

Vijay Merchant Trophy

# CM felicitates victorious J&K under-16 cricket team



Chief Minister Omar Abdullah felicitating victorious J&K u-16 cricket team.

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah morning interacted with the victorious Jammu and Kashmir under-16 cricket team after they clinched the Vijay Merchant Trophy (Plate Group) title, marking a historic achieve-

ment for Jammu and Kashmir. The Chief Minister met each player individually and enquired about their personal as well as team performance. Expressing his admiration for their outstanding display on the field, he encouraged

the young cricketers to continue their winning momentum and strive for greater excellence in future. He also took keen interest in their academic pursuits and other interests beyond sports. Congratulating the team on their remarkable feat, the

Chief Minister said, "Your victory reflects not just talent, but teamwork, discipline and dedication. You have made the entire J&K proud."

On the occasion, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah presented an appreciation trophy to the victorious team, led by Captain Smagey Khajuria, in recognition of their exceptional performance and contribution to sports in J&K.

It is noteworthy that on January 6, Jammu and Kashmir defeated Mizoram by an innings and 182 runs on the third day of the final played in Surat, Gujarat. With this emphatic win, J&K lifted the Vijay Merchant Trophy for the first time, marking a proud moment in J&K's sporting history.

# Bowling brilliance seals DIC XI victory in Kathua Admin Cup thriller



**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
KATHUA: Spectators at GDC Kathua were treated to a gripping low-scoring contest under the ongoing Kathua Admin Cup Cricket Tournament, where DIC XI outplayed PWD XI in a match marked by intense competition, sharp bowling and composed batting. After winning the toss, PWD XI opted to bat first but struggled to score freely against a disciplined DIC XI bowling attack. Surinder scored with a gritty 19 runs, while

Neeraj contributed 9 runs, as the rest of the batting line-up found it difficult to negotiate the tight bowling. Mushtaq and Parminder spearheaded the attack with incisive spells, consistently applying pressure and dismantling the batting order. Mushtaq returned impressive figures of 4 wickets in his 4-over spell, while Parminder provided effective support to restrict PWD XI to 71 runs. In reply, DIC XI chased the target with confidence and composure, reaching 76 runs within 11 overs.

Rahil and Narayan anchored the innings with identical scores of 19 runs each, providing a solid platform for the chase. Valuable contributions from Vishav Partap, who scored 17 runs and Vinay ensured that the target was achieved comfortably despite brief resistance from the PWD XI bowlers.

PWD XI made a late attempt to stage a comeback through Surinder and Arun, who picked up key wickets, but DIC XI maintained their calm to seal a well-deserved

victory. The match stood out for its high-quality bowling performances, disciplined cricket and excellent sportsmanship, highlighting the competitive spirit of the Kathua Admin Cup.

Man of the Match was awarded to Captain DIC XI, Mushtaq for his match-winning bowling performance, clinching 4 crucial wickets coupled with smart bowling and field changes which decisively tilted the contest in favour of DIC XI.

# U-16 Lawn Tennis Championship kicks off at MA Stadium



Vice President JKLTA, Hanumant Singh inaugurating U-16 lawn tennis championship at MA Stadium, Jammu.

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: The U-16 Boys and Girls Lawn Tennis Championship, organized by the J&K Lawn Tennis Association (JKLTA), commenced on Thursday at the Tennis Courts of MA Stadium. The event was inaugurated by Hanumant Singh, Vice President of JKLTA, marking the beginning of a highly anticipated competition among the region's best young tennis talents.

