

Govt committed to boost sports infrastructure across J&K: Dy CM

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, on Friday asserted that the government is committed to boost sports infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir, with emphasis on providing quality facilities to youth in far-flung and border areas.

The Deputy Chief Minister was speaking after inaugurating the ASMITA Khelo India Women's League - North Zone Kickboxing Tournament 2026 at the Gymnasium Hall, University of Jammu.

Addressing the gathering as chief guest, the Deputy Chief Minister extended a warm welcome to the women athletes and officials from all North Zone States and Union Territories, terming the event a significant step towards promotion of sports and women empowerment in J&K.

"The present government



Dy CM, Surinder Choudhary inaugurating ASMITA Khelo India Women's League - North Zone Kickboxing Tournament 2026 at the Gymnasium Hall, University of Jammu.

is focused on ensuring equitable development and providing essential facilities, including sports infrastructure, in villages across far-flung areas of Jammu and Kashmir. This will empower our rural youth to showcase and further hone their sporting talent," he said.

The Deputy Chief Minister lauded the ASMITA initia-

tion for creating meaningful opportunities for women athletes and for strengthening sports at the grassroots level.

"It is encouraging to see our young boys and girls participating in sports with such energy and commitment. This gives us confidence that the future of our country is in safe and capa-

ble hands," the Deputy Chief Minister said.

The Deputy Chief Minister observed that J&K harbours national unity, peace and stability as of paramount importance. He emphasised the need for collective strength to ensure a peaceful and resilient nation.

Describing J&K as a land of natural beauty, cultural

richness and harmony, he welcomed the visiting teams and delegates to experience its warmth and hospitality. He reiterated the government's commitment towards peace, development and inclusive progress in J&K.

Expressing happiness over the participation of distinguished guests and delegates from across the country, he said that their presence reflected goodwill and encouragement. He added that such sports events stand as a strong testament to government's resolve to nurture women athletes and strengthen the overall sports ecosystem in the region.

The tournament is witnessing participation of around 600 women athletes and 100 officials representing nine States and Union Territories of the North Zone, making it one of the largest women's kickboxing events in the region.

The inaugural ceremony was attended by Santosh Agrawal, President, WAKO India Kickboxing Federation; Sanjay Yadav, Senior Vice President, WAKO India Kickboxing Federation and Gaurav Chopra, Vice President, Kickboxing Association of Jammu & Kashmir.

Dawood Iqbal Baba, Director Sports, University of Jammu, presented the vote of thanks. The prestigious national level women's kickboxing championship is being organised by the Kickboxing Association of Jammu & Kashmir (KAJK) under the aegis of the Sports Authority of India (SAI) and Khelo India. Earlier, the opening ceremony commenced with a welcome address by Abhishek Jain, General Secretary, Kickboxing Association of Jammu & Kashmir.

J&K struggles against Pondicherry in Ranji

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir were struggling with wickets lost on regular intervals on day-two play at 150 for six in reply to Pondicherry's first innings total of 233 in the Ranji Trophy Elite Group-D match at Siechem Stadium, Pondicherry on Friday.



J&K still need 83 runs to match the opponent total with four wickets in hand. Resuming their innings J&K lost wickets at regular intervals and were struggling at 150 before bad light forced the umpires to stop play.

Abdul Samad at the crease with 40 off 57 balls, while Abid Mushtaq was unbeaten on one. Shubham Khajuria played cautiously and scored 46 runs, while Kanhaiya Wadhawan contributed 30 runs and Dikshant Kundal added 17 off 93 balls with three boundaries.

From Pondicherry, Sagar P Udeshi and Gaurav Yadav took two wickets each, while Puneet Datey and Aman Khan claimed one wicket each.

Earlier, on day-1, led by the duo of Sunil Kumar and Yudhvir Singh, J&K bowlers restricted Pondicherry to a modest 233 in their first innings.

J&K enters final of School Games U-14 Cricket



J&K Under-14 team posing with officials after winning the match.

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir on Friday qualified for the final beating Madhya Pradesh by six wickets in the semifinals of the ongoing 69th National School Games Under-14 Boys Cricket Tournament, hosted by the Government of Rajasthan under the aegis of the School Games Federation of India (SGFI) at Sikar.

Madhya Pradesh, put in to bat, collapsed to a meagre 56 runs in just 9.3 overs of the 15 overs a side

game. J&K's leg-spinner Faisal Amin Pandith claimed five wickets. Owais Ishaq bagged two and Harris Rehman took one.

J&K chased the target in 9.3 overs, losing four wickets in the process. Skipper Muhammad Mudrik Beig played unbeaten innings of 27, while Saksh Gupta contributed 18.

Now, in the final, J&K shall take on hosts Rajasthan in the title clash. The J&K team is accompanied by former

Ranji Trophy cricketer, Suresh Singh as Coach and Arif Hussain Mir as Manager. J&K takes part in the School Games under the banner of Department of Youth Services and Sports, J&K.

