

# Nag devotees celebrate age-old Kanchouth festival across Chenab region

## STATE TIMES NEWS

**BHADARWAH:** Celebrated to commemorate the marriage of Lord Shiva with goddess Parvati, ancient Kanchouth festival was observed across the hills and valleys of Chenab region. The festival is revered as one of the most religious and colorful events for the followers of Nag Culture.

The age-old festival is celebrated across the hilly Chenab valley as locals, mainly Nag followers believe that on this day of Gouri tritya, Lord Shiva and goddess Parvati got married and the latter insisted on a throne made of snow as her wedding gift. To observe age-old tradition and to take Blessings of Lord Shiva and Parvati while celebrating 'Kanchouth' festival, early morning women folk of Bhaderwah and its adjoining areas were seen marching towards their respective Temples and water bodies to offer prayers and rituals. The main programmes were reported from Kotli, Ghatha, Khakhal, Gupt Ganga, Chinote, Sartingal, Nalthi, Dhara, Chinchora, Hanga and other Temples of the area.

Like Karwa Chouth that is celebrated in plains, Kanchouth is celebrated in



Women folk celebrating Kanchouth festival at Bhadarwah.

this hilly Bhadarwah area. Both festivals are celebrated by women to pray for long-life of their husbands and in both, style is almost same.

According to a woman Dimple Devi of Kotli Bhadarwah, on Karwa Chouth women break their fast when the moon appears, while as in case of Kanchouth the fast is broken after Gouri Pooja during the day. On the occasion, the ladies are supposed to take food in every house they visit. In some cases it so happens that they have to take their meals in scores of houses each day. In the night ladies gather, sing Ghurai (Bhajan) and dance at their tune. During these three days the kitchen is managed by husbands. Like Karwa chouth in other parts of the country, Kanchouth or Gauri-Tritya a local festival of Women is celebrated with enthusiasm and

religious fervour in erstwhile hilly Chenab Valley every year during the Shukla Paksha of Magh month in January and February.

Karwa Chouth is celebrated mostly in wider geographical area in plains, Kanchouth and Gauri-Tritya is celebrated in hilly districts of Bhaderwah, Kishtwar, Ramban and Doda of Jammu Province.

Both the festival are celebrated by women to pray for long life of their husbands. Style is almost same. The only difference is the timing. Where as Kanchouth falls in winters while Karwa Chouth is celebrated during summer season. On the festival day women clad in crisp new elegant bridal suit, donning matching jewellery, with henna painted hands pray for the long lives of their spouses. The occasion has great significance in the life of every married woman. The

day is considered pious for women when they can pray to Goddess Gauri for the long and healthy lives of their husbands.

The Kanchouth festival though is of one day yet the festivity remains for three days. During these three days, ladies go in the neighborhood to offer respect (Known as Thel) to one and all irrespective of religion, creed and caste; age and sex and get in return their blessing 'Suhagan Bho'(Live long your husband).

"Kanchouth gives us a different kind of high as on this day, our mother-in-law seeks blessings from us by touching our feet and we get the liberty to enjoy as following the tradition husbands manage the kitchen for three days. Another beauty of this festival is that we touch everyone's feet to seek blessing irrespective of their religion, caste or creed," said Reva Devi Devi of Kotli village.

"This is my 47th 'Kanchouth' and I still feel excited and have goosebumps waiting for this beautiful festival. I hope coming generations will not forget their rich tradition and preserve the beauty of this ancient Nag festival," said Seva Devi of Bhadarwah.

# Abrogation of Art 370 paved way for socio-economic, political empowerment of refugees: Slathia

## STATE TIMES NEWS

**SAMBA:** Lauding the immense contribution of West Pakistan refugees towards nation-building during the past seven and half decades, Pradesh BJP Vice President and former minister Surjeet Singh Slathia said their welfare and equal partnership in resources and decision-making has been top on the agenda of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"Abrogation of Article 370 paved the way for their empowerment as proud citizens of this great nation and removed all the obstacles that denied them the rights as bonafide subjects of Jammu and Kashmir", Slathia said while addressing a day-long conference, organized by the BJP Refugee Cell Vijayapur.

Slathia lamented that those of the refugees settled in Jammu and Kashmir in the wake of horrendous partition in 1947 suffered perpetual neglect, denial and deprivation in terms voting rights, jobs etc due to the wrong policies of the Congress and their local lackeys here unlike others settled in the rest of the country, who prospered and made mark in all the fields.