The first round of the U-16 Boys' singles saw some exciting matches. Retish Kumar dominated Aarav Singh with a commanding 7-1 win, while Aarish Sethi easily defeated Ansh Sayal 7-0. Khushaansh Magotra also secured a 7-1 victory over Viraj Singh. Parth Gupta and Arsh

Arora played a closely contested match, with Gupta emerging victorious at 7-5. Other notable results included Piyush Kumar's 7-0 win against Neetan Balgotra and Aayank Jaiswal's 7-0 triumph over Vansh Sharma. Saksham Amla overcame Parth Gupta 7-2 in another impressive performance. In the second round, Nakal Mehra advanced with a 7-4 victory over Aayank Jaiswal, while Aarish Sethi continued his impressive run, defeating Retish Kumar 7-2. On the girls' side, Arushi showed excellent form, defeating Angel 6-2 and Aratika 6-3. Sarah Mahajan also secured a strong 6-3 win against Shubangi. With the competition heating up, the championship is set to provide thrilling matches as players vie for top honours.

# LG Kavinder reviews preparations for 6th Khelo India Winter Games

## KIWG a unique opportunity to promote sports culture & winter tourism in Ladakh

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
LEH: The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, on Thursday reviewed ongoing preparations for the 6th edition of Khelo India Winter Games, scheduled from January 20 to 26.

During the meeting, Administrative Secretary, Youth Services and Sports, Moses Kunzang, briefed the Lt Governor that the Games will be hosted at three venues: NDS Stadium, Guphuks Pond, and Ladakh Scouts Regimental Center (LSRC). He informed that this edition will feature figure skating alongside ice hockey and speed skating.

Moses informed that an Executive Committee headed by the Chief Secretary, along with functional committees, has



LG Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta reviewing preparations for 6th edition of KIWG.

been constituted for seamless execution. He also informed that tenders have been floated, and the UT Administration is ensuring top-quality accommodation with heating and running water for participants. Around 500 athletes from across the country, plus 100 technical staff, are expected to participate in the event, he further informed.

Kavinder emphasised zero compromise on quality to provide world-class facilities to the participants. Describing the Games as a marquee national event, he directed aggressive media promotion to showcase Ladakh globally. "The opening ceremony must be vibrant, celebrating Ladakh's rich cultural heritage," he instructed, urging depart-

ments to coordinate for flawless conduct.

Kavinder Gupta also stressed the importance of ensuring robust logistical and safety arrangements, including efficient transportation, medical facilities, and emergency response mechanisms at all venues. He directed the concerned departments to conduct regular inspections and mock drills well

in advance to ensure complete preparedness, particularly keeping in view the extreme winter conditions of the region.

The Lt Governor further highlighted that the Khelo India Winter Games present a unique opportunity to promote sports culture and winter tourism in Ladakh. He called upon all stakeholders to leverage the event to project Ladakh as a premier destination for winter sports, while ensuring active community participation and creating a lasting legacy of sports infrastructure and youth engagement in the Union Territory.

Among those present during the meeting were Deputy Director, PGF Upshi, Dr Tundup Namgail and Assistant Director, Information Leh, Riggzin Yangdol.

# Sakeena inaugurates Shri Aurobindo Gyan Kendra at JU Jodhamal School shines at 20th National Matsogi-Do Championship

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Ito inaugurated the Shri Aurobindo Gyan Kendra at Dhanvantri Library of University of Jammu here on Thursday.

Vice Chancellor, University of Jammu, Prof. Umesh Rai; Deans of various faculties, Professors, other staff members and large number of students were also present on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, Minister Sakeena said the Shri Aurobindo Ghosh has contribution in education sector, social welfare and every area associated with the upliftment of society. "We need to remember, especially youth, all those personalities who have contributed to society, so that our future generations are made aware of their contribution", the Minister said.

Highlighting on the relevance of Shri Aurobindo Ghosh in contemporary



Education Minister, Sakeena Ito inaugurating Shri Aurobindo Gyan Kendra at Dhanvantri Library of University of Jammu.

times, the Minister emphasized that education must go beyond textbooks to nurture character, creativity and consciousness among youth. "Shri Aurobindo Ghosh always spoke of unity and integration rather than division. He never tried to divide people. Education should always be kept free from religious bias and humanity should be preferred. Youth need to be given education which can bind the society together", Minister Sakeena stated.

