

CM interacts with delegations; discusses dev, community issues

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Several delegations called on Chief Minister Omar Abdullah at his residence here on Friday, apprising him of a range of developmental and welfare-related issues concerning their respective areas and communities.

Member of Rajya Sabha Sajjad Ahmad Kichloo called on the Chief Minister along with a delegation of residents from Paddar in district Kishtwar. The delegation submitted memoranda highlighting development requirements in sectors including tourism, public works and power in the



Delegation members calling on Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in Jammu on Friday.

Paddar region. A delegation of Kashmiri Migrants also met the Chief Minister and presented a memorandum of

demands. Former DDC Members Pooja Thakur and Shameem Begum also called on the

Chief Minister and apprised him of various issues concerning their respective areas.

A delegation of Other Backward Classes (OBCs), led by Abdul Ghani Teli, called on the Chief Minister and raised issues pertaining to the welfare and development of OBC communities.

A delegation from the Ambedkar Education Society, Jammu also met the Chief Minister.

The Chief Minister heard the delegations patiently and took note of the issues raised. He assured them of his administration's commitment to public welfare and said that genuine concerns and individual grievances would be addressed on merit.



Tawi Festival 2026 to celebrate heritage, environment and ideas in Jammu

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Jammu will host a vibrant celebration of art, culture and intellectual dialogue as the 4th Edition of the Tawi Festival takes place from 6th to 15th March 2026.

Gathering together leading scholars, artists, environmentalists and cultural practitioners, the festival promises ten days of meaningful engagement rooted in the region's heritage and contemporary concerns.

The festival is being organized by the Amar Mahal Museum and Library (AMML) in collaboration with Kala Kendra and IIT Jammu.

The formal inauguration will take place on 13th March 2026 at the historic Amar Mahal Palace and will be inaugurated by Dr Karan Singh. The opening day will feature a seminar on "Environment and Heritage", including a keynote address by eminent ecologist Dr Rajesh Thadani and expert deliberations on biodiversity, sacred groves and heritage trees of the region. The Art Camp and Exhibitions at Kala Kendra will be jointly inaugurated by Dr Karan Singh and B. M. Sharma, IFS, Principal Secretary, Culture, JKUT.

The festival activities begin earlier on 6th March with a workshop on "Elements of Basohli Miniature Painting" by noted artist Sohan Singh Billawaria at Amar Mahal. A Curtain Raiser on 12th March at IIT Jammu will feature an address by Dr. Karan Singh followed by an interaction with students.

A major highlight this year is a special exhibition of photo essays by senior journalists, to be held from 13th to 23rd March 2026, documenting the devastating floods in the region and the impact of war in the border areas.

The exhibition seeks to present compelling visual narratives of resilience, displacement and lived realities.

On 14th March, discussions under the theme "Literature and Ideas" will bring together eminent writers and poets from the borderlands. IIT Jammu faculty and students will present oral histories from Reasi, Rajouri and Poonch, foregrounding stories of memory and survival. The evening will conclude with a music recital by Vijay Singh Sambyal (Rangeelay Thakur) and students.

The festival will culminate on 15th March with a cultural Mela at the Amar Mahal lawns featuring crafts, organic cuisine, pottery, block printing, books in local languages and folk performances.

A special concluding session will host a discussion on "A Statesman and a Seeker: The Extraordinary Life and Legacy of Dr Karan Singh", the authorised biography by Prof. Harbans Singh. The session will be conducted in the presence of Dr Karan Singh, with Prof. Rekha Choudhary in conversation with the author and Dr Karan Singh.

The festival is being supported by the Hari Tara Charitable Trust, Jammu.

Escalator inaugurated at Katra Railway Station to enhance passenger convenience



STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a significant step towards strengthening passenger amenities in the Jammu Division, Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) Jammu Vivek Kumar today inaugurated a newly constructed escalator between Platforms 2 and 3 at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Railway Station. Senior divisional officers and railway employees were present on the occasion.

The newly installed escalator is expected to greatly facilitate the movement of thousands of passengers and pilgrims who visit the station daily, particularly the elderly, differently-abled persons, women and children. The facility will make it easier for passengers to move between platforms, especially those travelling with heavy luggage. Katra Railway Station witnesses a large influx of devotees throughout the year who travel to pay obeisance at the holy shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi. With the addition of this escalator, passengers will experience improved convenience and reduced physical strain while navigating the busy station premises.

Officials said the escalator will also help in better crowd management on the platforms and save valuable time for passengers during train arrivals and departures. After the inauguration, the Divisional Railway Manager conducted a detailed inspection of the station premises and reviewed various passenger facilities. He issued directions to the concerned officials to maintain high standards of cleanliness and continue efforts to further improve amenities for travellers.

Speaking on the occasion, DRM Vivek Kumar said that providing world-class facilities to passengers remains the top priority of Indian Railways. "The installation of this escalator at Katra Railway Station will make the travel experience of pilgrims undertaking the Vaishno Devi Yatra more comfortable and convenient," he said.

Railway authorities reiterated their commitment to continuously upgrade infrastructure and passenger facilities to ensure a smooth and pleasant journey for devotees and other passengers visiting the important pilgrimage destination.

Boosting tech policing, IGP Jammu inaugurates surveillance training

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A two-day specialised training programme on Electronic Surveillance commenced on Friday at the Conference Hall of Zonal Police Headquarters (ZPHQ), Jammu, aimed at enhancing the technical capabilities of police personnel engaged in investigation.

The training programme was inaugurated by the Inspector General of Police, Jammu Zone, Bhim Sen Tuti, in the presence of the Shamsheer Hussain, Staff Officer to IGP Jammu and Himanshu Mahajan, Sr. Prosecuting Officer, ZPHQ



IGP Jammu Bhim Sen Tuti chairing training programme.

Jammu.

Addressing the trainees, the IGP Jammu emphasised the growing role of technology-driven investigation and electronic surveillance in tackling modern crimes, including terrorism, cyber offences, and organised criminal activities.

He stressed that strengthening technical expertise among investigators is crucial for ensuring professional, evidence-based, and legally sustainable investigations.

The IGP emphasised that strengthening the technical capabilities of investigators is essential

for ensuring professional, evidence-based and legally sustainable investigations.

He encouraged the trainees to make the best use of the training programme and apply the knowledge gained in their respective districts and units.

During the programme, subject experts and senior officers will deliver lectures and interactive sessions on various aspects of electronic surveillance and technology-assisted investigation. The training is designed to familiarise trainees with modern tools and methods used in digital investigation and intelligence gathering.

The course will also focus on enhancing the trainees' understanding of emerging technological challenges in policing and the role of surveillance and analytical tools in supporting field investigations and operational decision-making.

The programme is part of the ongoing capacity-building initiatives of Jammu Police aimed at improving the professional skills of its personnel in dealing with technology-enabled crime and security challenges. Officers and officials from different districts of Jammu Zone are participating in the programme.

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