

GNSCT Chairman highlights role of Amarnath Yatra, Eid al-Adha in boosting J&K economy, promoting communal harmony

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JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir is gearing up for two major religious occasions-the sacred Amarnath Yatra and the festival of Eid al-Adha-both of which are expected to provide a significant boost to the region's economy, especially through tourism, while also sending a strong message of communal harmony and peaceful coexistence.

The annual Amarnath Yatra, which sees lakhs of devotees from across India making their way to the holy Amarnath Cave, has long been a pillar of spiritual life and a major contributor to the region's economy. As pilgrims, or yatries, begin preparations to undertake this arduous and sacred journey, the people and administration of Jammu and Kashmir are bracing for a busy and economically significant season. Parvinder Singh,

Chairman of the Guru Nanak Seva Charitable Trust (GNSCT), underscored the importance of the pilgrimage not just from a religious standpoint, but also in terms of its economic impact.

He said that tourism, particularly religious tourism, plays a pivotal role in sustaining the livelihood of thousands of families in Jammu and Kashmir.

"The Amarnath Yatra brings immense spiritual value, but it also revitalizes the local economy - from hotel owners and transporters to small traders and service providers. It is one of the cornerstones of economic activity in the region," he said. Singh also emphasized the need for meticulous administrative planning and inter-departmental coordination to ensure the smooth and safe conduct of the Yatra.

"It is vital that all requisite arrangements - including secu-



city, medical facilities, accommodation, traffic regulation, and communication - are in place well before the commencement of the pilgrimage. The safety and convenience of the yatries must remain the top priority," he added.

Simultaneously, the upcoming celebration of Eid al-Adha - one of the most significant festivals in the Islamic calendar - is expected to bring together communities across the Union Territory in a spirit of peace, compassion, and festivity. The festival, which com-

memorates the values of sacrifice and devotion, is celebrated with great fervor in every part of Jammu and Kashmir. Parvinder Singh remarked that the confluence of the Amarnath Yatra and Eid al-Adha presents a powerful opportunity to highlight Jammu and Kashmir's deep-rooted culture of mutual respect and religious coexistence.

"This is a region where people of different faiths have always lived together in harmony. These parallel observances - one a pilgrimage and the other a festival - reinforce the shared spirit of humanity, brotherhood, and unity," he said. Both events are expected to draw large crowds, not only from within the Union Territory but from across the country. The rise in tourist arrivals during this period is expected to bring substantial

economic benefits to the hospitality, transport, and local commerce sectors. Local artisans and markets are already preparing for the influx, anticipating strong business in the days to come.

As Jammu and Kashmir prepares for this spiritually and socially significant period, there is a renewed sense of purpose and optimism. With the combined efforts of the administration, civil society, and the people, these upcoming events could serve as a beacon of peace, prosperity, and unity.

Parvinder Singh reiterated that with careful planning, mutual respect, and community participation, both the Amarnath Yatra and Eid al-Adha can be celebrated in a way that honors tradition, supports the economy, and strengthens the social fabric of the region.

Education is best mean to ensure a bright future: Balbir

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JAMMU: Urging retired senior citizens of his community to inspire the youth in their families towards education, former Vice Chairperson, J&K SC, ST, BC Development Corporation, Balbir Ram Rattan, said that those who dedicate more of their present time to books are the ones who lay the foundation for prosperity and success in the future.

Balbir Ram Rattan stated that retired individuals can best understand from their own experiences that progress in life is not possible without education. He urged them to reflect on their past when they themselves were unemployed, and how education empowered them to secure jobs and earn a livelihood.

"Even today, after retirement, you are living a



financially independent and respectable life, and the credit for this goes to education," Balbir said.

Referring to history, Balbir Ram Rattan emphasized that evidence clearly shows education is the key to success. He said, "There are numerous examples in society where education has provided dignity, rights, and opportunities to people from marginalized sections."

In this context, he men-

tioned Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, stating that it was education that elevated him to such heights that the nation feels proud of him. Dr. Ambedkar not only faced social discrimination but also, through his knowledge and education, became the architect of the Constitution and earned a powerful place in society.