She appreciated the University of Jammu for taking this initiative and reaffirmed the government's

commitment to strengthening higher education with modern learning environment and opportunities.

The Minister further said that the newly established Kendra aims to foster intellectual, moral and spiritual development among students by promoting the philosophy, writings and ideals of Shri Aurobindo Ghosh. She added that the centre will serve as a hub for academic research, seminars, lectures and cultural activities inspired by Shri Aurobindo's vision of integral education.

In his welcome address by VC Jammu University, Prof. Umesh Rai said that estab-

lishment of this kendra is both timely and essential, given contemporary educational needs and the growing emphasis on holistic development as envisioned in the NEP and the unequivocal commitment of the University to the same. He added that this centre envisions to become a distinguished Centre for integral education and transformative learning within and beyond the University of Jammu.

The VC Jammu said that Kendra will be open for civil society apart from students and faculty of the university. On the occasion, a docu-

mentary on life, achievements and ideals of Shri Aurobindo Ghosh was also showcased, which enriched the audience about his philosophy and teachings.

The inaugural ceremony was graced by Prof. Neelu Rohmetra, Dean Research Studies; Prof. Sangita Gupta, Dean Planning and Development; Prof. J. P. Singh Joorel, Dean Academic Affairs; Dr. Neeraj Sharma, Registrar; Padma Shri awardee Prof. Lalit Magotra; Padma Shri awardee Mohan Singh and Amrinder Singh Amn, Ex-Culture Secretary were also present.

Among others present on the occasion included Deans, Directors, Rectors, Heads of Departments, faculty members, officers, staff, and students.

The formal vote of thanks was delivered by Dr. Vikram Singh Sahi, Incharge Librarian, Dhanvantri Library and the proceedings were conducted by Dr. Kusam Sharma.

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: Jodhamal Public School once again carved a niche for itself on the national sports platform as its talented students delivered stellar performances at the 20th National Matsogi-Do Championship, bringing laurels to the school as well as to the State. Teams from 17 States and Union Territories participated, with more than 1,200 participants competing in the championship.

Jodhamal Public School once again carved a niche for itself on the national sports platform as its talented students delivered stellar performances at the 20th National Matsogi-Do Championship, bringing laurels to the school as well as to the State. The prestigious championship witnessed participation from over 300 athletes representing nearly 20 States and Union Territories across the country, making the achievement even more commendable.

Demonstrating exceptional discipline, strength, and sportsmanship, the students show-



trained and led by their dedicated coaches, Vishal and Savneet Kour, whose guidance, expertise, and commitment played a pivotal role in preparing the students for this national event. The School Management and the Principal extended their heartfelt congratulations to the achievers and applauded the tireless efforts of the coaches and parents for their constant support and encouragement. Such commendable achievements continue to inspire fellow students and reaffirm Jodhamal Public School's commitment to nurturing excellence, confidence, and a strong competitive spirit among its learners.

The remarkable medal tally of 2 Gold, 3 Silver, and 5 Bronze medals stands as a testament to the students' perseverance and the school's strong emphasis on holistic development through sports and co-curricular activities.

The team was expertly

# May Fair International School celebrates Junior Wing Annual Function

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: May Fair International School, Laxmipuram Chinore, Bantatalab, Jammu, celebrated the Junior Wing Annual Function with great enthusiasm and elegance at Abhinav Theatre, Canal Road, under the inspiring theme "Ek Rishta - Bond of Love" on Thursday. The event marked 45 years of the institution's dedicated contribution to quality education, cultural values, and holistic student development.

The programme was graced by Sham Lal Sharma, MLA, Jammu North, as the Chief Guest, while Dr. Zahoor Ahmed Raina, Joint Director (HQ), Information J&K, and Gurdev Kumar, Joint Director School Education Jammu, were the Guests of Honour.

