

International Women's Day celebrated at GGM Science College

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Women Empowerment and Development Cell of Govt. Gandhi Memorial Science College celebrated International Women's Day under the patronage of Prof. (Dr.) Romesh Kumar Gupta, Principal, and the guidance of Prof. Yasmeen Mughal, Convener of the Cell. The event, centered on this year's theme "Accelerate Action," aimed to highlight the significance of women's empowerment and the need for progressive change in society.

Sapna Kotwal, Secretary, J&K Advisory Board for Development of Pahari Speaking People (Now PEG) was the Chief Guest on the occasion. The programme commenced with a formal welcome address by Prof. Yasmeen Mughal, who emphasized the role of education in empowering



Faculty members felicitating achievers during the event.

women.

Principal, Prof. (Dr.) Romesh Kumar Gupta also addressed the gathering and appreciated the efforts of the committee in organizing the event. He encouraged students to actively participate in initiatives promoting gender equality and recognized the importance of creating an inclusive environment for women. The highlight of the event was a Symposium in which ten

speakers across semesters expressed their views on the theme in Dogri, English, Hindi, and Urdu, showcasing not only their progressive thoughts but also their linguistic and intellectual diversity. The symposium provided a platform for young minds to engage in meaningful discussions on women's empowerment. An Art Exhibition was also organized by the Cell displaying a range of artworks,

posters, collages made by talented students Mohd. Zaigham Salaria and Ishit Kaur. Postgraduate students from the Department of English also contributed their creative expressions to the exhibition, which was widely appreciated.

Following the symposium and exhibition, a Felicitation Ceremony was held to recognize the achievements of meritorious students in various fields. For excellence in literary and cultural domains, Manmeet Kour, Sumeet Kumar, Chakshu Sharma, Maithly, and Mohd. Ayoub Jan were presented mementos and certificates of appreciation. For excellence in Fine Arts, Mohd. Zaigham Salaria and Ishit Kaur were also felicitated

and their artwork on display was much appreciated by all. Certificates of Participation were presented to speakers Imayat Kour, Sanchu Devi, Rahul Kumar and Tanisha Sharma. Speaking on the occasion, Chief Guest Sapna Kotwal shared her inspiring journey, highlighting the challenges and triumphs of women in leadership roles. She encouraged students to break barriers and work towards a more inclusive and equitable society.

Her speech resonated deeply with the audience, reinforcing the importance of taking concrete steps towards women's empowerment. The success of the programme was ensured by the efforts of the organizing committee members, including Dr. Mona Sethi, Dr. Revika Arora, Dr. Neha Mahajan, Prof. Akanksha Parihar, Prof. Reetika Rani, Dr. Nisha, Dr. Preeti Verma, Dr. Rohit Bhardwaj, and Dr. Varun Arya.

The programme concluded with a formal vote of thanks presented by Dr. Revika Arora while the proceedings were managed by Mohd Ayoub Jan and Maithly, students of semester VI.

Balbir advises street vendors to register for E-Shram Card

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir BJP Spokesperson and former Vice Chairperson, Balbir Ram Rattan, has urged street vendors to register themselves for the E-Shram Card, emphasizing its numerous benefits.

Balbir Ram Rattan, while speaking to a group of rehfradi vendors in Jammu city, explained how this initiative, launched by the Government of India, aims to provide social security and financial benefits to unorganized sector workers.

Balbir highlighted that street vendors, hawkers, daily wage labourers, construction workers, domestic workers, and other unorganized workers are eligible for this scheme. He encouraged all those who qualify to register to take full advantage of the government scheme's benefits.

Balbir explained that the E-Shram Card serves as a unique identification number (UAN) card that helps in tracking and supporting unorganized workers. Elaborating on it, he told that registered workers get ₹2 lakh insurance coverage under the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) in case of accidental death or total dis-



BJP Spokesperson Balbir Ram Rattan interacting with street vendors.

ability. In case of partial disability, ₹1 lakh is provided. Balbir Ram Rattan said that the individuals will be linked to various social security schemes, including pension plans, maternity benefits, and skill development programmes.

Through this scheme, the database created will help the government design better policies and job opportunities for unorganized workers. He further mentioned that the 12-digit UAN number provided after registration can be used across India to avail of government benefits without requiring multiple registrations.

He clarified that any worker in the unorganized sector between the ages of 16 to 59 years can apply for an E-

Shram Card. However, they should not be an income tax payer.

He informed that workers can register for free at Common Service Centers (CSCs), E-Shram's official website (eshram.gov.in), or through local government offices. They need to provide their Aadhaar number; bank details, and mobile number linked to Aadhaar. Balbir encouraged all eligible workers to take advantage of this initiative and secure their future with government-backed social security. "This is a golden opportunity for unorganized workers to get financial security and social benefits. Register today and ensure a better future for yourself and your family," he said.