Balbir further stated that the upliftment of society is only possible when the younger generation is educated and understands both their rights and responsibilities. He urged retired citizens to become mentors to the youth and explain to them that today's hard work becomes tomorrow's honour.

He said that an educated society is a strong and progressive one, and achieving this requires collective effort from all of us.

DBPS celebrates Birth Anniversary of Acharya Chanakya



DBPS members addressing a press conference.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Brahmin Community, Dogra Brahman Pratinidhi Sabha (DBPS) Organization all over the region today celebrated the Birth Anniversary of Acharya Chanakya in the name of Vishwa Brahman Divas to remember the contribution of the Brahmin Community with fervour and enthusiasm.

A function was organized by the DBPS in the premises of the sabha under the presidency of Ved Parkash Sharma said that Vishwa Brahmin Divas is a Hindu Celebration to commemorate the pride of Brahmin Communities in the Hindu

Tradition.

Speaking on the occasion, chairman of DBPS Advocate P.C. Sharma pointed out that translation of Vishwa Brahmin Divas is World Brahmin Day. It is celebrated on the occasion of the birth anniversary of the Indian Philosopher cum diplomat Acharya Chanakya, he added.

NMC President Subash Shastri, former Dy. Commissioner B.S. Janwal that the actual birth date of Acharya Chanakya Jammotsav on 1st June as his symbolic birth anniversary Acharya Chanakya is considered as the pride and ideals of Indian Politics.

Senior BJP Leader Chander Mohan Sharma, Bawa Bhair Dev Sathan Trust General Secretary Romesh Sharma and Former JMC Commissioner Soujanya Sharma while paying rich tributes to Acharya Chanakya said that he was an accomplished politician, diplomat and strategist as well as the author of Indian Text Arthashastra.

Among others who paid their tribute included N.C. Sharma, M.L. Sharma, Satyanand Sharma, M.L. Padha, Pt. Barita Ram, Ritiz Khajuria, Shiv Ram Sharma, Jagan Nath Sharma, K.L. Sharma, Mahesh Sharma, Davinder Sharma (Baboo), S.S. Barni, Gurdass Sharma, Sat Paul Sharma, Raman Sharma, Som Nath Sharma, Rajesh Sharma, Prem Balotra, Sanjeev Kerni, Krishan Lal Sharma, Giridhari Lal, said that Acharya Chanakya also called Kautilya because of his deep understanding of various subjects. Beside that Acharya Chanakya Challisa, Hawan Yajna were also performed on the occasion.

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JAMMU: Shri Guru Ravi Dass Sabha, Bahu Fort, Jammu, solemnly observed the Balidan Divas of Shaheed Amar Nath Bhagat, paying rich tributes to the veteran leader on his martyrdom day.

People from all walks of life gathered to honor the supreme sacrifice of a towering leader of the depressed classes, who laid down his life for the cause of reservation and social justice in Jammu & Kashmir.

C.L. Banal (Retd. IGP), Chairman of Shri Guru Ravi Dass SS Trust, Sikanderpur, Jammu, was the Chief Guest on this occasion. In his address, he recalled that Amar Nath Bhagat's hunger strike had lasted several days. When the government failed to address the concerns raised, Bhagat transformed the hunger strike into a fast-unto-death.

Multiple attempts were made to weaken the movement, but Bhagat remained resolute. As his health deteriorated, doctors were deputed to persuade him to end the strike, but he refused all treatment.



Dignitaries paying tributes to Shaheed Amar Nath Bhagat at Shri Guru Ravi Dass Sabha.

On 31st May, his condition worsened, and he was forcefully shifted to SMGS Hospital, where he passed away on June 1, 1970, after refusing medical intervention.

Sham Lal Basson, in his speech, highlighted that Amar Nath Bhagat was born in Champa village of Batote and became one of the most prominent leaders advocating for the rights of the Dalit community. He left his government job with the Notified Area Committee in Batote to dedicate his life to the struggle for justice and equality. At a time

when reservation had been implemented across India since January 26, 1950, J&K remained an exception. It was only after Bhagat's martyrdom in 1970 that the state began implementing reservation for Scheduled Castes.

