

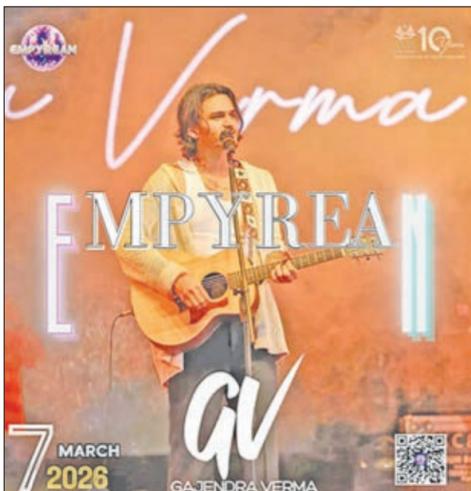
# Day two culminates in Grandeur with Cultural Competitions and a Power-Packed Performance by Bollywood Singer Gajendra Verma

## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The second day of Emphyrean 2026, the flagship cultural festival of the Indian Institute of Management Jammu, witnessed vibrant student participation, creative competitions, and electrifying musical performances, further elevating the spirit of celebration across the Jagti Campus on 7th March 2026.

The evening reached its pinnacle with a mesmerizing live performance by renowned singer Gajendra Verma, who captivated the audience with some of his most loved and popular numbers, including 'Tera Ghata, Baarish, Mann Mera, and Tune Mere Jaana. Students gathered in large numbers, singing along and swaying to the music, creating an electrifying and unforgettable atmosphere that resonated across the campus.

Prof. B. S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu, lauded the students for the organization of Emphyrean 2026. He remarked that the festival stands as a testament to the creativity, leadership, and managerial capabilities of the students, who take complete ownership of the event, from mobilizing spons-



ships to meticulous planning, coordinating, and executing every aspect of the festival. He emphasized that such student-led initiatives embody the true spirit of experiential learning at IIM Jammu, nurturing teamwork, innovation, confidence, and leadership while preparing students to emerge as dynamic leaders in an ever-evolving world. Prof. Jahir Ali, Dean Faculty and Research, IIM

Jammu, appreciated the enthusiasm and dedication displayed by the students and organizing team. He remarked that platforms like Emphyrean play an important role in encouraging creativity, collaboration, and holistic development while strengthening the vibrant campus culture of the Institute.

Prof. Nitin Upadhyay, Dean Academics, IIM Jammu, commended the remarkable efforts

of the student organizing team and noted that Emphyrean has grown into a dynamic platform that brings together talent, creativity, and cultural diversity, reflecting the vibrant spirit of youth. Dr. Ashish Kumar, Chairperson, Student Affairs, IIM Jammu, lauded the energy and participation of students and highlighted that such cultural festivals provide young minds with opportunities to showcase their talents, build networks, and develop confidence through meaningful engagement beyond academics.

The day unfolded with a wide range of cultural, artistic, and academic events, offering students from various institutions an engaging platform to showcase their talents and creativity. Competitions such as the Singing Competition, Dance Competition, Poetry, Nukkad Natak, Street Battle (Dance & Rap), Art Arena, and E-Sports drew enthusiastic participation and audience engagement throughout the day.

The campus resonated with energy as multiple academic and club-led competitions were conducted simultaneously across venues, enabling students to demonstrate their

skills in creativity, strategy, and performance. These activities reflected the multidisciplinary spirit of Emphyrean, where culture, creativity, and intellect come together on one dynamic platform. As the evening approached, the excitement reached its peak during the award ceremony, where winners of various competitions were felicitated for their outstanding performances and contributions during the festival. Following the live concert, the celebration continued late into the night with an energetic set by DJ Young & Broke, who transformed the venue into a vibrant dance arena. Their dynamic beats and crowd-pumping music kept the audience energized, bringing the second day of Emphyrean 2026 to a memorable close.

Emphyrean 2026 continues to reflect the vibrant student culture at IIM Jammu, bringing together music, art, creativity, and youthful enthusiasm while providing a national platform for talent, collaboration, and cultural expression. The entire event is being coordinated by student body at IIM Jammu along with the Office of Student Affairs and CAO office.

# KK Gandhi's live painting captivates at Unity International Art Camp 2026



## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Unity International Art Camp 2026, organized by the ICAC Foundation under the leadership of Ravinder Mardia, concluded on March 6 at Tent City in Kevadia, Gujarat.