Important to mention here that J&K earlier defeated Delhi in the quarterfinals and made it a five-wicket victory against Telangana in the pre-quarterfinals game. In the group stages, J&K beat hosts Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Gujarat.

KIWG 2026: Ladakh women set up ice-hockey final against ITBP, snowfall impacts long-track skating schedule

Army to clash with ITBP in men's ice-hockey semifinals on Saturday

STATE TIMES NEWS
LEH: Hosts Ladakh and ITBP women marched into the final of the Khelo India Winter Games 2026 ice hockey competition in commanding fashion on Friday. This will be a repeat of KIWG 2025's women's ice hockey final.

On an icy day in Leh, the 1000 metres long track finals for men and women at the Gupukh's Pond were impacted due to heavy snowfall, the first in weeks in this Union Territory.

Due to poor visibility and the condition of the 333 metres course, the women's final was badly impacted towards the middle stages. The men's race did not start.

Defending champions Army sealed their berth in the men's ice-hockey final from Group A. Playing at their 'home' turf, the Ladakh Scouts Regimental Centre rink, Army thrashed Jammu



& Kashmir 11-0.

They will play ITBP, the No. 2 team in group B in the semifinals. Hosts Ladakh are sitting on top of Group B. Both men's semis are on Saturday.

In the women's semifinals at Nawang Dorjay Stobdan (NDS) Stadium on Friday afternoon, both Ladakh and ITBP girls decimated their opponents with ease. The new-look NDS Stadium has a roof now and the snowfall did not matter.

Himachal Pradesh 14-0 while ITBP beat Chandigarh 10-1. The women's final will be a repeat of the KIWG 2025 final where Ladakh defeated ITBP 4-0 in a thrilling contest. Women's ice hockey competition started only in KIWG 2024.

Tsewang Chuskit's hat-trick and a brace each from veteran star Padma Chorol, Rinchen Dolma, Padma Desal, Samina Khatoon and Rigzin Yangdol left Himachal Pradesh completely flattened.

"We have won all four

matches so far in KIWG 2026. Even though I am the captain, we have seniors guiding us on the ice and in the locker room. The younger girls are also playing well and scoring goals. We have a good coach, and his strategy worked in today's match. Also, the UT Administration's support in our training has been tremendous, and the selection process was conducted through trials in both Leh and Kargil," said Ladakh skipper Yangdol, adding: "We are excited for the finals, and we will hopefully lift the cup once again."

Dechen Dolker's hat-trick was the highlight of ITBP's win against Chandigarh in the second women's semifinal. Tashi Dolker and Sharap Yangster scored two apiece to bolster ITBP's scoreline. While this one-sided scoreline was not unexpected, Gunika Kaur Bhatti received the

loudest cheer for scoring a consolation goal for Chandigarh.

"Last year, we lost to Ladakh because we were underprepared. This year, it's different. We are more prepared, and I believe in my team. Usually, we face the Ladakh team in many tournaments, but this year there was only one major event—the LG Cup, which happened recently. Most of the Ladakh players were playing under the Ladakh Women Ice Hockey Foundation (LWIHF) banner, and we won that match 7-3. We have kept the same spirit, and we hope to do well at KIWG 2026 final as well," said Tashi Dolker, captain of ITBP.

FRIDAY'S RESULTS
ICE HOCKEY (Women's semis) Ladakh beat Himachal Pradesh 14-0; ITBP beat Chandigarh 10-1. (Men) (Gr A) Army beat Jammu & Kashmir 11-0.

Heritage School celebrates Republic Day, Basant Panchami with culture, pride

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Heritage School celebrated Republic Day and Basant Panchami with great enthusiasm, devotion and patriotic spirit through special assemblies organised across the Kindergarten, Primary and Secondary Wings on Friday within the school campus.

The celebrations at Heritage School beautifully reflected the unity in diversity of the institution, with each wing contributing meaningfully according to the age and understanding of its students.

The Kindergarten Wing hosted a vibrant special Assembly in the school amphitheatre. The programme began with a soulful Shloka and prayer, set-



Students depicting as freedom fighters at R-Day celebration.

ting a serene and respectful tone. Young learners, dressed as great freedom fighters, confidently spoke a few lines about national heroes, helping peers understand their sacrifices in a simple and engaging

manner. A melodious medley of patriotic songs presented by teachers filled the atmosphere with pride and love for the nation. Students were also sensitised to the importance of Republic Day and the core values of unity, freedom and democracy. The assembly concluded with the National Anthem, leaving everyone with a deep sense of national pride.

The Primary Wing celebrated the occasion with a

special Assembly that harmoniously blended patriotism and cultural devotion. The programme commenced with prayers offered to Maa Saraswati, seeking blessings for wisdom and learning.

