

Swami Ram Shiv Ashram celebrates success of month-long spiritual event "Maag Maas"

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Swami Ram Shiv Ashram, a renowned spiritual socio cultural Trik institution, successfully concluded its month-long spiritual event, which witnessed overwhelming participation from scholars, devotees, and enthusiasts from across the globe. The event, which took place from January 13 to February 12, 2025, featured recitations, explanations, deliberations, of sacred texts of Sanatan Dharma in general and Kashmir Shaiv Trik Parampara in particular, fostering a deeper understanding and connection with the divine.

The program was designed as a month long course in this Civilizational Learning Centre which is first of its kind in UT of J&K.

The program included the recitation, explanation , discussion on the ancient pre-Vedic scriptures of Shaiv Darshan with occasional conjectures of Vedic philosophy.

The attendees were



enthralled with the lucid explanations by eminent Shaiv scholar and Kashmir Rituals and Culture expert Sanjay Raina.

Topics explained and deliberated included among others the scriptures of Bahurup Garb of Aagam/Tantre Shastra, Amog Shiv Kavach coupled with Rudra Gayatri Mantra and Mahamritanjy Mantra, Mahamaheshwaracharya

Abhinav Gupta experienced and written Bairav Stotre, Sangreh Stotre composed by the Param Guru of MM Abhinav Gupta, the MM Utpal Dev Ji Maharaj.

The audience was mesmerised with the explanation of well known Aarti comprising of 36 Shastras interalia 36 elements of God's creation which was recited by Maha Maheshwarcharya Swami

Ram Ji Maharaj at Fatekadal, Srinagar about more that 100 years ago and which was penned by his disciple and ardent Shaiv Scholar MM Vidyadhar Ji Maharaj.

The audience was highly charged with the emotions ,goose bumps and feeling trans. Eminent scholars and spiritual leaders graced the occasion, sharing their insights and expertise with the attendees.

The program also included in between the pilgrimage to Maha Kumbh by bus in which 44 devotees participated and continued the spiritual journey which too was streamlined live as other days. In addition to the physical gathering, the institution also provided a virtual platform for devotees worldwide to participate and experience the event online. This initiative enabled people from diverse backgrounds and locations to come together, promoting unity and spiritual growth.

On the penultimate day , the organisers gave live

demo of the celebrations of Herath (Har Ratri) and also explained the difference between the Shiv Ratri and the Herath.

On the demand of the community the Ashram arranged a compact set of Vatak Mandap ingredients to facilitate the continuance of the rich age old customs in a small sized flats/houses which was appreciated and evinced huge demand.

"We are thrilled to have received such an incredible response to our event," said Surinder Kachroo, the President and JK Khar, Gen Secretary of Swami Ram Shiv Ashram.

"Our institution remains committed to promoting spiritual awareness, education, and community building. We look forward to organizing more such initiatives in the future," they said.

Swami Ram Shiv Ashram expressed its heartfelt gratitude to all participants, scholars, and devotees who made this event a resounding success.

BSS celebrates 130th Birth Anniversary of Acharya Srimat Swami Pranavanandaji Maharaj

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The 130th Birth Anniversary of Acharya Srimat Swami Pranavanandaji Maharaj, the revered founder of Bharat Sevashram Sangha (BSS), was celebrated with great devotion and enthusiasm at BSS Ashram Panjgrain, Nagrota, near here. The event was part of the global celebrations held across all national and international branches of the Sangha.

The occasion was graced by the presence of Swami Mrinmayanandaji Maharaj, Shri Niladri Barman, Principal, teachers, and students of Swami Pranavananda Vidyamandir.

The event also witnessed the participation of prominent dignitaries, including Chander Mohan Gupta, Ex-Mayor of Jammu Municipal Corporation, Dr. B. B. Sharma, Dr. Salathia, and Dr. Deepak De from BSS Medical.

The celebrations began with Vedic prayers and devotional songs, followed by enlightening discourses on the life and teachings of Swami



Dignitaries and BSS members celebrating 130th Birth Anniversary of Acharya Srimat Swami Pranavanandaji.

Pranavanandaji Maharaj. Swami Mrinmayanandaji Maharaj highlighted the spiritual and humanitarian contributions of the revered saint, emphasizing his mission of service, self-discipline, and dedication to humanity.

The students of Swami Pranavananda Vidyamandir performed cultural programs, including Bhajans and speeches, showcasing the impact of Swamiji's teachings on young minds.

The dignitaries present lauded the efforts of BSS Jammu in carrying forward the mission of selfless service, education, and healthcare for the underprivileged.

Speaking on the occasion, Chander Mohan Gupta gave a brief account of idealism and gospels of Swami Pranavanandaji Maharaj and urged everyone to follow the path of truth and disciplined life.

The program concluded with a community feast (bhandara), reflecting the values of unity and selfless service, as envisioned by Swami Pranavanandaji Maharaj.

The celebrations served as a reminder of his profound teachings and legacy, inspiring attendees to dedicate themselves to the welfare of society.

