

LG launches QR code-based mechanism for certification, labeling of handmade carpets of J&K

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday launched QR Code based mechanism, which is first of its kind in the country, for certification and labeling of handmade carpets of J&K.

With the QR-based application, customers can check & verify authenticity and other requisite details of carpets produced in Jammu Kashmir UT.

The Lt Governor observed that J&K Handicrafts are repository of India's creative traditions that is serving as a cultural expression for centuries. This creative tradition is strikingly visible in handmade carpets with intricate designs & subtle shades.

With the help of modern technology, we will be able to standardize uniqueness of handmade carpets & boost exports of J&K's carpet industry in the international market, he added. On the occasion, the Lt Governor also felicitated UT's awardees of Handicrafts & Handloom. "I truly admire the painstaking work of all the craftsman and carpet weavers. Government is providing training & financial support to strengthen the priceless artistic and cultural heritage of J&K UT", he said.



Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha launching QR Code-based mechanism during a meeting.

The Lt Governor said that J&K has a unique identity in the global market for handloom and handicraft products. He noted that the Indian Institute of Carpet Technology has taken several important steps for GI certification, testing, labeling and training to promote Kashmiri carpets. "Government of Jammu and Kashmir has introduced Export Incentive Scheme. Under this scheme, incentive of 10% of the total volume of GI certified Handicrafts and Handloom products exported to any country, with maximum reimbursement upto Rs. 5 crores, shall be provided to eligible exporters registered with Department of Handicrafts and Handloom", he added.

The Department of Handicrafts & Handloom and Indian Institute of Carpet

Technology (IICT), Srinagar shall launch a massive awareness & promotional campaign within and outside the UT to popularize GI of Hand-knotted carpets so that its demand gains popularity across the globe, the Lt Governor said.

It was informed that a project has also been completed in association with NIFT Srinagar. The Lt Governor further observed that presently carpets are being exported from Jammu and Kashmir to at least 25 countries. In 2020-21, carpets worth Rs 115 crore were exported to Germany, Rs 34 crore worth to USA, Rs 36 Crore to UAE and Rs 22 crore to Netherlands.

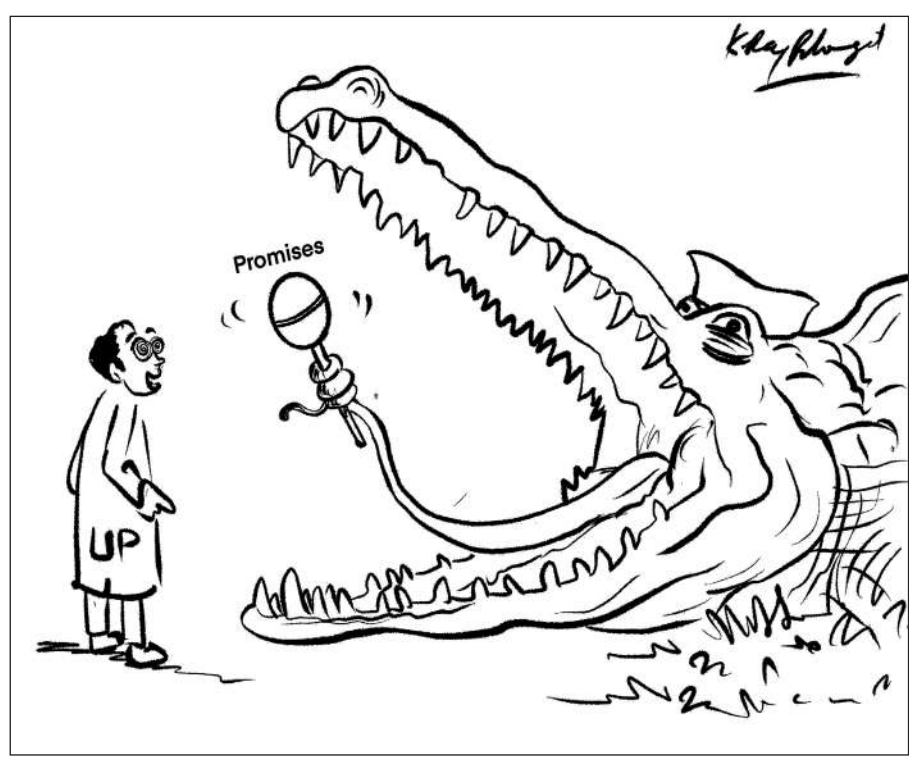
Earlier, Ranjan Prakash Thakur, Principal Secretary to J&K Government, Industries & Commerce Department briefed the chair about the key