He referred to the landmark legislation of repealing Article 370 in August 2019 and said this reflected the deep urge of the BJP in general and the



Pradesh BJP Vice President Surjeet Singh Slathia addressing a gathering at Samba.

Prime Minister in particular in undertaking course correction. He said the politically empowered refugees can now take equal part in the democratic process and contribute in decision making in a big way.

Referring to the problems being faced by the people living in the forward areas, Slathia said that every endeavour is being made to ensure their safety, security and wellbeing with an avowed objective of bringing them under the ambit of the overall developmental scenario as per the vision of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas'.

He spelled out the measures taken by the BJP government with regard to one-time settlement of compensation for the West Pakistan refugees, grant of domicile and opening of opportunities in the field of

education and other avocations besides establishment of the bunkers on a massive scale. These are some of the path breaking initiatives that have brought cheer in the lives of these segments of the society. Though much has been done, yet more is still to be carried out for ameliorating the lot of these people and the BJP is committed in this regard, he added.

Responding to various issues flagged during the conference, Slathia said though a multi-pronged strategy is already under the process and implementation in terms of developmental projects and provision of the utility services, the issues raised by the

representatives would be taken up with the concerned agencies for immediate and earnest disposal. He said the Lieutenant Governor's administration has already put in motion various schemes and programmes for the overall progress of all the areas, yet special impetus is being given on the development of the border; backward and hilly areas.

Present on the occasion included DDC Anita Choudhary, BDC Darshan Choudhary, Ashok Khajuria Incharge Refugee Cell BJP, Rakesh Mahajan incharge all cell BJP, Vijay Singh Vice President BJP Samba and others.

## Dental awareness cum hygiene camp organised for jail inmates



Principal District and Sessions Judge Bhaderwah Sunit Gupta inaugurating the camp.

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**BHADARWAH:** With an aim to aware prisoners about the oral hygiene and provide on spot treatment, Chairman District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Bhaderwah (who is Principal District and Session Judge Bhaderwah) inaugurated Dental awareness cum hygiene camp organized for the inmates of District Jail Bhaderwah. The camp was organized by Indira Gandhi Government Dental College in collaboration with J&K Legal Services Authority and Prison Department, J&K. Principal District and Sessions Judge Bhaderwah Sunit Gupta accompanied by Secretary DLSA (Sub Judge) Ramesh Lal, Dr Azhar Malik from Govt Dental College Jammu, Superintendent District Jail Bhaderwah Mushtaq Ahmed

Malla, Advocate Pooja Kotwal and Advocate Mohd Majid Malik Inaugurated the mega camp. PLVs and team of dental surgeons from Indra Gandhi Dental College Jammu were present on the occasion. While addressing after inaugurating the two day camp, Principal District and Session Judge Bhaderwah Sunit Gupta said that dental hygiene is equally important for every person but due to lack of awareness the people normally ignore these issues.

"On the directions of Justice Tashi Rabstan, (Judge High Court of J&K and Ladakh) Executive Chairman J&K Legal Services Authority these camps are being organized across Jammu and Kashmir," Chairman DLSA Gupta added. Superintendent Mushtaq Ahmed Malla thanked Chairman DLSA.

## BADC demands special skill training institutes for Poonch

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**POONCH:** Jammu and Kashmir Border Area Development Conference (JK-BADC), a registered organization working for the welfare of border residents has urged the government of India and Jammu and Kashmir administration to set up special skill training institutes in border districts wherein the local youth be provided customized special skill trainings so that they become employable. The organization in its demand stated that though there are already government ITI and even Polytechnic institutions in the border district but they are not able to cater the current need of the market. He also insisted for setting up same kind of institute for Rajouri district also.

Dr Shazad Ahmed Malik, Chairman of BADC and former Vice Chancellor in his demand regarding setting up special skill training institutes in border areas said that the incumbent ITI and polytechnic institutes in the twin border



districts are unable of handling the market demand.

The former VC informed that the courses offered in already established institutions of border districts do not match the standard and quality that is capable to make the youth employable thus it is imperative that when the government jobs are limited and almost negligible for the youth of border areas, the youth be trained and provided skill so that they do not continue to wait for government jobs but start their own entrepreneurs. These special skill training institutes should also have qualified faculty not only from J & K but also from other parts of India who are expert an successful in their own field.

