

DIPR organises workshop on 'Ethical Journalism and Evolving Landscape of Journalism'



Director Information, Nitish Rajora speaking at workshop on 'Ethical Journalism and Evolving Landscape of Journalism'.

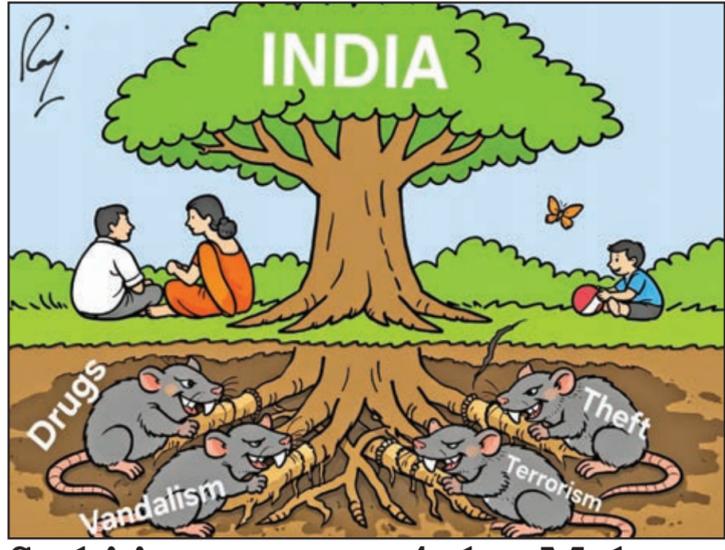
STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Directorate of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) on Saturday organised a day-long workshop on 'Ethical Journalism and the Evolving Landscape of Journalism', for Media persons of Jammu at Media Complex here. The objective of the workshop was to sensitise the media professionals and communication practitioners about the changing dynamics of journalism and the critical importance of ethical standards in the present digital age. During the workshop, Regional Director IIMC Jammu, Dr. Dilip Kumar and Assistant Professor, Vishav were the

resource persons. The Resource persons enlightened the participants on emerging trends in journalism, challenges posed by misinformation, and the growing influence of digital platforms on news consumption and dissemination. They also spoke in length about the ethics in journalism and importance of ethical journalism in view of rising AI use in Journalism as well as digital journalism. Speaking on the occasion, Director Information, Nitish Rajora highlighted the vital responsibility of journalists in the present scenario, stressing that the role of the media extends beyond

reporting facts to shaping informed, balanced and responsible public opinion. "Journalists today operate in a fast-paced environment where information travels instantly. This makes adherence to ethical principles like accuracy, fairness, objectivity and accountability more important than ever", he said. He also underscored the need for continuous capacity building to keep pace with technological advancements and evolving audience expectations. The Director underlined the need for constant interaction between DIPR and Mediapersons, adding that

the department will make it a regular feature to organise get-togethers for Journalists. In his welcome address, Joint Director Information (hr), Dr. Zahoor Ahmad Raina spoke about the role of media in present scenario. He also highlighted the importance of fairness and credibility in the media. Joint Director Information Jammu, Deepak Dubey in his concluding remarks emphasized on the role of Mediapersons in present scenario of evolving digital age. He also said such workshops will be conducted in coming times also to strengthen collaborations between media institutions and government departments to

promote professional excellence, transparency and responsible journalism. During the workshop, an interactive session was also held between the participants and resource persons, sharing experiences and seeking guidance on ethical dilemmas faced in professional practice. Deputy Director Information (PR), Javid Ahmad Rather; Information Officer Alka Misra along with other officers and officials of DIPR were present on the occasion. The workshop was attended by Mediapersons of various National and local Media organisations.



Yudhvir Sethi inaugurates 4-day Maha Shivratri Mela at Peer Kho

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Directorate of Tourism, Jammu in collaboration with the district administration Jammu organized the Maha Shivratri Mela at Peer Kho Cave Temple. The four-day festivities at Peer Kho Cave Temple commenced from February 14 to 17, 2026 with the blessings of Mahant Rajinder Nath of the temple, was inaugurated by Chief Guest, Yudhvir Sethi, MLA Jammu East and BJP J&K Vice President and former Minister Priya Sethi by lighting sacred Jyot along with Director Tourism Jammu Dr. Vikas Gupta, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Jammu Anusuya Jamwal, Deputy Director Tourism, Savita Choulhan, Shashi Khajuria (Coordinator), Peer Kho Temple, and other dignitaries.