features of the QR Code based GI Application.

Mahmood Ahmad Shah, Director, Handicrafts & Handloom Kashmir gave a powerpoint presentation on the background and present scenario of the handmade car-

pet industry of Jammu Kashmir, and latest initiatives made by the UT administration to promote it.

Anoo Malhotra, Director, Industries and Commerce, Jammu; Zubair Ahmad, Director, IICT Srinagar; Dr. Javid Ahmad Wani, Director, NIFT Srinagar; Dr. Vikas Gupta, Director, Handicrafts & Handloom, Jammu; Sheikh Ashiq, President, KCCEI; Firdous Ahmad Bhat, Chairman and Maharaj Krishan Bhat, Vice Chairman, Kashmir Carpet Cluster Development Organization, besides other officers and awardees were present on the occasion.



Trident Production launches maiden Punjabi Video Ghazal 'Shikwa'

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Trident Production in collaboration with Ace of Spades Studios on Thursday launched its maiden Punjabi Video Ghazal 'Shikwa' in an impressive launching ceremony held at Press Club, Jammu.

Soujanya Sharma, former Director Information and former Commissioner Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC); Narendar Rohmetra, former Chief Engineer Hydraulic; Raj Dahuja, Editor-in-Chief STATE TIMES, Zorawal Singh Jamwal, General Secretary Press Club, Jammu and Chairman Team Jammu released video in a glittering ceremony which was attended by prominent persons and media fraternity. Manu Srivastava, former President, Press Club Jammu was also present on the occasion. A Trident Production presentation, the Ghazal has been produced and directed by



Dignitaries and crew members releasing Punjabi Ghazal Shikwa at Jammu.

Raj Bhagat and assisted by co-producer Tarika Mahajan. Budding singer Raman Rahi has given voice to Gazal lyrics of Suraj Badyal, which was composed and recorded at R K Studio. The video features Raj Bhagat, Hitesh Mahajan, Juhi Kalsotra, Suresh Kumar and Varun Jamwal while special contribution was provided by Vishwa Mitter.

Landung the album, Zorawal Singh Jamwal appreciated talent of the entire crew for pro-

ducing a mesmerized video, saying that there is no dearth of young talent in Jammu region. "Young and talented boys and girls from J&K have scaled new heights in various tele-serials as well as in Bollywood but unfortunately their talent has not been recognized in Jammu & Kashmir," he said adding that Government must formulate a policy for nurturing the local talent in a big way so that budding artists can excel in their

fields, thereby bringing fame and laurels to the UT. He urged the team to produce an album on the drug menace with an objective of motivating youth to stay away from the addiction.

Soujanya Sharma congratulated entire team of the album and hoped that it will make waves in the music industry and will be received well by people across the UT and country. He said that there is dire need to provide a platform

to budding singers to further harness their talent. Video song made by these young budding artists is the greatest example of intellect, creativity and team spirit, he added.

In his address, Raj Dahuja hailed Raj Bhagat and all other crew members for their contribution towards music and projecting mesmerizing tourist destinations of Jammu at national level. He wished them success in their future artistic pursuits.

On the occasion, Producer and Director, Raj Bhagat informed the gathering that it was not an easy for him to bring out this video but with support of his family and friends besides hard work of the all crew members finally the dream came true. He said that this is his first production and assured that in near future he would produce more songs to promote culture and heritage of Jammu.