Yogi condoles demise of KP Youth Amit Koul in tragic road accident

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: M.K. Yogi, In-Charge Apni Party Shangus Constituency, Anantnag, and senior leader, expressed deep sorrow over the untimely demise of Amit Koul, a young Kashmiri Pandit from Patoli Brahmana, Jammu.

Koul lost his life in a tragic car accident at Battery Chashma on the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway in District Ramban. In his



statement, Yogi extended heartfelt condolences, deep

sympathy, and solidarity with the bereaved family. He prayed to the Almighty to grant eternal peace to the departed soul and strength to the grieving family to bear this irreparable loss.

Yogi also appealed to Lieutenant Governor of J&K to provide financial compensation to the next of kin and offer a government job to a family member to support them in this difficult time.

Kesri condemns IED blast, expresses grief over martyrdom of 2 soldiers

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Shiv Sena Hindustan J&K President Pt Rajesh Kesri on Wednesday condemned the IED blast in Laleali area of Akhnoor sector, in which two soldiers were martyred.

Addressing a press conference in Jammu, Kesri expressed his heartfelt tribute to the two brave soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

He extended his deepest condolences to the bereaved families and acknowledged the unwavering commitment and valour of the armed forces in safeguarding the nation.

Condemning the attack, Kesri strongly criticized Pakistan's continued support for terrorism, which he said has been responsible for repeated attacks on Indian security forces.

"The cowardly act of targeting our soldiers through



IED blasts is yet another

proof of Pakistan's malicious intent to destabilize peace in the region.

It is time for strict action to put an end to such cross-border terrorism," he added.

He stated that such attempts by anti-national elements to disrupt peace in J&K will never succeed.

He emphasized that the sacrifices of the brave soldiers will not go in vain, and the nation stands united in its resolve to root out

terrorism.

"The martyrdom of our brave hearts is a reminder of the challenges we face in safeguarding our borders. The entire nation salutes their supreme sacrifice, and we stand in solidarity with their families during this moment of grief," he added.

Prominent among those present on the occasion include Balveer Kumar , Rajkumar Baba and Balwant Fauji.

ABRSM demands withdrawal of UGC Letter on discontinuation of advance increments

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Akhil Bharatiya Rashtriya Shaikshik Mahasangha (ABRSM) on Wednesday demanded the University Grants Commission (UGC) to withdraw its recent letter regarding the discontinuation of advance increments at the entry level of academic staff. ABRSM asserted that this directive is contrary to natural justice and will adversely impact teachers and academic staff across the country.

President of ABRSM, Prof Narayan Lal Gupta highlighted that the UGC letter is in direct contradiction with Clause 19.1 of the UGC Regulations 2018, which was notified in the Gazette of India on 18th July 2018.

This regulation explicitly pro-



ABRSM delegation meeting with UGC official.

vides for five non-compounded advance increments for Ph.D. holders, two for M.Phil. degree holders, and two for postgraduate degree holders in professional courses like LL.M., M.Tech., M.Arch., and M.D. at the entry level of Assistant Professorship. The Ministry of Education's letter dated

2.11.2017, which the UGC letter cited, denies such increments, but it predates the legally binding UGC 2018 regulations and should not be considered a valid basis for policy changes. General Secretary of ABRSM, Prof Geeta Bhatt pointed out that advance increments have been a longstanding

provision in the UGC 1998, 2010, and 2018 Regulations, making the recent clarification unwarranted. She also emphasized that Gazette Notifications are official and legally binding documents of the Government of India, and as a statutory body under the Ministry of Education, the UGC must

adhere to them. Implementing this new directive could lead to financial recoveries from teachers, causing undue distress and financial hardship across the academic community.

Additionally, multiple government memorandums and court judgments, including those from the Supreme Court and High Courts, have raised concerns about delayed financial recoveries by employers. Implementing this UGC letter may force many affected teachers into legal battles, adding to the judicial burden.

In light of these legal, financial, and ethical concerns, ABRSM has urged the UGC to withdraw its letter with immediate effect to protect the rights and financial stability of teachers nationwide.

Sainik Samaj Party demands separate Jammu State or UT instead of Statehood restoration

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Sainik Samaj Party (SSP), J&K UT, has called upon the Union Government and the Lieutenant Governor to consider the aspirations of the people of Jammu and grant them a separate Union Territory (UT).

Addressing the media, Col SS Pathania, Chief Convener and President of SSP, emphasized that restoring statehood, as demanded by the National Conference (NC)-led opposition, would not serve the interests of Jammu's people. Col Pathania stated that the restoration of statehood would shift power from the Lieutenant Governor to a Chief



Minister, leading to increased political domination from Kashmir-centric leadership.

He argued that this would do little for Jammu's development while creating more ministerial positions and legislative council seats, ultimately reinforcing the existing political imbalance.

Highlighting the prolonged discrimination faced by the Jammu region for over 70 years, he pointed to issues like political marginalization, lack of develop-

ment, and demographic concerns. He asserted that with a population of over 70 lakh and an area of 26,000 square kilometers, Jammu qualifies for statehood, citing the example of Goa, which was granted statehood despite having a much smaller population of 17 lakh and an area of just 3,500 square kilometers.