MLA Jammu East, Yudhvir Sethi with other dignitaries inaugurating Maha Shivratri Mela at Peer Kho Cave Temple.

In his address, Chief Guest Yudhvir Sethi underscored the profound significance of the Maha Shivratri Mahotsav, extending a heartfelt invitation to the public to join in the celebrations. He encouraged everyone to immerse themselves in the region's rich cultural heritage and unite in promoting communal harmony and progress. He emphasized the significance of such cultural and religious events in promoting Jammu & Kashmir's rich heritage and boosting tourism and invited everyone to partake in the celebrations. Director Tourism Jammu Vikas Gupta also informed that the Tourism Department would organise multiple events during the four-day Mela, featuring cultural programs. Moreover, Indian-style wrestling matches would also be held during the Mela. "The Maha Shivratri Mahotsav features a series of cultural events and religious ceremonies, offering an enriching experience for visi-

tors. This event serves as a vibrant celebration of faith, culture and community, inviting people from all backgrounds to unite in devotion and festivity," he added. Additional Deputy Commissioner Anusuya Jamwal informed that the four-day religious and cultural event will feature devotional programmes, cultural performances and various departmental stalls to attract devotees and visitors from across the region. "Artists from the Cultural Academy will present performances, while departments including Tourism and other government agencies will set up stalls showcasing cuisine,

tourism promotion and public outreach initiatives. Religious performances and cultural programmes will also be organised on February 15 and 16, while a traditional wrestling event (dangal) is scheduled for February 17," she said. Mahant Rajinder Nath extended Maha Shivratri greetings to the people of Jammu and urged residents to visit the temple, seek blessings of Bhagwan Shiva and actively participate in the celebrations. He also called upon devotees to maintain cleanliness during the Mela and support the campaign for a polythene-free environment at the venue.

Dr Andrabi chairs administrative meeting of Waqf Board for upcoming Ramadan preparedness

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi, the Chairperson of the Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board chaired a dedicated administrative meeting of the Board at its Central Office in Srinagar today to assess and finalise arrangements for the upcoming holy month of Ramadan. Executive Magistrate of the Board Ishtiyaq Mohiuddin convened the meeting. The review brought together all senior administrative officers of the Board from whole of Kashmir division as well as imams and ulama from across the valley to ensure comprehensive planning. During the meeting, detailed deliberations were held to set in place all required arrangements - including logistical support, infrastructure readiness at mosques and shrines, sanitation, rush manage-



ment, and other essential services. A coordinated roadmap and plan of action was formulated with emphasis on harmony between different units and departments. Speaking on the occasion, Chairperson of the Board emphasised on the need of providing fool proof facilities to all during the month long special

prayers and congregations at all places. "Waqf Board has maintained the trust of the people during the past three years, and thus the public expectations have risen & we have to rededicate ourselves with much enterprise and dedication to come up to the public requirements and expectations", said Andrabi. She said that team work is the key to success. Andrabi also asked the Administrators to coordinate with the government departments involved as service providers and devise a comprehensive coordinated work plan to be more effective. Dr Andrabi highlighted the significant role of imams and khateeb during Ramadan, urging them to promote piety, peace and social harmony through their daily sermons, and contribute positively to the spiritual atmosphere of the holy month.

Two-day Training Programme on e-Auction of JKEL-2 Retail Vends concludes at Nagrota



Excise Commissioner, J&K, Subash Chander Chibber interacting with the participants.