Curtains down on rehabilitation package for PoJK DPs, several families still craving for justice

► More than 50 per cent displaced families denied justice◄

■ SANJAY SHARMA

JAMMU: The Government on Thursday downed the curtains on the much publicized scheme for rehabilitation package of Pakistan occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) Displaced Persons (DPs) of 1947 and Chhamb DPs of 1965 and 1971 through which thousands of displaced families received Rs 5.5 lakh each although a considerable number of families were denied the relief, as these failed to produce the requisite documents and formalities to prove authenticity. The aforesaid scheme was given nod in 2016 by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the first stint of his government as things started rolling soon after BJP came to power in the year 2014. Those refugee families which produced the prerequisite documentation were given Rs 5.5 lakh by transferring the same into the bank accounts thus making the procedure transparent and hassle-free.

About 31,619 families were migrated from PoJK to J&K in 1947. Out of these, 26,319 families settled in J&K and 5,300 families initially moved to other parts of the country. During 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pak wars, 10,065 more families were displaced from Chhamb-Niabat area in which 3,500 families were displaced during 1965 war and 6,565 families were displaced during the 1971 war.

A total of 36,384 displaced families covered under the rehabilitation package approved by the Cabinet on 30.11.2016 included 26,319 displaced families from PoJK settled in J&K and 10,065 Displaced Families displaced from Chhamb Niabat area. While 5,300 displaced families of PoJK who initially moved

out of Jammu and Kashmir were not included in the approved package in 2016 but they were later included. If sources are to be believed near about 16,000 displaced families benefited of this rehabilitation scheme.

The Central Government headed by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has allotted Rs 2,000 crore for the purpose and the Home Ministry had sought bank account details of all the families from the erstwhile state government of Jammu and Kashmir as it intended to transfer the money directly into stakeholders' accounts instead of giving it to the then State Government. The gesture of Modi Government win accolades of displaced community as before this no dispensation has ever given such a big amount to compensate the refugees although meager amounts were distributed which was insignificant as compared to the present one. As the scheme has been ended, there are still some families which were supposed to get this hefty compensation of Rs 5.5 lakh but due to non-production of the required documentation or their inability to prove their authenticity, have been denied the benefits under this bountiful scheme.

In this regard, government on January 24, 2022 through a notice had informed all the Displaced Persons of PoJK of Chhamb 1965 and 1971 (camp/non-camp) DPs, presently settled in District Jammu that in view of the impending closure of the scheme, any eligible beneficiary who has not yet filed his/her claim, may submit the same, in the office of respective Tehsildars till February 7, 2022. It was further notified that no claim shall be enter-

tained after 10th of February 2022, if no claim is received before the due date. "It shall be presumed that there is no claimant left in respect of DPs/ WPR families settled in District Jammu", the notice further reads.

Ch Manmohan Singh, President All India Jat Maha Sabha and former Mayor Jammu, said that the abrupt closure of rehabilitation package scheme for PoJK Displaced Persons a cruel joke with those refugees who have not received the stipulated Rs 5.5 lakh relief for delay in documentation. "There is no logic in abruptly closing the aforesaid scheme because still hundreds of families are lurching to get the benefit guaranteed by none other than the Prime Minister of the country," he said and demanded that aforesaid scheme should be extended for another six months and a procedure should be relaxed so that the genuine and deserving DP families would get their claim.

Ravinder Sharma, former MLC and Chief Spokesperson Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress said that BJP Government at the Centre has betrayed the refugees of 1947, 1965 and 1971. He urged the LG to immediate review and recall recent notice of closing the relief package scheme. He requested for continuation of ongoing disbursement process of Rs 5.5 lakh till all the eligible families are covered. Despite repeated attempts, Suraj Parkash Rukwal, Special Secretary, Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction, having additional charge of ex-officio PRO, Jammu, could not be contacted for comments as his phone was switched-off.