Held from March 2 to 6 near the iconic Statue of Unity-the world's tallest statue dedicated to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel-the five-day international art gathering brought together artists, critics, and cultural thinkers to celebrate artistic expression inspired by India's heritage and unity. Among the participating artists, noted painter K.K. Gandhi emerged as one of the highlights of the camp. His live painting drew widespread attention and admiration from fellow artists, art critics, and vis-

itors. The artwork presented a sweeping panorama of the majestic Vindhya mountain ranges with the imposing figure of the Statue of Unity rising with quiet authority from the landscape. Through bold strokes and thoughtful composition, Gandhi's work beautifully merged natural grandeur with the symbolic power of the monument. The painting quickly became a focal point of the camp, earning repeated applause from the audience and appreciation from art enthusiasts present at the venue. Gandhi's visual narrative reflected both artistic sensitivity and a deep engagement with the idea of national unity embodied by the monument. His work also received notable coverage in local and national

media, further amplifying the significance of the artistic moment. The camp was curated by eminent art historian and curator Johny ML, who brought together a diverse group of painters and sculptors from India and abroad. The event also saw the presence of distinguished cultural figures such as renowned art critic and writer Prayag Shukla and celebrated painter and sculptor Ashok Bhowmick, whose reflections added intellectual depth to the gathering. Set against the inspiring backdrop of the Statue of Unity, the camp became a vibrant platform where art, history, and contemporary thought intersected-while K.K. Gandhi's evocative live painting stood out as one of the defining artistic moments of the event.

# Shiv Sena extends full support to 'Dharma Yudh Yatra'

## Demand to declare cow as 'National Mother'

## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir unit of Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) has announced its full support to the 'Dharma Yudh Yatra' and the 'Lucknow Chalo' call given by Jyotishphelt Shankaracharya Swami Avimuktেশ्वरानंद Saraswati.

The movement has been launched with the demand that the cow be granted the status of "Rashtra Mata" (National Mother) and that strict laws be enacted across the country to ensure the protection of cattle.

In a press statement issued from the party's state central office in Jammu, J&K unit chief Manish Sahni stated that the cow holds a sacred



place in Sanatan culture, faith, and the traditional value system of India. He said that the demand to accord the cow the status of 'National Mother' is both justified and timely.

Sahni further added that the issue is not merely related to religious sentiments but is also connected with the protection and preservation of India's cultural heritage and traditions.

He said that, as per the

directions of the party high command, the Jammu and Kashmir unit of Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) stands firmly with the movement launched for the dignity and protection of cows. He also informed that a delegation of Shiv Sainiks from Jammu and Kashmir will participate in the upcoming protest in Lucknow to raise the demand at the national level.

Sahni urged that if the Central and State governments are genuinely committed to safeguarding Sanatan traditions, cow protection, and the cultural ethos of the country, they should take a historic decision without delay and grant the cow the status of 'National Mother'.

# Imbibe teachings of Guru Ravidasji for harmonious, just society: Sadhotra

## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Former Minister and Additional General Secretary of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, Ajay Kumar Sadhotra, on Saturday called upon people to imbibe the teachings of Sant Ravidas to build a harmonious and just society based on equality, compassion and mutual respect. He was addressing a congregation organised in connection with the 649th birth anniversary celebrations of Guru Ravidas Ji by the Guru Ravidas Satsang Society Karwanda in Jammu North Assembly Constituency. The programme was organised under the leadership of Parshotam Kumar along with members of the society.

Speaking on the occasion, Sadhotra said that the life and teachings of Sant Ravidas Ji continue to inspire humanity to strive for a social order based on



Additional General Secretary NC Ajay Sadhotra seeking blessings from Shri Shri 108 Swami Gurdip Giri Ji Maharaj at Karwanda in Jammu North Assembly Constituency.

justice, brotherhood and dignity for all. He noted that the message of the revered saint holds immense relevance in contemporary times when societies need to reaffirm the values of love, compassion and harmony. He said Sant Ravidas Ji devoted his life to spreading the message of equality and social

standing. "The teachings of Guru Ravidas Ji transcend barriers of caste, creed and religion. His vision was of a just and equitable society where everyone enjoys equal opportunities," Sadhotra said. He added that the ideals preached by the saint are particularly significant in the present era when societies across the world are striving to strengthen harmony and coexistence.

Urging people, especially the younger generation, to draw inspiration from the teachings of Sant Ravidas Ji, Sadhotra said that the path shown by great saints and reformers serves as a moral compass for building an inclusive and compassionate society.