# Booth Jan Samvad, Gaon Chalo Abhiyan are best way to reach out common masses: Baru

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**NOWSHERA:** BJP JK-UT senior leader and district Parbhari Sanjay Kumar Baru and DDC vice-chairman Jammu Suraj Singh addressed the meeting of district Nowshera-Sunderbani office bearers, senior leaders and mandal Presidents at ThandaPani, Sunderbani. The meeting was chaired by district President Neena Sharma.

Addressing the meeting Sanjay Baru said that BJP programmes like "Booth Jan Samvad" and "Gaon Chalo Abhiyan" are the best way to reach out the common masses and also helping the workers to gear up their ground working and be prepared for the upcoming Parliamentary polls.

Sanjay Baru also reviewed the ongoing "Gaon Chalo Abhiyan" and other Party programmes during the meeting of Nowshera district, which was attended by



BJP JK-UT district Parbhari Sanjay Kumar Baru addressing gathering at Nowshera.

DDC Sangeeta Sharma, Rajinder Sharma, district General Secretaries Pritam Sharma, Sukhdev Choudhary, former District Presidents Captain Ramesh, Captain Balkrishan, BDC Bal Krishan, Thakur Randhir Singh, Sardari Lal, Rakesh Raina, Yuvraj Singh.

Sanjay Kumar Baru, while addressing the party workers stressed that BJP cadre works consistently for the welfare of the society and nation. He said that BJP

worker remains active for every day of the year and never take rest in the service to the fellow citizens. He said that it is a routine work for the BJP activist to visit every home to know their issues and to get them resolved at the earliest, however, now every party worker must leave no stone unturned to ensure that the Narendra Modi government at the Centre receives highest support from Jammu & Kashmir. Suraj Singh asked

the party leaders to reach every section of the society and ensure that the public welfare schemes initiated by the Modi government have reached the targeted population. He said that the real motive of these schemes will only be achieved if all needy fellows, who are a part of the targeted population successfully get the benefit from these schemes to uplift their socio-economic status.

Neena Sharma, speaking on the occasion, asked the party leaders to contribute more hours and initiate regular Pravas in their respective areas. She said that the people are fully prepared to support the Narendra Modi government in the upcoming Parliament elections.

BJYM district president Rajat Singh, Mahila Moreha president Preeti Sharma, District Convenors of Cells and developments were also present in the meeting.

## JKTA deputation meets CEO Udhampur; raises issues of teachers



Deputation of JKTA calling on CEO Udhampur Geetu Bangotra.

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**UDHAMPUR:** The deputation of Jammu Kashmir Teachers Association (JKTA) led by its UT President Bhupinder Singh, UT Patron Kuldeep Katoach, District President Udhampur Sudesh Kumar and District Chairman Surjeet Singh called on CEO Udhampur Geetu Bangotra, DPO Udhampur Chand Krishan and Deputy CEO Dr

Kalpna Jasrotia in the office chamber of Chief education officer Udhampur.

The deputation submitted memorandum regarding the burning issues of teachers faced at Zonal/District level includes grant of post facto permissions to teachers who has already prior enrollment permissions and also to grant the enrollment permissions to teachers to enhance their qualification;

Release of the time bound and Salary arrears of teachers of different Zones of District Udhampur; earned Leave in favour of teachers engaged for Summer/Winter Camps; to update the Service books and Updation of PG Seniority Lists; to release the TA on equity basis as it is released in favour of some officials and some are pending; to unfreeze the JKHRMS portal so that

the necessary correction may be made by the teachers and to clear the Pending liability of MDM.

CEO Udhampur gave patience hearing to the deputation and assured to redress the burning issues raised by JKTA deputation within Short span of time.

Those who were present in the deputation includes: Parbhat Singh ZP Banchari, Ravi Kumar ZP Kalwanta, Angrez Singh ZP Chenani, Gopal Singh ZP Ghordi, Vijay Paul ZP Majalta, Senior members Wazir Mohd, Isher Dass, Bharat Bushan, Satpaul Singh, Rajeev Sharma, Bhim Singh, Rattan Singh, Ifrad Jameel, Surat Singh, Angrez Singh, Liaqat Ali, Sandeep Singh, Mohd. Rafiq and others.

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**RAJOURI:** In an effort to address public issues, Commissioner Secretary, Information Technology, Prerna Puri, along with the Deputy Commissioner, Om Prakash Bhagat conducted an extensive public darbar at Lamberi block in Rajouri district.