The ceremonial lighting of the lamp by the Principal, Vice-Principal, Mentor, Headmistress and Coordinators marked an auspicious beginning. Students presented a beautifully curated medley of patriotic songs that echoed the spirit of Republic India. Gracious poems on Basant Panchami and the Motherland were recited, celebrating spring, knowledge, new beginnings and love for the nation. The Assembly stood as a fine example of tradition meeting youthful enthusiasm.

The Secondary Wing organised a thoughtful and inspiring assembly highlighting constitutional values and cultural awareness. It began with a

thought for the day, encouraging students to uphold the ideals of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. This was followed by an insightful article and a patriotic poem celebrating India's glory.

An informative presentation on Basant Panchami enlightened students about its cultural significance and its association with learning and the advent of spring. The highlight of the assembly was a melodious medley of patriotic songs that vividly portrayed India's unity and diversity, leaving the audience inspired and proud.

The celebrations across all wings were a perfect blend of patriotism, culture and values, nurturing young minds while honouring the nation and its rich heritage. The day truly stood as a memorable reminder of faith, freedom, festivity and the timeless ideals enshrined in the Indian Constitution.

J&K 70 for 2 in reply to Kerala's 165 in U-23

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir made a positive progress with 70 for two in reply to 165 runs scored by Kerala in their first innings on opening day of the Under-23 Colonel C K Nayudu Trophy match at St Xavier's College Ground in Thiruvananthapuram.

Electing to bat, Kerala crumbled to 165 all out in 64.2 overs, courtesy five-wicket haul from Sarvashish Singh. Ahammed Imran was top scorer with 43 runs while wicketkeeper Varun Nayanar (32), skipper Abijith Praveen V (24) as



also Rohan Nair (24) were other contributors to the total.

Left-arm spinner Sarvashish Singh bowled deadly spell taking five Kerala wickets for 56 runs thus reducing the side to a

small total. Pacer, Basit Bashir and Vishal Kumar grabbed two wickets each while right-arm seamer, Atif Bin Mushtaq took the other wicket.

In reply, J&K were playing at 70 for the loss of two wickets in 17.5 overs, with a trail of 95 runs. Kamakh Sharma played powerful innings making 35-ball 41 runs before his dismissal. Basit Nazir (11) was other batsman to lose his wicket on the last delivery of the day while Skipper Shivansh Sharma was batting at 16. Pavan Raj and Shoun Roger took the wickets for Kerala.

Rakesh shines at Subrata Classic Powerlifting Nationals



STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Rakesh Kumar of Jammu & Kashmir UT delivered an outstanding performance at the Subrata Classic Full Powerlifting and Deadlift National Championship 2026, organized by the Indian Powerlifting Federation (IPF) at Haridwar from January 17 to 21, 2026.

He clinched three gold medals and one silver medal across various categories. His achievement was applauded by Kaushtav Dutta, General Secretary, IPF, and Rahul Shukla, Joint Secretary, IPF. Congratulations were also extended by Amit Dutta, President, Powerlifting Association of J&K.

Avni Langer awarded Gold Medal for First Rank in M.Sc Forensic Science

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Avni Langer, granddaughter of Kailash Langer and Santosh Langer, and daughter of Atul Langer and Mamta Langer, was awarded the Gold Medal for securing First Rank in M.Sc (Forensic Science) during the 15th Convocation 2026 of The West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences (WBNUJS), Kolkata, held on 18th January 2026.

The prestigious Gold Medal was conferred upon her by Justice Surya Kant, Chief Justice of India, in recognition of her outstanding academic excellence and remarkable achievement in the field of forensic science.

The achievement of Avni Langer has brought immense pride to her family and



well-wishers. Her dedication, hard work, and commitment to academic excellence stand as a source of inspiration for aspiring students.

GDC Akhnoor organises poster making event



STATE TIMES NEWS
AKHNOOR: Government Degree College (GDC) Akhnoor organized a Poster Making Event along with the celebration of Basant Panchami under the theme "Vande Mataram." The programme aimed to promote patriotism, cultural values, and creative expression among students.

As part of the celebration, students of the Department of Sanskrit melodiously rendered Saraswati Vandana, invoking the blessings of Goddess Saraswati. On the auspicious occasion of

Basant Panchami, halwa was distributed among the participants and faculty members, symbolizing joy and togetherness.

The programme formally commenced with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp by the Principal, Dr. Romilla Malla Bhat, before the idol of Goddess Lakshmi, marking an auspicious beginning to the event.

Her guidance and encouragement played a pivotal role in the successful organization of the programme.

The event was organized by the Department of

Sanskrit in collaboration with the Activities and Cultural Affairs Committee. Faculty members were also present and extended their support to encourage student participation. Students participated enthusiastically and showcased their artistic talents through posters reflecting national pride, cultural heritage, and the spirit of Basant Panchami.

The programme concluded on a positive and inspiring note, fostering cultural awareness, discipline, and patriotism among the students.