

Deputy CM tours RS Pura, pushes for border area development

Inspects ongoing projects, orders enquiry into Hare Peer Bridge design, holds public outreach at Village Sai

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, on Sunday conducted an extensive tour of border areas in R.S. Pura to review the progress of developmental works and address the public grievances.

During the visit, the Deputy Chief Minister convened a day long public outreach programme at Village Sai, where he interacted with a large gathering of residents and listened to their concerns.

Pushing for holistic development of border areas, the Deputy Chief Minister directed the concerned departments to identify suitable land patches for construction of a Community Hall, an Industrial Estate and other public facilities in the area.

"Our emphasis is on sustainable and inclusive development and the government is determined to strengthen the infrastructure and improve livelihood opportunities in border regions," he said.

He asked the officials to explore the possibilities for establishment of an Industrial Estate on available government land, making it clear that industries



Dy CM, Surinder Choudhary addressing public rally.

would not be set up by acquiring farmers' land.

Highlighting the importance of skill development, the Deputy Chief Minister also called for strengthening training opportunities and skilling local youth for better livelihood opportunities. He further directed the concerned departments to organise awareness-cum-registration camps under the Labour and Employment Department so that eligible residents can avail welfare benefits.

"I urge all the residents to register for labour cards, which provide benefits such as marriage assistance for daughters, scholarships for child education and health insurance coverage for the workers," he said.

Earlier, the Deputy Chief

Minister paid obeisance at the revered Baba Hare Peer Dargah and prayed for peace, harmony and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir.

Later, he inspected the restoration work of the Hare Peer Bridge at Sai Kalan and expressed serious concern over the poor design and execution of the project.

Taking strong notice of the delay and technical shortcomings, he directed the concerned authorities to conduct an enquiry into the matter. He stressed that permanent restoration, including strengthening and protection of the existing infrastructure, must be completed at the earliest to ensure seamless connectivity for residents of the border areas.

During the tour, the Deputy Chief Minister also inspected the ongoing construction work on Sai Fagal Bridge (Aik Nallah) and reviewed its progress, directing the executing agencies to expedite the pace of work for its timely completion.

During the outreach programme, the local residents raised several issues relating to development and basic services. Key concerns included the ownership rights of West Pakistan Refugee (WPR) legal allottees, improvement in irrigation water supply, maintenance of canals such as D-17 and Jagobal and relief in electricity bills for farmers cultivating land beyond the border fencing.

The locals also highlighted

the need for improved sanitation facilities, construction of ladies' bathrooms, verification of individual bunkers in border areas, better public transport services including e-buses and timely restoration of infrastructure damaged due to floods and other natural causes.

The Deputy Chief Minister directed the concerned officers to take prompt action on the issues raised and ensure speedy implementation of development works in the border areas.

The Dy CM was accompanied by MLA Suchetgarh, Gharu Ram Bhagat, former DDC members, Chief Engineers of PMGSY and PWD, Concerned SDM and other senior officers.

NEET-UG 2026 application deadline extended after Minister Sakeena Itoo's intervention

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The National Testing Agency (NTA) has extended the last date for submission of the online Application Form for the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) - 2026 upto 11th March.

A public notice, issued by NTA in this regard reads, "the last date for submission of Online Application Form for the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test [NEET (UG)] - 2026 has been extended up to 11th March, 2026 (09.00 P.M.). The payment of fees can be made up to 11:50 PM on 11.03.2026".

The notice further reads that candidates are advised to complete the filling up of form within the extended date and time and no further extension will be granted.

Pertinently, Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo had written to Union Minister for Education, Dharmendra Pradhan on 6th March, 2026 and requested for extension of the NEET-UG 2026 application deadline in view of recent internet restrictions in Kashmir valley to maintain law and order as well as safety of citizens.

Several students had had faced difficulties in submitting their application forms due to issues with OTP verification and submission.

Minister Sakeena has extended her gratitude to Union Minister of Education for promptly considering this request and extending the NEET-UG 2026 application deadline by three days, now till 11th

March. "This decision will greatly help many students from Kashmir Valley who faced difficulties in submitting their forms due to internet speed limitations. Grateful for the timely support to ensure that no aspirant misses the opportunity", she stated.

Minister Sakeena has now advised the candidates to avoid last-minute submissions and complete the application process well before the deadline to prevent any technical difficulties. "All aspiring candidates who have not yet completed their application process are advised to take advantage of this extended deadline and ensure that their application forms are submitted within the stipulated time", she said.