On the occasion, spiritual leader Swami Gurdip Giri also addressed the gathering and highlighted the teachings of Sant Ravidas Ji. He empha-

sized that the saint's philosophy of devotion, humility and service to humanity continues to guide millions of followers across the country. He urged devotees to follow the path of truth and righteousness and work collectively for the welfare of society.

The congregation paid rich tributes to Sant Ravidas Ji and prayed for peace, harmony, prosperity, equality and justice in society. Several prominent persons including Ved Prakash Sharma, Sandeep Singh Manhas, Charan Dass, Bishan Lal Chalgotra, Kulwant Manhas and others were also present on the occasion.

Sadhotra appreciated the efforts of Parshotam Kumar and his team for organising the event and thanked Swami Gurdip Giri for delivering a spiritual discourse and attending the function from Pathankot.

# BJP slams NC Govt over 18% fare hike, warns of agitation across J&K

## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Saturday strongly criticized the government led by Omar Abdullah in Jammu and Kashmir over the recent 18 percent hike in transport fares, terming the decision illogical and anti-people. The criticism came during a press conference held at the BJP headquarters in Trikuta Nagar, Jammu.

Addressing the media, Abhijeet Jasrotia, spokesperson of the J&K BJP, said the steep hike has placed an unnecessary financial burden on the common people. He alleged that the decision reflects the insensitivity of the government towards the hardships faced by ordinary citizens.

Dr. Jasrotia said that instead of imposing a fare hike, the government should have rolled back the increased fuel prices, which



MLA Jammu East, Yudhvir Sethi and other BJP leaders talking to reporters.

would have provided relief to transporters while protecting the public from additional financial strain.

He stated that the decision contradicts the promises made to the people of Jammu and Kashmir in the 2024 election manifesto. He further warned that the increase in transport fares would trigger a cascading effect on the prices of essential commodities. According to him, any hike in transportation costs directly affects the pricing of goods

and daily necessities, pushing the common citizen into further economic distress. He pointed out that students, daily wagers, labourers and families with limited incomes would be the worst affected as they rely heavily on public transport for their daily activities.

Dr. Jasrotia also said that the decision will severely impact household budgets, as the cost of living will inevitably rise with the increase in fares. He described the move as anti-

people and insensitive to the economic realities faced by the public. Speaking on the occasion, Yudhvir Sethi, MLA from Jammu East, questioned the justification behind the hike. He said the government has already collected significant revenue through increased fuel prices over the past one and a half years. Quoting figures, Sethi said that the government collected nearly Rs 1,675 crore last year through fuel price hikes and continues to earn around Rs 140 crore every

month from the same source. Despite such substantial revenue collections, he said, the government has chosen to impose an additional burden on the public.

Sethi announced that the BJP will soon submit a memorandum to the Divisional Commissioner demanding an immediate rollback of the fare hike. Similar memorandums will also be submitted through the offices of Deputy Commissioners across Jammu and Kashmir. He warned that if the government fails to withdraw the decision, the party will launch a mass agitation across the Union Territory and raise the issue both inside and outside the Assembly.

Earlier, Ved Sharma introduced the subject of the press conference and highlighted the party's concerns regarding the impact of the fare hike on the general public. Other party leaders present included Ashutosh Mahajan, Roshan Lal and Kamal Preet Singh.

# Bharat Vikas Parishad delegation visits Home for the Aged & Infirm

## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A distinguished team of Bharat Vikas Parishad, led by Ajay Khajuria, Former Deputy Commissioner, visited the Home for the Aged and Infirm (Vridh Ashram), Ambhalla, Jammu and held an interactive meeting with the management and members of the institution.

During the visit, the delegation had a detailed discussion regarding the activities, objectives and social initiatives undertaken by Bharat Vikas Parishad. The members also took keen interest in understanding the functioning, management and welfare activities being carried out by the Home for the Aged & Infirm for the care and rehabilitation of elderly residents.

A three-hour discussion was held on various issues concerning senior citizens, particularly the challenges faced by elderly persons who are living away from their families. Both organizations exchanged views on how collaborative efforts can further strengthen support sys-



BVP members during visit to Home for the Aged and Infirm.

tems for senior citizens, especially the inmates residing in the Home.

The delegation expressed their commitment to work in close coordination with the management of the Home to enhance the emotional and social well-being of the elderly residents. It was also discussed that various cultural, recreational and motivational programmes would be organized in the future to bring positivity, emotional support and a renewed sense of joy among the inmates who are residing in the Home away from their families.

