

SVMMCH launches Corneal Transplant Surgery

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Responding to the healthcare needs of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, Swami Vivekananda Medical Mission Charitable Hospital (SVMMCH), Ambphalla, Jammu, has officially commenced corneal transplant (keratoplasty) surgery. This milestone makes SVMMCH the first private hospital in Jammu province to be authorized as a Corneal Transplant Centre by the Director Health Services, Jammu. The inauguration ceremony was honored by the presence of Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha), Ghulam Ali Khatana, who visited various departments of the hospital and commended the institution's dedication to advancing healthcare in the region. The event was attended by esteemed members of the hospital's administration, including Subash Gupta (Chief Patron), Anil Gupta (President), Amar Chand Gupta (Sr. Vice President), B.B. Gupta



MP (Rajya Sabha), Ghulam Ali Khatana being honoured by hospital management.

(General Secretary), B.S. Jamwal (Secretary), Mohan Singh Chohan (Treasurer), and Management Members, Neeraj Puri, Dr. Brij Mohan Gupta, Dharamvir Chopra, Dr. Sachin Gupta and Iqbal Deep Singh (Manager). Following its official registration with the Director Health Services Jammu, the hospital successfully performed its first two corneal transplants on March 13, 2025. The expert surgical team included corneal surgeon Dr. Suruchi Gupta (M.S. Ophthalmology, ex-senior resident PGI Chandigarh), Dr. Pallavi Sharma, O.T.

Technician Gurjeet Singh, Transplant Coordinator Kewal Kumar, Refractionist Vikram, and supporting staff members Sonu Singh and Anita Taak. The first recipient was a patient who had suffered vision loss due to a chemical injury and had been waiting for a corneal transplant for a prolonged period. The second patient, affected by corneal dystrophy for over 30 years due to a hereditary condition, underwent a complex triple procedure that included optical keratoplasty and cataract surgery. MP Ghulam Ali Khatana lauded the hospital's achievement, stating, "This

is a significant step toward reducing blindness and enhancing healthcare in Jammu and Kashmir. SVMMCH continues to demonstrate its commitment to providing advanced and accessible medical care to the people of the region. The hospital's dedication to improving healthcare infrastructure is truly commendable." He also praised all the facilities of the hospital and lauded the visionary leadership of its management for their dedication to providing quality healthcare services. Expressing his gratitude, SVMMCH President Anil Gupta remarked, "We take immense pride in being the

first private hospital in Jammu province to offer corneal transplant services. This facility will greatly benefit patients who previously faced long waiting periods or had to travel outside the state for such critical procedures. It will also help alleviate the burden on government hospitals." This development marks a significant advancement in addressing corneal blindness in Jammu and Kashmir, where such specialized services were previously available only at GMC Jammu and M.H. Udhampur. SVMMCH remains committed to serving the community with its guiding principle, "Nar Sewa Narayan Sewa." During his visit, Ghulam Ali Khatana also toured key hospital facilities, including the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), MRI and CT scan sections, dental department, laboratory, and other essential healthcare units, further appreciating the hospital's comprehensive medical services.

BJP remains committed to welfare of every citizen: MLA Randhawa

Initiates development works worth Rs 37 lakhs in Ward 44, Nanak Nagar

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Senior BJP leader and MLA Bahu Vikram Randhawa on Saturday inaugurated a newly constructed lane and drain project in Ward No. 44, Nanak Nagar. The development work, will be completed with an estimated costs of Rs 37 lakh. Randhawa emphasized the BJP's commitment to infrastructure development and ensuring basic civic amenities for all. He stated that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the governance of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Jammu is witnessing rapid transformation with a focus on public welfare projects. "The residents of Nanak Nagar had been facing inconvenience due to poor drainage and damaged lanes. Today, with the inauguration of this project, we have addressed a major civic issue, ensuring better hygiene, sanitation, and mobility for the people,"



MLA Bahu Vikram Randhawa inaugurating lane and drain project in Ward No. 44, Nanak Nagar.

Randhawa said. The MLA has assured the public that the BJP-led administration is dedicated to holistic development, leaving no stone unturned in providing better roads, sanitation, and civic facilities in every ward of Jammu. Randhawa also interacted with the public and listened to their concerns, assuring them that all their issues would be taken up on priority. He reiterated that BJP remains committed to the welfare of every citizen, ensuring that development reaches every nook and corner of the Union Territory.