The event, attended by PRI representatives and locals, recorded several issues including road macadamization, bolstering health infrastructure, staff shortage, water scarcity, repairing of old handpumps, timely rectification of electro-mechanical components of water supply schemes, appointment of an Urdu teacher at GHSS Lamberi, expediting pending instalments under PMAY, resumption of work on GHSS Lamberi, dilapidated condition of road leading to Dandani, sanction of a veterinary center at Lamberi, proper drainage system on internal roads, enhanced pension for persons with disabilities, improving internet connectivity at Garan, tackling staff shortages at HS Garan, construction of road from Lamberi to Garan and black-topping of Rajal to Garan road, opening of a bank branch at Garan and start of work on Dabbar Bagnoti bridge.

Commissioner Secretary inspected the stalls established by different government departments highlighting their respective welfare and development schemes. He interacted with the officers and visitors there and sought feedback on



Commissioner Secretary, Information Technology, Prerna Puri distributing baby care kits among mothers of newborn babies.

impact of various Centrally Sponsored and UT government schemes on lives of the people in the district.

The attendees were not only heard but were also motivated to explore and avail the benefits offered by these initiatives.

During her speech at the public darbar, the Commissioner Secretary conveyed government's commitment towards addressing the issues brought forward by the local community. She said that top priority of the Government is to ensure that basic facilities and services are delivered to the general public in an efficient and timely manner. She reassured the attendees that their demands have been heard, and their concerns would be redressed on top priority. The Commissioner Secretary underscored the significance of collaboration between the government and the public saying that the development process can only be successful when these both work in tandem. She encouraged the community to actively participate in the journey towards a better quality of life for everyone. She stated that the role of the Government is to facilitate progress, but true

development requires the active engagement and support of the people. During the public outreach camp, the Commissioner Secretary said that the primary goal of holding these public darbars is to establish an accountable and responsive governance and ensure prompt redressal of grievances of the public. She highlighted the significant progress made in this regard, stating that out of 292 grievances raised during the last five public darbars, 164 have been successfully redressed. Recognizing the importance of proper implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) scheme, Prerna Puri directed the officers to ensure effective monitoring of the projects to ensure their completion within the predetermined timelines.

In response to concerns about internet connectivity, the Commissioner Secretary informed that 968 sites in Jammu and Kashmir have been identified for installation of mobile towers. She reassured the public that necessary steps are being taken to address the issue, with the aim of installing the mobile towers by March 2024.

The Commissioner Secretary

valued the opinions and suggestions of the public, recognizing their role as vital stakeholders in the process of governance. By fostering an inclusive and participatory environment, the program aims to establish a strong bond between the government and the people it serves, she added.

Later, the Commissioner Secretary distributed baby care kits among the mothers of newborn babies under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao campaign besides presenting certificates of cutting and tailoring to women beneficiaries.

Earlier, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted the achievements recorded under various schemes being implemented by different departments in the district including Ayushman Bharat, PMGSY, JJM, PM KISAN, PMAY-G, etc. He also presented the status of grievances raised by the public during the recent public outreach camps and the redressal of those grievances.

## Training Programme for police officers on JJ Act held

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**RAJOURI:** A training programme for Jammu and Kashmir police officers was held at the District Police Lines Rajouri jointly by Department of Social Welfare,



SSP Rajouri Amritpal Singh and others during the programme.

National Development Foundation and J&K Police.

The programme was inaugurated by SSP Rajouri Amritpal Singh (IPS) in presence of Rajeev Khajuria from NDF and Abdul Raheem DSWO.

During this training program also named under Mission Vatsalya, the partici-

pating police officers were briefed on Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 for implementation of JJ Act and Strengthening of Child Protection Services.

All the aspects of JJ Act and Child Protection were discussed in length. Special emphasis was laid down on

procedures of handling juvenile cases, children in conflict with law, recording and reporting of Juvenile cases & roles of JJBs and CWCs.

Mentionable that the lecture delivered by resource person, Ms Nimisha Srivastava, ED Council to Secure Justice, on "Required Communication Skills & Do's and Don'ts for Police Officers while dealing juveniles" remained buzzword among the participating officers.

The training program marked the presence of all senior police officers, SHOs, officers of Special Juvenile Police Units, Women Police Station Rajouri and Women Help Desks of District Rajouri.

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