DG reviews working of Treasuries, processing of bills ahead of FY closure

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Director General Accounts and Treasuries Fayaz Ahmed Lone on Sunday chaired a meeting to review the functioning of treasuries and the status of bills processing ahead of the closure of the current financial year 2025-26.

Director Accounts & Treasuries, Jammu Rajesh Talwar; Joint Director (Central) DGAT, Ishfaq Ahmad Pandit; Sadder Treasury Officer, Yasir Sharief; Treasury Officer Additional Treasury Gandhi Nagar, Zafar Iqbal; Treasury Officer Additional Treasury Talab Tillo, Kuldeep Kumar; Treasury Officer Additional Treasury New Plot Jatinder Singh and other officers were present. District Treasury Officers and Sub-Treasury Officers



DG Accounts and Treasuries Fayaz Ahmed Lone chairing a meeting.

attended the meeting through virtual mode. The DG asked Treasury Officers to coordinate with NIC for smooth functioning of JK PaySys and TreasuryNet application to avoid delay in processing of bills, especially SNA bills to be released in favour of

the eligible beneficiaries. It was also decided that a point of contact at the NIC level will be designated to ensure faster resolution of technical issues and directions were issued to Treasury Officers to ensure smooth closure of the financial year.

DLSA Reasi celebrates Int'l Women's Day

STATE TIMES NEWS

REASI: On the directions of JK Legal Services Authority and under the Chairmanship of Khalil Choudhary, Chairman DLSA (Pr. District & Sessions Judge), the District Legal Services Authority Reasi in collaboration with Tehsil Legal Services Committee, Mahore celebrated International Women's Day on Sunday.

On this occasion, a Legal Awareness Camp was organized at Government Higher Secondary School Mahore under the theme "Give to Gain".

The awareness programme/camp was attended by Chairman District Legal Services Reasi Khalil Choudhary (Pr. District & Sessions Judge), Secretary, (Sub-Judge) Pooja Gupta; Munsiff Mahore Himanshu Attri (Chairman TLSC Mahore);



Chairman DLSA Reasi, Khalil Choudhary presenting trophy to a winner student.

Chief LADC Rashi Baru; local SDPO Parul Bhardwaj SDPO; Tehsildar Mahesh Chander school staff, Principal Government, local Advocates, staff members, students and Para Legal Volunteers.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairman District Legal Services Authority Khalil Choudhary made the students aware about the importance of the day and highlighted the legal protection and benefits for women. He

further made the gathering of people conversant with different NALSA & SLSA Schemes.

The welcome address was presented by Secretary DLSA Reasi Pooja Gupta.

Chief LADC and local advocates also spoke on the theme of the program and made students aware regarding rights of women, welfare and social security Schemes for Women, besides legal framework to prevent violence against Women and its different forms.

Students of the School also shared their views on the theme. Maroofa Kousar of Class 12th, Nahida Kousar of Class 11th, Shabina Akhter of Class 10th and Jamila Anjam - Parajudo Athletes were felicitated by presenting trophies to them. Vote of thanks was presented by Bar President Court Mahore.

JKAACL stages "Komal Gandhar" to mark International Women's Day

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: To mark International Women's Day, Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL) staged the renowned Hindi play "Komal Gandhar", written by eminent playwright Shankar Shesh, at Abhinav Theatre on Sunday evening.

Former Minister, Priya Sethi graced the occasion as the Chief Guest and appreciated JKAACL for presenting such a wonderful theatrical production. She lauded the efforts of the Academy in organizing meaningful cultural programmes and also appreciated the artists for their powerful performances. The event, organized under the guidance of Secretary, J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, Harvinder Kour, reflected the Academy's continued commitment to promoting theatre and meaningful cultural expression in Jammu and Kashmir.

The play was directed by noted theatre personality Bhupinder Jamwal and witnessed an enthusiastic response from theatre lovers, artists, students and people from all walks of life.

The audience highly appreciated the performances of the artists. Arvind Anand portrayed Bhisma with remarkable intensity, while



Artists performing in a play.