Among those who were present included JMC officials--Nisha Devi (AEE), Vishal Kotwal (JE), Imtiyaz Ahmed (work supervisor); BJP leaders Naresh Singh (District President), Rahul Kumar (Mandal president) and Surjeet Singh (Mandal president) and prominent citizens of concerned area namely Pankaj Bral, Daljeet Singh, Harshmeet Singh, Sahil Mahajan, Rakesh Sharma, Babu Ram, Sunny Bakshi, Neel Kashav, Vishal Gupta, Bobby, Sunil Kumar, Arun Gupta and others.

LJK Store an example of PM Modi's 'Vocal for Local' vision: Rekha Mahajan

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Rekha Mahajan, BJP leader, J&K, visited 'The LJK Store' (Ladakh Jammu Kashmir store) at Amphalla, Jammu, reaffirming her support for the Vocal for Local initiative and encouraging local artisans, farmers, and entrepreneurs. During her visit, the BJP leader accompanied by Social activists Shikha Gupta and Ritika Mahajan, lauded 'The LJK Store' for its efforts in providing a dedicated platform for selling and marketing high-quality products sourced directly from the skilled producers of Ladakh, Jammu, and Kashmir. Rekha emphasized the importance of empowering local communities, preserving cultural heritage, and boosting the regional economy through self-reliance. Rekha Mahajan said, "The LJK Store is a shining example of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Vocal for Local' vision, which aims to strengthen our indigenous



BJP leader, Rekha Mahajan, during visit to 'The LJK Store' at Amphalla, Jammu.

industries and uplift small-scale producers. By supporting such initiatives, we not only preserve our rich cultural heritage but also create employment opportunities for the youth and rural artisans." She also interacted with local artisans and farmers, appreciating their craftsmanship and commitment to sustainable production. She said that the store showcases an extensive range of authentic products, including Pashmina shawls,

Kashmiri carpets, hand-crafted wooden items, and organic produce like saffron, honey, dry fruits, herbal teas, and aromatic spices. She encouraged people to choose locally-made products over mass-produced alternatives, emphasizing that such choices contribute to the overall development of the region. She also assured full support from the administration in promoting and expanding similar initiatives across Jammu and Kashmir.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: A meeting of the Jammu Hotels, Restaurants, and Bar Association (JHRBA) was held on Saturday at Hotel Taj Vivanta Jammu City Centre, where industry leaders came together to discuss critical matters affecting the hospitality sector. The meeting, chaired by Raju Chowdhary, President of JHRBA and Managing Director of Hotel Taj Vivanta Jammu City Centre, covered a variety of issues with a particular focus on promoting Jammu as a premier destination for weddings. Chowdhary highlighted Jammu's immense potential to attract destination weddings, proposing that the city could offer wedding packages at just a quarter of the price compared to popular wedding destinations such as Jaipur and Udaipur. "Jammu is uniquely positioned, with its close proximity to Mata Vaishno Devi, making it a spiritual and scenic destination for weddings. The government should pro-



JHRBA members after the meeting in Jammu.

mote Jammu as a 'Blessed Wedding Destination,' capitalizing on its cultural and religious significance," said Chowdhary. The meeting also addressed concerns regarding SGST and CGST reimbursement, particularly in relation to the Jammu and Kashmir Industrial Policy. Despite the provisions outlined in the policy, hoteliers expressed concerns over the lack of clarity and guidelines on how to access these reimbursements. Chowdhary emphasized the need for formal notification and clear guidelines on how

these reimbursements could be claimed. "While these incentives are mentioned in the policy, there is no clear path forward. A formal notification with proper guidelines is essential to ensure hoteliers can take full advantage of these incentives without facing roadblocks," he stated. Another issue discussed was the rising cost of power for the hospitality sector, which has become a major concern for hoteliers across Jammu. With the increasing demand for electricity and the high operational costs,