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: A two-day training programme on the e-auction of JKEL-2 retail vends for the Financial Year 2026-27 concluded on Saturday at the Excise & Taxation Training Institute, Nagrota. The programme was held on 13th and 14th February 2026 and witnessed enthusiastic participation from representatives of J&K Bank and various stakeholders/prospective bidders. The programme was graced by the Excise Commissioner, J&K, Subash Chander Chibber, who interacted with the participants and appreciated their active engagement. The Principal, Excise & Taxation Training Institute, Nagrota, Renu Kumari, welcomed the dignitaries and participants and emphasized the importance of transparency and digital transformation in the auction process. A dedicated team from J&K Bank conducted a comprehensive demonstration of the e-auction portal. The team explained, in a step-by-step manner, the entire process including bidder registration, login procedures, document submission, bidding methodology, payment flow, and other technical aspects. During the interactive sessions, stakeholders/prospective bidders raised various

queries related to the e-auction process and portal. Experts from the department, along with bank officials, provided detailed clarifications to ensure complete understanding of the system and its functioning. In his address, the Excise Commissioner appreciated the proactive participation of stakeholders/prospective bidders and encouraged them to fully acquaint themselves with the system before participating in the auction process. In the concluding remarks, the Principal,

Excise & Taxation Training Institute, Nagrota presented the vote of thanks, expressing gratitude to the Excise Commissioner and Officers of the department for their support and guidance. She also informed prospective bidders that the pre-bid meeting is scheduled for 17 February 2026 at 11:00 AM at the Excise & Taxation Training Institute, Nagrota, and urged all stakeholders to attend for further clarification and guidance.

Tarun Chugh engages Punjabi NRI diaspora on Punjab's growth roadmap

STATE TIMES NEWS
CHANDIGARH: Chandigarh witnessed a significant interaction with members of the Punjabi diaspora in the presence of Union Minister Virendra Kumar and Tarun Chugh. Overseas Punjabis from India and abroad participated in a detailed dialogue on development and investment opportunities in Punjab. Senior BJP leaders, including Ashwani Sharma, Iqbal Singh Lalpura, Manpreet Badal, Avinash Rai Khanna, Manoranjan Kalia, Subhash Sharma and Anil Sareen, were also present. Addressing the gathering, Tarun Chugh said the Bharatiya Janata Party identifies individuals not by the colour of their passport but by their Indian roots and commitment to the motherland. He remarked that since May 26, 2014, India has established a strong global identity, emerging as one of the fastest-growing major economies with notable progress in infrastructure and defence exports. Chugh stressed that while India has accelerated its development, Punjab must introspect. He highlighted concerns including fiscal pressures, limit-



ed large-scale investments and youth migration. Without decisive leadership and clear policy direction, he said, these challenges would persist. He advocated for a "double-engine government" to align state and central policies for faster growth, assuring NRIs of transparent governance, strong law and order; and zero tolerance towards terrorism, crime and corruption. Union Minister Virendra Kumar described the Indian diaspora as a vital partner in national progress. He said that under the leadership of Narendra Modi, the government's vision of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas" aims to foster inclusive development, expressing confidence that collective efforts can restore Punjab's growth momentum.

Dr. Zabeer Ahmed gets additional charge of director, CSIR-CIMAP

STATE TIMES NEWS
LUCKNOW: Director of CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine, Jammu, Dr. Zabeer Ahmed today assumed the additional charge as Director of the Lucknow-based institute, CSIR-Central Institute of Medicinal Plants. The additional responsibility has been assigned to him upon completion of the tenure of former Director, Dr. Prabodh Kumar Trivedi. According to an official order issued, the arrangement has come into effect from February 14, 2026, he will hold the additional charge until a regular Director is appointed or until further orders are issued. CSIR-CIMAP, Lucknow, is a premier national laboratory dedicated to research on medicinal and aromatic plants, while CSIR-IIM Jammu is known for its work in natural products, drug discovery and integrative medicine. Officials stated that the interim arrangement is aimed at ensuring leadership continuity and the smooth progress of ongoing scientific programmes. With over 28 years of research experience in drug discovery, Dr. Ahmed has made significant contributions in inflammatory and metabolic disorders, including diabetes, obesity and rheumatoid arthritis. He has led the implementation of major Government of India missions such as the CSIR Phytopharmaceutical Mission, Aroma Mission and Floriculture Mission, and has played a key role in the Purple