The members of Bharat Vikas Parishad who were present during the visit included

Jagmohan Sharma, Former Executive Director, Power Grid Corporation of India; Dr. Dev Raj Sharma, Former National Vice President, Bharat Vikas Parishad; Balwant Singh; Vinod Kumar; and C.M. Sharma.

The members from the Home for the Aged & Infirm who participated in the interaction included Er. Pankaj Gupta, President; Dr. Dinesh Gupta, Secretary; Satpal Sharma; and Rajinder Singh (MCM).

The visit concluded on a positive note with both organizations expressing their resolve to work together for the welfare, dignity and improved quality of life of senior citizens.

# New India rising with Nari Shakti: Adv. Purnima on Women's Day

## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: "Women Empowerment is the Power of New India," said BJP Spokesperson and Former Deputy Mayor of Jammu, Adv. Purnima Sharma, while extending warm greetings to women across the nation on the occasion of International Women's Day. She said that empowering women is not just a social responsibility but a national mission that strengthens families, communities, and the country as a whole.



healthcare, and financial independence for women across India.

Highlighting key initiatives, she said flagship programmes such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao have played a crucial role in protecting and educating the girl child, while Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana has brought relief and dignity to millions of women by providing clean cooking fuel to households.

Adv. Sharma further noted

that financial empowerment of women has been strengthened through schemes like Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, which have enabled women to start businesses, access banking services, and become financially independent.

She also highlighted the impact of Sukanya Samridhhi Yojana and the government's ambitious Lakshmi Didi Scheme initiative, which are empowering women, especially in rural areas, to become self-reliant entrepreneurs and contributors to the nation's economy.

Adv. Purnima Sharma said the Modi government's vision of "Nari Shakti" and women-led development has opened new opportunities for women in governance, entrepreneurship, science, sports, defence,

and innovation. She added that today Indian women are breaking barriers, leading institutions, and playing a decisive role in shaping the future of the nation.

Calling upon society to respect and support women in every sphere of life, she emphasized that true development of the nation is possible only when women are empowered, educated, safe, and economically independent.

She concluded by reaffirming the commitment of the BJP to continue strengthening policies and initiatives that promote women's dignity, leadership, safety, and economic empowerment, ensuring that the strength of Nari Shakti becomes the driving force behind India's journey towards a strong and developed nation.

# 8th Anniversary of Janaushadhi Diwas celebrated at GMC Jammu

## STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The 8th anniversary of Janaushadhi Diwas 2026 was celebrated today at N.S. Pathania Hall, GMC Jammu marking the successful journey of the Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) and its message "Jan Aushadhi - Sasti bhi, Achi bhi." The programme was graced by the MLA East Yudvir Sethi as the Chief Guest and attended by Dr. Ashutosh Gupta, Principal & Dean, GMC Jammu, Rajesh Kumar State Drug Controller J&K (Guest of Honour), Dr Harbaksh Singh, Chief Medical Officer Jammu, Rifat Nazir, State Nodal Officer PMBI and all the Medical Superintendents of GMC & Associated Hospitals.



MLA East Yudvir Sethi with doctors at GMC Jammu.

ing and spoke about the importance and impact of the scheme in ensuring the availability of affordable medicines.

Thereafter, Dr. Ashutosh Gupta, Principal & Dean, GMC Jammu welcomed the dignitaries and highlighted the benefits of the scheme in providing quality life-saving medicines and consumables at affordable prices. A PowerPoint presentation on the journey and benefits of PMBJP was presented by

State Nodal Officer PMBI Rifat Nazir. In the concluding session, the MLA East Yudvir Sethi addressed the gathering and appreciated the initiative.

The Chief Guest was honoured by the Principal & Dean, while mementos were also presented to the State Drug Controller, Chief Medical Officer, and Medical Superintendents.

The State Nodal Officer PMBI Rifat Nazir was appreciated for the valuable contribu-

tion towards the successful organization of the programme and efforts in strengthening the Janaushadhi initiative in the state. During the recognition segment, Sunandya Gupta, Janaushadhi Kendra Canal Road, received the first recognition, while Janaushadhi Kendra District Hospital Anantnag received the second recognition at the national level under PMBJP. Winners of Janaushadhi Kendras in the UT of Jammu & Kashmir were also recognized during the programme. The programme concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Shaista Ganai (Deputy Medical Superintendent, GMCH) Programme Coordinator, who expressed gratitude to the Chief Guest, dignitaries, organizers, and participants for making the event successful.