finance on Medical Allowance, Pensioners' ID Cards

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: A high-level delegation of the J&K Secretariat Retired Employees Welfare Forum met on Wednesday with the Principal Secretary Finance at the Civil Secretariat, Jammu, to discuss issues related to Medical Allowance and the Medical Scheme for state government pensioners.

The delegation, comprising Nazir Ahmad Mir (President), Manzoor Ahmad Khan, K.L. Anand, Mustaq Hussain Khan, and Ashok Kumar Sharma, strongly advocated for enhancement of Medical Allowance and implementation of a Medical Scheme for state pensioners on par with central government pensioners.

The Principal Secretary Finance provided a patient hearing, assuring the

Forum that the demand is under favorable consideration and that the government is striving for a speedy resolution.

The delegation also met Sajjad Khaliq Bhat, SSP Security, Civil Secretariat, to discuss the issuance of identity cards for retired Secretariat employees. The SSP assured that ID cards will be issued upon submission of an attested copy of the PPO along with a recent photograph of the pensioner.

The Forum expressed its sincere gratitude to both the Principal Secretary Finance and SSP Security for their proactive approach and positive response toward resolving these long-standing issues, highlighting the administration's commitment to the welfare of retired employees.