Revolution through lavender cultivation. Several successful start-ups and translational projects have emerged under his leadership. He has also been instrumental in establishing two Industrial Biotech Parks at Ghatti (Kathua) and Handwara in Jammu and Kashmir. An accomplished scientist, Dr. Ahmed has published over 150 peer-reviewed research papers, guided 15 PhD and 65 postgraduate students, and holds 15 patents. His recognitions include the Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar (as a Team Member for the CSIR Aroma Mission), UT-level Science and Technology Award by the J&K Government, the Maharaja Hari Singh Award for Excellence, and an Award of Appreciation for excellence in Science and Technology by the Indian Army.

JU to host National Hackathon 'Innovathon 1.0', Startup Fest PRAGATI-2026 on Feb 16-17

35 teams shortlisted from across India; startups, student innovators to showcase ideas

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: In a historic initiative to promote innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurial excellence, the University of Jammu (JU) is set to launch Innovathon 1.0, a prestigious 48-hour national-level hackathon being organised for the first time in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The hackathon, along with PRAGATI-2026: Startup Fest, is being organised by the Skill Incubation, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Centre (SIEDC), University of Jammu, on 16th-17th February, 2026, at the University campus. Innovathon 1.0 has

received an overwhelming response from across the country, with 107 teams comprising 321 participants registering from universities, engineering institutions, management institutes, startups, and innovation groups. Based on a structured, merit-based evaluation process, 35 teams have been shortlisted by a panel of external experts after careful assessment of the originality, innovation potential, technical feasibility, and societal relevance of the proposed ideas. The selected teams represent a wide national footprint, with participation from States and Union Territories including Jammu

& Kashmir, Ladakh, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana, Bihar, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttarakhand, reflecting the truly national character and significance of the hackathon. Envisioned in alignment with the national vision of Viksit Bharat @ 2047, Mission YUVA, and the transformative goals of the National Education Policy 2020, Innovathon 1.0 will provide a unique platform for young innovators to develop technology-driven solutions in key thematic areas such as Artificial Intelligence and Data Analytics, Cyber-Physical

Systems and emerging technologies, Sustainable Development, Health-Tech, and Technology-enabled Tourism. During the intensive hackathon, participants will work to develop functional prototypes, business models, and scalable solutions addressing real-world societal and developmental challenges. The initiative is expected to strengthen innovation capacity, enhance employability, and encourage youth to translate their ideas into impactful entrepreneurial ventures. Alongside the hackathon, the University will organise PRAGATI-2026: A Startup Fest, which will showcase more than thirty emerging

startups and student-led entrepreneurial ventures from diverse sectors including sustainable products, creative industries, wellness, food innovations, and eco-friendly enterprises. The Startup Fest will provide an opportunity for students and aspiring entrepreneurs to present their innovations, interact with industry leaders and mentors, and gain valuable exposure to the startup ecosystem. The initiative reflects the University's continuous efforts towards promoting entrepreneurship through incubation support, skill development programmes, and academic initiatives such as the innovative

Design Your Degree programme. In his message, Prof. Umesh Rai, Vice-Chancellor, JU said that the organisation of Innovathon 1.0 and PRAGATI-2026 marks a significant milestone in strengthening the culture of innovation and entrepreneurship within the University. He stated that these initiatives provide students with valuable exposure to real-world problem-solving, industry interaction, and innovation-driven learning. He further emphasised that the University of Jammu is committed to providing meaningful platforms that encourage creativity, support entrepreneurial aspi-

rations, and empower youth to contribute to national development and the emerging knowledge economy. These pioneering initiatives are expected to witness enthusiastic participation from students, innovators, startups, and academic institutions from across the country. With the launch of Innovathon 1.0 and organisation of PRAGATI-2026, the University of Jammu continues to strengthen its role as an emerging centre of innovation, entrepreneurship, and academic excellence, contributing meaningfully to the innovation landscape of Jammu and Kashmir and the nation.