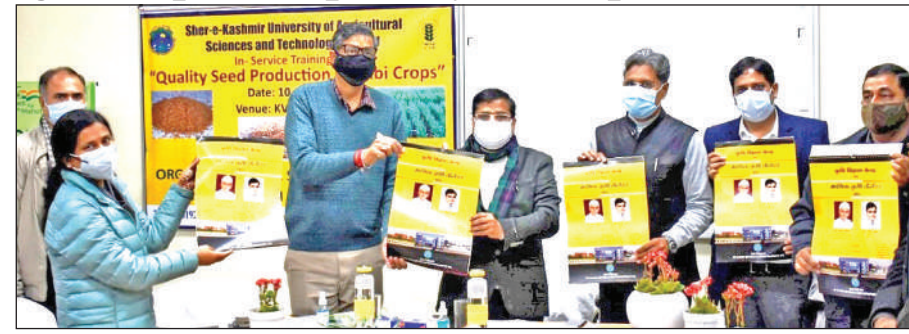
■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-Jammu, Prof. J.P. Sharma inaugurated training programme on Quality Seed Production on Field crops organized by Mega Seed Project in collaboration with Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Jammu, SKUAST-J at R.S. Pura Campus.

The Programme was attended by district level officers, Subject Matter Specialists, Agriculture Extension Officers from Department of Agriculture Jammu.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. J.P. Sharma, Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-Jammu stressed upon improvement in Seed replacement rate of various crops.

He further desired that focus should be on speciality agriculture including development of value addition and processing facilities for various food and fruit crops, vermicomposting, adoption of climate smart agriculture technologies, effective utilization of government schemes of AtamNirbhar Bharat with a total outlay of Rs. 1 lakh



VC SKUAST-J, Prof. J.P. Sharma and others releasing calendar prepared by KVK Jammu.

crores under agriculture infrastructure fund. He further stressed that seed villages should be adopted and there is need for strengthening of participatory seed production programmes by various agencies.

During the programme, Prof. Sharma also elaborated the role of pulses as 10th of Feb, 2022 is being celebrated as World Pulse Day across the globe.

A calendar prepared by Krishi Vigyan Kendra Jammu 2022 various operation related to agriculture on monthly basis is also released on the occasion.

At the outset, Dr. Puneet Choudhary, Sr. Scientist & Head, KVK Jammu welcome

all the participants and highlighted the various activities and achievements of KVK Jammu.

Dr. Amrith Vaid, Nodal Officer, Mega Seed Project briefed the participants about various insect and pest management practices to be carried out during quality seed production of field crops.

He also apprised the house

regarding the HRD activities be carried out by Mega Seed Project, SKUAST-Jammu in collaboration with Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Jammu at district level.

Dr. S.K. Gupta, Director Extension, SKUAST-Jammu appreciated the efforts of Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Jammu and highlighted the role of Krishi Vigyan Kendra in capacity

building of field functionaries of Agriculture and allied sector. During the technical session Dr. Tuhina Dey, Prof. Plant Breeding and Genetics, Dr. M.C. Dwivedi, Sr. Scientist, Agronomy, Dr. Amitesh Sharma, Scientist PBG, Dr. Prem Kumar, Scientist Fisheries Dr. Raju Gupta made a power point presentation and interacted with participants actively during all the sessions.

Roshan Lal, Area Development Officer thanked KVK Jammu for organizing such type of training programmes and also suggested to provide some location specific wheat varieties for Basmati growing areas.

Dr. Muneeshwar Sharma, Satbir Singh, Sahil Talgotra also helped in the smooth conductance of the programme.

CS inaugurates Shankaracharya trekking trail

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, on Thursday inaugurated 5.5 km gentle forest trek route around Shankaracharya hills, known as first learning ground for hiking enthusiasts in Srinagar.

Pertinently, the Shankaracharya 360 degree trekking trail offers a 360-degree view of Srinagar city and the surrounding landscapes.