Gurmeet Jamwal delivered a compelling performance as Gandhari. Soham Kashyap as Sanjaya, Mukesh Bakshi as Shakuni, Balwinder Singh as Dhritarashtra, Rishab Manhas as

Duryodhan, and Deepshikha as Dasi also impressed the audience with their strong stage presence. The chorus included Sahil Bazaz, Narved Singh Jamwal, Rakesh Kumar, and Dhariya Singh.

The production was particularly notable for its aesthetically rich stage design by eminent theatre personality Deepak Kumar, whose thoughtfully crafted sets created a powerful visual backdrop for the play and effectively evoked the epic atmosphere required for the narrative.

Other production credits included Ashish Sharma for Music Operation; Pankaj Sharma and Aditya Bharti for Light Design and Execution; Sahil Qureshi for Costume Design; Shiv Dev Singh and Pintu Bhat for Make-up; Ajay Kumar for Props and Set Execution; and Jyeshtha Jamwal for Brochure and Poster Design. Ravi Sharma and Sahil Bazaz served as Assistant Directors, while Mohit Singh Chib worked as Production Manager.

Secretary, JKAACL presented the vote of thanks and appreciated the artists for their commendable performances as well as the audience for their enthusiastic participation and support to theatre activities of the Academy.

JKRLM celebrates International Women's Day across J&K

Mission Director virtually inaugurates UT-wide activities

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Jammu & Kashmir Rural Livelihood Mission (JKRLM) on Sunday celebrated International Women's Day across all blocks of J&K, with a series of awareness and community mobilisation activities aimed at empowering women and strengthening their role in community development.

The celebrations were virtually inaugurated by the Mission Director, JKRLM, Dr Shubhra Sharma who addressed Self Help Group (SHG) members, CLF representatives and community cadres, emphasizing

the importance of women's empowerment, financial inclusion and community participation. The Mission Director highlighted the vital role played by SHG women in driving social and economic transformation in rural areas.

As part of the celebrations, Financial Fraud Awareness Camps were organized to educate SHG members on prevention of digital and financial frauds, safe digital banking practices and grievance redressal mechanisms. Resource persons from banks and financial institutions also participated in the sessions to sensitize participants

about responsible use of digital financial services. Additionally, plantation drives were conducted at several locations involving SHG members and community institutions to promote environmental responsibility and sustainable development, while also highlighting the role of women in conservation and community leadership.

The events witnessed enthusiastic participation from SHG members, CLF leaders and community cadres across various districts, reflecting the growing strength and collective spirit of women associated with JKRLM.

DYSS Doda celebrates International Women's Day



Participants posing for a photograph.

STATE TIMES NEWS

DODA: To commemorate International Women's Day 2026, the District Youth Services and Sports (DYSS) Doda organized a series of high-energy sports competitions along with a prestigious facilitation ceremony to honor the achievements and contributions of women in society.

The event was organized on the directions of Director General Youth Services and Sports Anuradha Gupta and under the supervision of DYSSO Jaffer Haider Sheikh.

The day-long programme featured exciting Cricket and Kabaddi tournaments for girls, drawing enthusi-

astic participation from young athletes across the district. The competitions showcased exceptional talent, teamwork, and the growing sporting spirit among female athletes in both traditional and modern sports.

Following the thrilling sports competitions, a special felicitation ceremony was organized to recognize and honor women who have made notable contributions in various fields, including sports and community service. These "Women of Excellence" were presented with mementos and certificates of appreciation for their dedication, perseverance, and for serving as inspiring role models for the younger generation.

Multiple events mark International Women's Day celebrations across Jammu Division

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A series of events were organised across Jammu Division to celebrate International Women's Day, highlighting women's empowerment, entrepreneurship, sports participation and social awareness.

At Doda, the Department of Agriculture, Sub Division Pranoo, celebrated International Women's Day at Dak Bungalow Bhaderwah by organising a gender sensitization and inclusive awareness workshop. Speakers delivered informative lectures on women's empowerment, gender sensitization and their participation in decision-making processes.

At Samba, the Social Welfare Department organised a programme to mark International Women's Day. Deputy Commissioner Ayushi Sudan inaugurated the programme and emphasised the importance of gender equality and the need to ensure equal opportunities for women in all sectors.

The programme was held under the theme "Give to Gain," highlighting the importance of generosity, collaboration and collective efforts to accelerate gender equality. The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from officials, women entrepreneurs, college students and members of civil society.