BJP committed to bring development at people's doorstep: Randhawa

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a significant move towards enhancing local infrastructure, Senior BJP leader and MLA Bahu constituency, Vikram Randhawa inaugurated the lane and drain development project in Ward No. 44, Nanak Nagar. The project, with an estimated cost of Rs 43 lakhs, aims to improve the quality of life for residents by addressing longstanding issues related to drainage and road conditions.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by AEE Nisha Devi, Vishal Kotwal JE and Intiyaz Ahmed Work Supervisor. Prominent political figures such as Naresh Singh District President, Rahul Kumar and Surjeet Singh Mandal Presidents, along with esteemed citizens like Pankaj Bral, Daljeet Singh, Harshmeet Singh, Sahil Mahajan, Rakesh Sharma, Babu Ram, Sunny Bakshi, Neel Kashav, Vishal Gupta, Bobby, Sunil Kumar, and Arun Gupta, were also present.

Addressing the gathering, MLA Vikram Randhawa emphasized the Bharatiya Janata Party's commitment to grassroots development and the enhancement of urban infrastructure. He highlighted the party's



MLA Bahu Vikram Randhawa inaugurating civic works in Ward No. 44, Nanak Nagar.

proactive approach in addressing the needs of the common people and ensuring that development reaches every household.

Randhawa stated, "The BJP, under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is dedicated to bringing development to the doorstep of every citizen. Our government believes in inclusive growth, where no section of society is left behind. This project stands as a shining example of our continuous efforts to strengthen urban infrastructure and provide essential services to the people."

The senior BJP leader further emphasized that improving basic amenities such as roads, water supply, sanitation, and electricity remains a top priority. The Modi government is working tirelessly to modernize urban spaces, mak-

ing them more livable and sustainable.

Randhawa urged the local residents to take active participation in the developmental process and assured them that more such projects would be undertaken to uplift the constituency.

He reiterated that the government at the Centre is committed to delivering quality infrastructure, which will not only enhance the standard of living but also foster economic growth and job opportunities for the youth.

Later, MLA Randhawa also interacted with residents, encouraging them to actively participate in maintaining the newly developed infrastructure. He urged the community to ensure cleanliness in their surroundings and take ownership of public assets to ensure their longevity.

Book "Dino Satsai" by Dr. Ashok Kumar released

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In an impressive literary event organized by Yuva Hindi Lekhak Sangh, Jammu, a book titled Dino Satsai by Dr. Ashok Kumar was officially released at K. L. Saigal Hall on Tuesday.

The event was presided over by Prof. Neelam Saraf, with Prof. Raj Kumar as the Chief Guest.

Lauding the book, Prof. Saraf remarked that it reflects the essence of Indian culture, while Prof. Raj Kumar praised its depiction of nature's beauty.

Dr. Parshotam Kumar evaluated the book in the context of the Satsai tradition, highlighting its fresh dimensions.

Dr. Nirmal Vinod elaborated on the book's objectives, while Dr. Baljit Raina and Dr. Pawan Khajuria discussed its legal and economic perspectives.

The book's socio-cultural themes were also analyzed, with Maharaj Krishan

Santoshi and Kalpana Jassi addressing issues of Dalit Vimarsh and Nari Vimash, respectively.

Dr. Raj Kumar Behl examined the poetic essence of the book, focusing on its relation to music, emotions, and passion.

During the event, Sheikh Mohd Kalyan shed light on the book's relevance to national and international relations, while speakers like Naresh Sharma and Vanika discussed its exploration of marginal social classes in modern society.

Dr. Ashok Kumar, the author, shared insights into his writing journey, and the event concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Parshotam Kumar.

This literary gathering highlighted the book's depth and its significance in contemporary discourse, making it a notable contribution to Hindi literature.

HPS celebrates Women's Day



STATE TIMES NEWS

SAMBHA: At Humanity Public School (HPS) Bansi Kalan, Bari Brahmna, Women's Day was celebrated to raise awareness about the status and dignity of women among the students.

The Principal of the school, Gaurav Charak, Vice-Principal, Anku Charak were also present during the special assembly along with the Administrative Officer, Ravinder Sadhu, Admin Incharge, Akashdeep Raina, Parsidh Singh (Higher sec. Incharge), Namra Sharma (High Wing Incharge), Vandana Sharma (Primary Wing Incharge), Aparna Billooria (Pre-Primary Incharge), Er. Varinder Kumar (IT Incharge), and Mahan Singh (Sports Incharge).

The program commenced with a poem presented by Aditi Sangra of 9th Golden and Neha Manhas of 9th Golden gave her speech on women's empowerment.