More than 200 students took part in a vibrant series of cultural performances reflecting themes of compassion, patriotism, mindfulness, and unity. The event began with a warm welcome address by Abhey Basur, Director, May Fair Schools, followed by a melodious welcome song by Class 1 students. A colourful dance by kindergarten students set a lively tone, while the powerful presentation "Raksha Bandhan - A Tribute to the Indian Army" stirred deep emotions

and patriotic pride. Dr. Neha Gupta, School Incharge, presented the Annual Report, highlighting the school's academic progress and achievements. Students further captivated the audience with performances such as Value of Sports and an energetic Spanish Dance, before the programme concluded with a vibrant Qawwali.

The occasion also witnessed the release of "Lakshya 2026", the 12th edition of the school magazine, by the distinguished guests. The Management Committee members Anita Basur, Secretary, and Sandeep Sharma, Chief Advisor, were present to support the event.

A special prize distribution ceremony honoured board toppers, class toppers, students with 100% attendance, and sports achievers, who received awards from the Chief Guest and Guests of Honour.

In his address, Sham Lal Sharma appreciated the school's commitment to holistic education and applauded the students for their confident and graceful performances.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Radhika Basur, Trustee, who thanked the dignitaries, parents, staff, and students for making the celebration a grand success.

# 3-day National Painting Exhibition inaugurated at Kala Kendra

**STATE TIMES NEWS**  
JAMMU: A three-day National Level Painting Exhibition, organized by Kala Kendra Jammu in collaboration with the Centre for Creative Arts J&K, was inaugurated today at the Master Sansar Chand Art Gallery, Kala Kendra, Jammu. The exhibition has been dedicated to the memory of eminent sculptor Gobind Kour, the first woman sculptor of Jammu and Kashmir, as a tribute to her remarkable contribution to the world of art.

The exhibition was formally inaugurated by Deepika Sharma, Secretary, Department of Culture, Jammu & Kashmir, in the presence of a distinguished gathering of artists, writers, art critics, intellectuals, students, and art enthusiasts. The inaugural ceremony witnessed enthusiastic



Secretary, Department of Culture, J&K, Deepika Sharma witnessing paintings.

participation, reflecting the continued vibrancy of the art scene in the region.

In his welcome address, Dr. Javaid Rahi, Secretary, Kala Kendra Jammu, Department of Culture, J&K, said that the primary objective of the exhibition is to pay homage to Gobind Kour, who tragically passed away in an accident nearly a decade ago. He described her as a pioneering figure in the field of

sculpture and emphasized that the exhibition seeks to preserve her artistic legacy while inspiring young and emerging artists to pursue creative excellence.

Speaking on the occasion, Deepika Sharma paid rich tributes to Gobind Kour and lauded her outstanding contribution to the field of art, particularly sculpture, in Jammu and Kashmir. She remarked that organizing

a national-level painting exhibition in her memory is a fitting tribute to a trailblazing woman artist who carved a unique space for herself in a male-dominated domain. She further noted that the artworks displayed in the exhibition reflect the rich diversity, depth, and cultural heritage of the country.

Eminent art historian Dr. Lalit Gupta, while sharing insights into Gobind Kour's artistic journey, recalled that her family migrated from the Mirpur area of PoJK to Jammu in 1947. He described her as a distinguished colleague and a class artist who, despite having excellent teachers and training, achieved a distinct and lasting identity through her own creative vision and dedication.

O. P. Sharma, Founder President of the J&K

Centre for Creative Arts, informed that around 30 artworks are on display in the exhibition, including several rare and artistically valuable pieces. Renowned artist Jang S. Verma, husband of Gobind Kour, shared that he possesses several rare sculptures and artworks created by the late artist, which stand as testimony to her creative genius.

Among the prominent dignitaries present were Naginder Jamwal, Special Secretary to the Chief Secretary; art critic Ravinder Jamwal; Rajeshwar Singh Raju; and eminent artists Bhushan Kesar, Milan Sharma, Rakesh Sharma, Ankush Kesar, Dr. A. S. Aman, Sheikh Mohd Kalyan, Bajet Raina, Dr. Bhasin, and Jush Mohan, besides a large gathering of artists, art lovers, and students.