At Kishtwar, the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the District Administration, organised a training-cum-workshop on gender sensitization. Women and young girls from Self-Help Groups (SHGs) were aware about their rights and respon-

sibilities to enable them to actively contribute to the development of society and the nation. Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma graced the event as the Chief Guest, while daughter of the soil Dr Daisy Parihar; Principal Government ANMT School Gandhinagar; was the Guest of Honour. The programme witnessed participation of women farmers, SHGs, Krishi Sakhis and young girls from across the district.

Meanwhile, the District Employment and Counselling Centre organised a Women Entrepreneurship and Self-Help Group (SHG) Mela for potential entrepreneurs at GHSS Bhatta, Block Palmar. The event was graced by MLA Shagun Parihar as the Chief Guest and ADDC Vinod Kumar Behnal as the Guest of Honour. Around 100 potential entrepreneurs, along with representatives from various SHGs, participated in the event.

During the programme, the MLA distributed five sanction letters under Mission YUVA to eligible applicants, providing a significant boost to budding entrepreneurs.

At Poonch, the Department of Social Welfare celebrated International Women's Day 2026 at the Conference Hall of Government Degree College under the theme "Give to Gain." Deputy Commissioner Ashok Kumar Sharma graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. District Social Welfare Officer Khalil A. Bauday highlighted the importance of the day and reiterated the department's commitment to

the welfare and empowerment of women. Meanwhile, Block Administration Mankote organised "Aznat-e-Khawateen Mela - Mankote" to commemorate International Women's Day. The event featured a women's awareness rally comprising SHG members, expectant mothers, ASHA workers, Anganwadi workers and members of the local community.

At Reasi, a one-day entrepreneurship mela under Mission YUVA was organised at Block Panthal to mark International Women's Day. Various government departments set up stalls showcasing start-up opportunities in sectors such as agriculture, horticulture, handicrafts, handloom, cooperatives and allied fields. Successful entrepreneurs and Self-Help Group members associated with the National Rural Livelihood Mission and Mission POSHAN also displayed their products and shared their experiences to motivate aspiring youth. A large number of women, SHG members and prospective entrepreneurs participated in the event and interacted with departmental officers and bank representatives to seek guidance regarding the establishment of enterprises under various government initiatives.

Assistant Director Employment Sanjay Kumar Bhat highlighted the importance of Mission YUVA in creating an enabling ecosystem for entrepreneurship and livelihood generation among youth. He called upon government departments, financial institutions and other stakeholders to work in

coordination to facilitate aspiring entrepreneurs in establishing sustainable enterprises.

At Ramban, the District Administration organised a Women Entrepreneurship Mela at Government Higher Secondary School Banihal. Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan attended the programme as the Chief Guest. Women entrepreneurs, members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), unemployed youth and representatives from various government departments participated in the event. The Deputy Commissioner highlighted the importance of empowering women through entrepreneurship and self-employment initiatives. The stalls set up by the Departments of Agriculture, Horticulture, Handicrafts & Handloom, Cooperatives and Employment disseminated information regarding self-employment schemes and livelihood opportunities available for women. The DC also distributed Mission YUVA sanction letters to five beneficiaries to support them in establishing their own enterprises. Similar programmes and awareness activities were also organised across sub-divisions and tehsils of the district.

At Udhampur, MY Bharat Udhampur celebrated International Women's Day with great enthusiasm at Subhash Stadium by organising an athletic event for girls and women. Hundreds of women participants showcased their sporting spirit and

enthusiasm. The competitions included 100-metres, 200-metres and 400-metres races along with tug-of-war events making the event vibrant and energetic. MLA Chenani Balwant Singh Mankotia graced the occasion as the Chief Guest and appreciated MY Bharat for organising such a meaningful event. The programme was organised as a joint initiative of MY Bharat, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) and Khelo India with the objective of empowering women through sports and community participation.

At Rajouri, the District Administration in collaboration with MY Bharat, the Sports Authority of India and Khelo India Centres celebrated International Women's Day 2026 by organising a series of sports and fitness activities under the ASMITA League. Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma, DIG Rajouri-Poonch Range Tejinder Singh and SSP Gaurav Sikarwar attended the event and appreciated the enthusiastic participation of women and girls.

Several competitions including tug-of-war; fun games and 100-metres, 200-metres and 400-metres races were conducted at the District Police Lines.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted the importance of creating platforms which empower women and encourage their active participation. He said that such initiatives help build confidence and promote a culture of equality and empowerment in society.