Neha Sharma (TGT Hindi) also delivered her speech and said that it is a day to celebrate the progress and also reflect on the journey towards

gender equality. To enhance the charm beauty of the program, a dance performance was also presented by the Pre-Primary Teachers, Nisha Dogra, Gurwinder, Mamu, Vaishali Sangral, Primary Teachers -Monika Saini, Ritika, Sonu Bala, Pallvi, Nirnal, Necty, Tannmeet, Middle Wing teachers, Shivati, Neha Attri, Art and Craft Teacher, Davneet and Vishali under the guidance of dance teacher, Taruna. The program was very well hosted by Abul Hassan of 6th A.

Principal of the school, Gaurav Charak, gave his speech in which he explained about the theme of "Gender equality". He said that it is an occasion to recognize the efforts of the extra ordinary women- the teaching and non-teaching staff who demonstrate acts of kindness, compassion, leadership and determination.

Vice-Principal, Anku Charak also addressed the gathering with the words that the significance of the day taught our students that the world needs to be free of bias, stereotypes and discrimination.

Bhagwad Holy Saptah begins at Laxmi Narayan Temple Priya Sethi emphasizes significance of religious events in promoting cultural heritage, spiritual enlightenment

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The sacred Bhagwad Holy Saptah, organized by the Dharam Prachar Sewa Mandal, commenced on Tuesday at the ancient Laxmi Narayan Temple in Dhakki Saranjana, Jammu, amidst an atmosphere of devotion and spiritual fervor. The event witnessed the presence of a large number of devotees who gathered to seek divine blessings and immerse themselves in the teachings of the Bhagwad Gita.

Senior BJP leader and former Minister, Priya Sethi, who is also the Chairperson of Dharam Prachar Sewa Mandal, graced the occasion and emphasized the significance of such religious events in promoting cultural heritage and spiritual enlightenment. She expressed her gratitude to the devotees for their enthusiastic participation and urged the younger



Senior BJP leader, Priya Sethi participating in Saptah at Laxmi Narayan Temple.

generation to embrace Sanatan values and traditions. Renowned Katha Vachak, Pt. Satpal Raina, commenced the holy discourse, narrating the timeless wisdom of the Bhagwad Gita. His soulful rendition and deep interpretations captivated the audience, inspiring them to lead a life of righteousness and devotion. The Katha sessions will continue with special Bhajan sessions,

discourses, and religious rituals enriching the spiritual experience for all attendees. On the occasion, Priya Sethi highlighted the importance of religious gatherings in fostering peace and harmony in society. She lauded the efforts of the Dharam Prachar Sewa Mandal in organizing such events that strengthen the cultural and spiritual fabric of Jammu and Kashmir.

Mid-Day Meal cooks, CPWs, other workers announce strike over unpaid wages, regularization demands

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a strong show of protest, Mid-Day Meal Cooks, CPWs, Land Donors, ASHA Workers, and employees from multiple government departments including PHHE, PDD, Revenue, Home Department, Irrigation & Flood Control, SRO 63, SRO 43, VDG, RDD, SPO, and Anganwadi Workers have announced a "No Pay, No Work" strike from March 31, 2025. The decision comes after years of neglect and unfulfilled promises by the authorities regarding their minimum wage implementation, regularization, and other financial entitlements. These workers, who perform non-teaching tasks in schools such as cleaning, cook-



Members of Sangarsh Samiti briefing media.

ing, watch and ward duties, and maintaining hygiene, have accused the Education Department and Finance Department of exploiting their services without fair compensation. Despite budget allocations for minimum wages, no salaries have been disbursed to them for

over a decade, leaving thousands of families in financial distress. They demanded immediate payment of pending wages as per Supreme Court guidelines, implementation of a regularization policy for all workers, compensation for land donors at present rates, a per-

manent job for at least one family member of affected workers, retirement benefits and policies ensuring financial security, and no wage interruptions throughout the year.

Frustrated by false assurances from authorities, the workers' Union State Body has warned that if wages are not paid within a week of the strike, they will escalate their protest to include hunger strikes and broader demonstrations. Additionally, Union Representatives will mobilize land donors, and the strike may disrupt normal school operations. The Union has also called upon the teacher community to extend their full support and cooperation to the movement.

The protesting workers have made it clear that any disruptions, security concerns, or operational failures in schools will be the sole responsibility of the apex authorities who have failed to address their grievances. If demands remain unmet within one month, the workers have vowed to take to the streets in mass protests, holding the government accountable for any escalations or hardships faced by students and institutions.

As the deadline approaches, the situation remains tense, with the potential for widespread disruption if authorities do not take urgent action to address the long-standing issues.