the JHRBA stressed the need for a more affordable and sustainable power tariff for the service sector, particularly hotels and restaurants. "Like the manufacturing sector, the service industry, including hotels, restaurants, and bars, requires stable and competitive energy pricing to maintain operations efficiently. We urge the authorities to review the power tariff structure to ensure that the service sector receives the same attention as other industries in terms of energy costs," said Chowdhary. The meeting concluded

with a consensus on the need for continued dialogue with the government to address these concerns and work together to create a more robust and transparent framework for the hospitality industry. JHRBA remains committed to fostering the growth of Jammu's hospitality sector, ensuring its role as a major contributor to the region's economic development and cultural tourism. Other members present were Rattandeep Anand, Vice President, JHRBA and Owner Hotel Asia, Vikram Gupta, General Secretary JHRBA and Managing Partner Radisson Blu, Siddhant Chowdhary, Managing Director, Hotel Taj Vivanta Jammu City Centre, Nirdosh Trehan, Owner Hotel Ritz Manor, Chaitanya Chowdhary, Owner, Zone by the park, Sanjeev Prabhakar, Owner Hotel Anutham, Chandershekar, Owner Hotel KC Residency and CP Gupta, Owner Hotel Inn Riviera.

Research Methodology Course in Social Science concluded at SBS, CUJ

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: The ten-day Research Methodology Course (RMC) in Social Sciences, sponsored by the Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR), New Delhi, concluded at the School of Business Studies (SBS), Central University of Jammu (CUJ). The programme, hosted by the Department of Tourism and Travel Management (TTM), CUJ, was conducted under the guidance of Prof. Sanjeev Jain, Vice Chancellor, CUJ, and culminated with an enlightening session by Prof. D. Mehta, a renowned expert in data analytics. The event saw participation from over 33 research scholars and 16 faculty members from both within and outside the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, representing diverse disciplines. The valedictory function was attended by Deans, Heads of Departments, and faculty members from the School of Business Studies,



CUJ officials during the programme.

including Dr. Ranjeet Kumar Raman, Dr. Neelika Arora, Dr. Gowhar Rasool, Dr. Anjali Pathania, Dr. Amit Gangotia, Dr. Bharti Gupta, Dr. Susmita Ekka, Biswabhusan Pradhan, Dr. Asif Ali, Rahul Thakur, and Dr. Shahid Mushtaq. The programme featured sessions led by acclaimed resource persons, including Prof. Saurabh Agrawal, Prof. R. R. Sharma, Dr. Shankar M., Dr. Manorama Tripathi, Prof. Hardeep Chahal, Prof. Jeevan Jyoti, Prof. Anil Gupta, Prof. Manish Sharma, Prof. J. N. Baliya, Prof. Santap S.

Mishra, Prof. A. K. Nanda, Dr. R. K. Raman, Prof. Jaya Bhasin, and Dr. S. Mushtaq. These experts guided participants through theoretical and practical aspects of research methodology, covering both quantitative and qualitative methods, as well as hands-on training in data analysis tools such as SPSS, SMART-PLS, JAMOVI, R, ATLAS-TI, citation management software, AI, and anti-plagiarism tools. A key highlight of the programme was a field visit, where participants were divided into

groups and assigned real-world data collection tasks, including surveys, interviews, and observations. This practical exposure helped bridge the gap between theory and application, providing valuable hands-on research experience. Additionally, paper clinics, report writing, and presentation skills workshops equipped scholars with essential academic competencies. During the valedictory session, Prof. Jaya Bhasin, Dean, School of Business Studies, welcomed the participants and highlighted

the significant deliberations held over the ten days. She urged scholars to apply the research tools they had learned. Dr. Ranjeet Kumar Raman, Head, Department of TTM, presented a comprehensive report of the programme and praised the efforts of faculty members in ensuring its successful execution. Participants also shared positive feedback and experiences, emphasizing the programme's impact on their research skills and confidence. The event was coordinated by Dr. Shahid Mushtaq and Rahul Thakur under the supervision of Prof. Jaya Bhasin. Dr. Shahid Mushtaq delivered the formal vote of thanks, expressing gratitude to all contributors and supporters of the initiative. This ICSSR-sponsored programme reinforced CUJ's commitment to enhancing research quality and fostering academic excellence in social sciences.