Managing the entire 42,000 square kilometers of Jammu & Kashmir as a single UT is not a pragmatic governance model, he argued. Additionally, he called for the implementation of Article 371 provisions in Jammu to safeguard local jobs, land ownership, and cultural heritage.

The SSP reiterated its demand for a separate Jammu state or UT, ensuring the region's independent development and addressing long-standing grievances of its people.

Randhawa calls for spreading message of Love & Compassion on Guru Ravi Das Jayanti



MLA Bahu Constituency, Vikram Randhawa speaking at Guru Ravi Das Jayanti celebration.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Senior BJP leader and MLA Bahu Constituency, Vikram Randhawa on Wednesday paid rich tributes to Guru Ravi Das on the occasion of Guru Ravi Dass Jayanti at a function organized by Guru Ravi Das Sabha, Bahu Fort.

He called for imbuing the spirit of love, compassion, peace, and harmony as preached by great saints and seers throughout their lives, emphasizing that striving for social justice and equality would be the true tribute to Guru Ravi Das Ji. Addressing the gathering, Randhawa underscored the significance of Guru Ravi Das Ji's teachings in contemporary times. "The relevance of the teachings of great Gurus and saints assumes greater significance today than ever before, as intolerance, hatred, and greed have

unfortunately become widespread," he said. He expressed hope that Guru Ravi Das Ji's life and teachings would continue to inspire and motivate humanity to work for the betterment of all, irrespective of caste, creed, or color. "As a society, we have a moral responsibility to uplift marginalized sections and ensure equitable opportunities for growth and progress for all," he asserted.

Randhawa highlighted the need to sustain, strengthen, and pass on the glorious heritage of inclusiveness.

"The divine message of righteousness must be spread far and wide. Only the spirit of humanism can guide society to overcome hatred, animosity, and bitterness, making this world a better place to live in," he added. He further elaborated on the impact of Guru Ravi Das Ji's teachings, stating that they have

played a transformative role in shaping society by fostering an environment conducive to unity and coexistence.

"Guru Ji emerged as a beacon of light at a time when society was plagued by discrimination based on caste and creed. His efforts ensured that all segments of society could live with dignity and honor," he remarked.

Randhawa urged people to take a pledge to follow Guru Ravi Das Ji's teachings in letter and spirit.

"The best way to honor this apostle of peace is to build a society based on the principles of social justice, equality, compassion, love, and togetherness," he affirmed.

The event witnessed the participation of various dignitaries, community leaders, and devotees who gathered to pay homage to the revered saint and reflect upon his enduring legacy.

PSPS GCW Gandhi Nagar starts short-term Training Program on "Retail Management"

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Department of Commerce and Department of Computer Sciences, Padma Shri Padma Sachdev Government College for Women, Gandhi Nagar, has commenced a specialized Retail Management Training Program in collaboration with ICT Academy and Infosys Foundation.

This initiative aims to equip students with essential skills and industry knowledge to excel in the dynamic retail sector. The inaugural ceremony of the program was held today, witnessed the esteemed presence of distinguished speakers, educators and professionals in the field.

fostering career readiness. He laid stress on how this training program will enable students to secure promising job opportunities in retail and related sectors.

Prof. Arjun Kotwal, Head of the Department, Computer Science, and Dr. Asha Devi, Head of the Department, Commerce, were the also the keynote speakers at the event.

Both dignitaries emphasized the importance of industry-aligned training and assured their full support in ensuring the successful execution of the Retail Management Training Program. They highlighted how such initiatives empower students with practical knowledge and professional



PSPS GCW Gandhi Nagar faculty with dignitaries at a programme.

Ajay Yousuf, ICT Academy and Infosys Foundation, officially started the program, focuses on enhancing employability by providing hands-on training in retail operations, customer service, sales strategies, and business management. He highlights the program designed that bridge the gap between academic learning and industry expectations, ensuring students are well-prepared for opportunities in the retail industry.

Further, Prof. S.P. Saraswat, Principal, Padma Shri Padma Sachdev, GCW, Gandhi Nagar Jammu, applauded and congratulate the efforts of entire team for organizing such useful programmes for the benefit of students.

Lovetesh Kumar, Senior Manager, ICT Academy and Infosys Foundation, emphasized the significance of such skill-based programs in

skills, making them competitive in the job market.

The trainer of the program, Suraj, also introduced the participants to the course structure, learning objectives, and key industry insights that would be covered during the training. She emphasized the importance of practical exposure and interactive learning in mastering retail management concepts. Her session provided a clear roadmap for students to develop essential skills for careers in the retail sector.

The event also welcomed Prof. Liaquat Jafri, HOD (Department of Urdu), Dr. Himani Arora (Assistant Professor; Department of Commerce) and Prof. Paramjeet Singh (Assistant Professor; Department of Computer science), whose presence further enriched the inaugural ceremony.