Jammu University's School of Biotechnology reviews Master's Programme in Advisory Committee Meeting

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The School of Biotechnology, University of Jammu, held an Advisory Committee Meeting to evaluate and enhance its Master's Programme in Biotechnology.

The M.Sc. Biotechnology program at the School is fully funded by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India. The meeting was chaired by Vice Chancellor, Prof. Umesh Rai, and attended by distinguished experts, including Prof. Madan Mohan Chaturvedi and Prof. Manoj Prasad (academic experts), Mr. Goutam Bhattacharya (skill sector expert), Dr. Govind Rao (industry representative), and Manoj Kumar (DBT Program Officer). Additionally, senior university officials, core and associated faculty members of



JU VC Prof. Umesh Rai chairing a meeting on Tuesday.

the School of Biotechnology were also present.

Expressing his appreciation for the School's contribution to the University's NAAC A++ accreditation, Prof. Umesh Rai commended the faculty, staff, and students for their relentless efforts in fostering a dynamic and inclusive learning environment.

Prof. Madan Mohan Chaturvedi, Vice Chancellor of SGT University, Gurugram, lauded the School's achievements and stressed the need to

shift from a teacher-centric to a learner-centric approach.

Prof. Manoj Prasad, from the Department of Genetics, University of Delhi, encouraged students to apply for fellowships and internships and gain practical exposure through certificate courses offered by prestigious national institutes.

Goutam Bhattacharya, CEO of the Life Sciences Sector Skill Development Council (LSSSDC), New Delhi, underscored the importance of academia-industry collaboration. He pro-

posed curriculum restructuring to align with industry requirements and suggested incorporating LSSSDC-certified courses to meet the growing demands of the Life Sciences sector. Representing the industry sector, Dr. Govind Rao Adireddi, Founder and CEO of NMC Genetics, Gurugram, highlighted the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in bioinformatics. Given the vast amount of biological data generated, AI can significantly aid in data analysis and interpreta-

tion. Dr. Manoj Kumar, DBT Program Officer, expressed his satisfaction with the School's progress and the DBT-supported M.Sc. program. He praised the quality of education, research opportunities, and the enthusiasm of students, noting that their active engagement reflects the program's success.

Prof. Anju Bhasin Dean Academic Affairs, University of Jammu discussed the adoption of NEP 2020 by the University and expressed the desire to know guidelines and framework for biotechnology education and admissions adopted by DBT.

Prof. Meena Sharma, Dean Planning and Development, University of Jammu lauded the efforts of the School for excellent infrastructure put in place. Prof. Yashpal Sharma, Dean Faculty of Life Sciences appreciated that the School has

created a collaborative and interdisciplinary research environment and actively contributes to community engagement and Scientific Social Responsibilities.

Dr. Neeraj Sharma, Registrar, University of Jammu also attended the meeting and assured all possible support for the strengthening of the program.

Earlier, Program Coordinator, Prof. Sanjana Kaul, Director, School of Biotechnology while presenting progress report, mentioned that the School has been established in the year 1999 with a generous funding support from Department of Biotechnology, GoI. Over the years, School of Biotechnology has been instrumental in taking up various initiatives for the development of education and research fields.

Prof. Kaul also informed the

house that besides, DBTGoI, the School is supported by funding under DST FIST, DST PURSE, DST SAP, RUSA MHRD, DBT BUILDER, besides Extra Mural Funding to individual faculty members from DBT, DST, ICMR, NMPB, CSIR, JKSTIC/DST, UGC, DST DAAD etc. and expressed gratitude to all the funding agencies. Admission to the M.Sc. Biotechnology program is through the highly competitive Graduate Aptitude Test Biotechnology (GAT-B), conducted by the DBT, Government of India through Regional Centre for Biotechnology, Faridabad and NTA. Students admitted to the program are entitled forstundship of Rs. 5000 per month, which is likely to be increased. Since its inception the School has proudly gradu-

ated over 500 students, many of whom have excelled in national tests like NET-JRF (CSIR-UGC), BET-JRF (DBT), NET-JRF (ICMR), GATE etc. and have gained placement in prestigious internationally and nationally renowned institutes.

Prof. Jyoti Vakhlu, Professor in the School proposed the formal vote of thanks extending gratitude to Honourable Vice Chancellor and to all the members of the advisory committee for their valuable inputs.

The meeting was also attended by all the core faculty members of the School Prof. B. K. Bajaj, Prof. Madhulika Bhagat, Dr. Ritu Mahajan and Dr. Nisha Kapoor and also by the associated faculty members Dr. Yashpal Khajuria, Dr. Ankit Mahajan, Dr. Sheetal Ambardar and Dr. Bharathiraja.