Chief Secretary said that trekking is emerging as a potential adventure tourism in Jammu and Kashmir and asked the department to optimally utilize their men and machinery towards tapping the same. He asked the officers for ensuring all requisite basic amenities besides signages, sitting benches and viewpoints along this trail to facilitate the trekkers without disturbing or affecting the aesthetic wealth and environment of the area. He also asked for keeping the trekking routes free from plastics and other waste.

Chief Secretary also interacted with the trekkers and enquired them about the equipments and other logistics being made available to them by the authorities.

He said that trekking in



Chief Secretary, Dr A.K Mehta inspecting forest trek route around Shankaracharya hills.

Jammu and Kashmir provides a closer peep into the culture of mountain dwellers as one enjoys the rugged mountains, lush green meadows, diverse forests and breathtaking scenic views.

Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, P K Pole, Principal Chief Conservator Forests (PCCF), Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar and other officers accompanied the Chief Secretary during his visit. Chief Secretary also visited the Hokarsar Wetland Conservation Reserve and reviewed progress on conservation works being executed on Ramsar site. He directed for initiating measures towards maintaining at least 3 feet level of water at the conservation reserve all the time. He asked for strenuous efforts to get rid of plastics there besides ensuring prop-

er care of environment and the habitat of bird species.

He also enquired about the number of bird species visiting the place saying that facilities should also be put in place for convenience of visitors.

Later, Chief Secretary visited Dal Lake and launched modern machine with latest technological interventions in a bid to speed up cleaning operations of the Lake.

Highlighting the significance of Dal in Jammu and Kashmir, Chief Secretary said that it is the second largest lake in the Union Territory which is integral to culture, tourism and recreation in Kashmir and is famously known as the "Jewel in the crown of Kashmir". He said that all efforts are being made towards complete extraction of unwanted weeds from the famous Lake.

Sat Guru Nanak Mission distributes blankets among widows

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Sat Guru Nanak Mission, a free tuition coaching center in Rehari Chungi, on Thursday held a blanket distribution drive. The initiative was carried out under the moto "Make Someone Smile".

The blanket drive assumes importance on account of the number of people it caters to. Previously also the Mission distributed stationary kits to poor students and the students in need.

Chairman of Mission Surinder Singh today in presence of Jagjeet Singh Bagga Secretary and Varinder Mogatra Cashier distributed over 45 blankets to widow women of different areas.

"I believe we don't require a large set up to help poor people,



Chairman of Sat Guru Nanak Mission, Surinder Singh distributing blankets among widows.

we at the team Mission have been doing our bit to bring a smile on the faces of people.

Keeping in sync with our team motto and agenda, we organise such drives. Today's blanket donation drive was also the part of our effort to reach

out to destitutes in the far flung area. In the future also we look forward to increasing our reach to such people who are in need. With dedicated teammates, we hope we will make a difference," Surinder Singh said.

Bail denied to Punjab-based narco smuggler

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Additional Sessions Judge Kathua Kamlesh Pandit rejected bail application of one Hardeep Singh, resident of Gurdaspur, from whom police recovered 500 Kg Poppy Straw.

Additional Sessions Judge Kathua Kamlesh Pandit, while rejecting bail application, observed that illegal trafficking and trade in Narcotics and Psychotropic substances has posed potential threat to whole society as it is eating the very vitals of the society and menace of traffickers is spreading its tentacles to every nook and corner of UT of Jammu & Kashmir, which cannot be ignored when recovery of contraband is immense. With these observations, the Court rejected bail plea.

Thieves steal cash from revered shrine in Srinagar

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Thieves struck at the revered shrine of Dastgeer Sahib in the Khanyar area of the city, stealing cash from the donation box by breaking open its lock, officials said on Thursday.

They said police have taken cognisance of the incident and started investigations.

The devotees, who visit the shrine for pre-dawn prayers, were shocked to find the broken locks of the donation box at the shrine, they said.

There have been attempts at breaking the safe in the past as well which were caught on the CCTV camera installed at the shrine.