Arrangements finalized for 31st Chhari Mubarak Yatra to Purmandal

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: A high-level meeting was held on Saturday at Shri Lakshmi Narayan Mandir Complex, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu, to finalize arrangements for the 31st Chhari Mubarak Yatra to Purmandal Shrines on Chetar Chaturdashi (March 28, 2025). The meeting, chaired by Th. Gulechain Singh Charak, President of the Trust was attended by representatives from various religious committees, administration, and social organizations. Key decisions included ensuring adequate transport for devotees, especially from Purmandal Morh to the shrines, as coordinated by the RTO and Traffic Police. Drinking water and electricity arrangements will be managed by the Public Health Engineering (PHE) Department, while the Tourism Department and

Municipal Committee Bari-Brahmana will oversee cleanliness around Devika and temple premises. The Tourism Authority will also provide washroom facilities at Devika's banks. Road repairs leading to the shrines will be undertaken by the Public Works Department (PWD), and law and order will be maintained by local police. The Nodal Officer of Samba will coordinate all departments for a seamless pilgrimage. A Special Chhari Pooja will be held at Shri Ranbireswar Mandir, Jammu, on March 27, 2025, at 5:00 PM. The Holy Chhari Yatra will commence from Ranbireswar Mandir on March 28 at 7:00 AM, led by Mahatma Rishi Ban. After performing Pooja Arehana at Shri Raghunath Temple, the procession will reach Lakshmi Narayan Mandir, Gandhi Nagar, for a grand

pooja before proceeding to Purmandal Shrines. Devotees will join the yatra via multiple temples, with a special reception by Muslim and Sikh communities at Kharah Madana. Upon arrival at Purmandal, Mahatmas will perform rituals at the historic Shiv Temple, and the Holy Chharis will be placed in the Mandir Complex for public darshan. Prominent attendees included S.C.Rekhi, Col Karan Singh, Romesh Thakur, Kulbhushan Bali, P.C Gupta, Kapil Slathia, Ved Verma, Parshant Sharma, Sumesh Damral, Kulbir Singh, Pankul Vaid, Tarun Gupta and representatives of Bhandara Committee B a r i - B r a h m a n a , Purmandal-Uttarbehni Shrines Development Committee and Data Ranpat Dev Committee, Narsing Dev Mandir Birpur.

Dogra Sewa Sambhal Trust organizes Holi Milan

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: The Dogra Sewa Sambhal Trust (Regd.) organized a vibrant 'Holi Milan' program in Ward No. 56, Gangyal, Jammu, celebrating the festival of colors with a unique and eco-friendly approach. The event was presided over by Trust President Rajiv Sharma, with former Deputy Mayor of Jammu, Baldev Singh Billawaria, attending as the chief guest. A key highlight of the celebration was that instead



Trust members celebrating Holi.

of water and chemical colors, participants played Holi with flowers and gulaal (organic colors). The program was filled with joyful dance, songs, and traditional rituals, as attendees applied gulaal tilak on each other, showered flowers, and exchanged warm Holi wishes. Addressing the gathering, Baldev Singh Billawaria emphasized that Holi, celebrated in a spirit of unity and joy, strengthens social harmony and brotherhood.

He highlighted that this festival, rooted in Indian Sanatan culture, conveys the message of love, peace, and togetherness. Billawaria also wished for prosperity and progress in Jammu & Kashmir, expressing hope that the festival would bring happiness, peace, and good health to everyone's lives. Commending the Dogra Sewa Sambhal Trust, Billawaria appreciated the initiative of celebrating Holi with 'Pushp Varsha' (flower showers) as a com-

mendable step towards water conservation and environmental protection. He noted that this approach not only preserved traditional celebrations but also spread a meaningful message about saving water. In his address, Trust President Rajiv Sharma spoke about the significant contributions of the Trust in recent years, emphasizing the importance of preserving religion and culture. He stressed that such

events provide an opportunity to connect with cultural traditions and uphold Indian heritage. The program was conducted by Dr. Kuldeep Gupta, and individuals who made outstanding contributions in social work were honored with mementos by the Dogra Sewa Sambhal Trust. The event successfully blended cultural celebration with social awareness, reinforcing the values of environmental conservation, unity, and cultural heritage.