Retired CEO M.R. Bhangotra elaborated on Bhagat's extensive activism. After shifting to Jammu, he rented a room at Shaheedi Chowk and made it the headquarters for his mission. He also started a newspaper called Pasmandgi, through which he raised pressing

issues faced by marginalized communities and refugees from West Pakistan and Chhamb, settled in areas like Resham Ghar, Mazdoor Basti, and Qasim Nagar. In 1970, Bhagat intensified the movement and submitted a detailed memorandum to the government, which demanded not only reservation in government services and promotions but also included calls for land allotment, housing for the homeless, and SC representation in the Public Service Commission. Prof. Kali Dass provided an insightful account

of the historical context of the movement. He noted that after the submission of the demands, a formal notice for a hunger strike to begin on May 21, 1970, was served. With the government's inaction, the hunger strike commenced at Karan Park, opposite the Civil Secretariat. Bhagat was joined by committed companions including Chhaino Ram, Krishan Lal, Sinar Dass, Maizra Singh, Munshi Ram, Sheru Ram, and Charan Dass Thapa.

Those who addressed and attended function included EC Satia, State president All India Backward Classes Federation, Retd Col. Mohan Lal, Charan Dass Shivgotra Retd Deputy Controller; Raj Kumar Chalotra, Spokeperson AIBCU, Sumita Bangotra- President Savitri Bai Phule Mahila Sangathan, Er. Surinder Deygowda, B.D Thapa (Retd. BSNL officer), Moti Ram Angral, Om Prakash Badgal, Mangat Kalsi, O.P.Thapa, R.L.Bangotra Retd Distt Agri. Officer, Kuldeep Raj (Fouji), Krishan Lal, Veena Bakshi and Bodh Raj Kalsi.

Natrang's Summer Theatre Camp-2025 for children inaugurated by Balwant Thakur

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Natrang's Summer Theatre Camp for children-2025- the most sought after and ultimate professionally devised event for children in the region inaugurated here on Sunday at Natrang Studio Theatre, Jammu with the lighting of traditional lamps by Director Natrang, Padmashri Balwant Thakur.

Natrang's Summer Children Theatre camp matches the international standards in terms of the level of its activities, training faculty and the programme structure. The exposure of participating children is going to be all time high.

To cite one example, tomorrow, 2nd of June, 2025 on the 2nd day of the camp, the children are being shown Natrang's popular play 'Sainyan Bhaye Kotwal' at Abhinav Theatre, Jammu at 6 pm. Such opportunities are



Director Natrang, Padmashri Balwant Thakur lighting ceremonial lamp during a workshop.

very rare and the participating children are lucky to have such occasions.

Balwant Thakur who has worked in over 100 countries internationally has devised the programme module after having worked in the best of the children centres like Oxford Summer School and Cambridge Children Theatre.

The most noteworthy feature of Natrang's Children programme is that it focuses more on social development, self-development, emotional devel-

opment, critical thinking, public speaking, empathly fostering and enhancing cognitivity. Children Theatre Camp-2025 will be conducted by Sumeet Sharma who is a National Awardee for direction in theatre. Neeraj Kant and Gauri Thakur in addition to Balwant Thakur will also conduct sessions in this workshop.

Natrang's Children Theatre Wing was started in the year 1990 and since then, annual Summer Theatre camps, Spring Theatre workshops,

Winter Theatre Workshops have been a regular feature of Natrang's children activities. Over 5,000 children have been trained in this process and the majority of them are now top professionals in varied fields. Fact remains that theatre transforms an individual to a level that he/she excels and succeeds in every field.

The period of Summer Vacations is exclusively dedicated for Children Theatre every year by Natrang as this is the only time when children have many days in continuity to learn, explore and groom their personalities and improve their immense inner abilities in a fun-filled creative space and occasion. Till now, Natrang has groomed the personalities of thousands of children with an

effective and efficient transforming tool called theatre.

A new full-length play would also be prepared by the participants during Natrang's Theatre Camp-2025 which would be presented before larger audiences who get a chance to watch a wonderful children's play every year as the outcome of the summer theatre camp.

A dedicated team of artists/trainers which includes Mohd Yaseen, Kananpreet Kaur and Kartik Kumar will facilitate the smooth functioning of the workshop.

Those who are attending this workshop include Supria Gorka, Tavi Bajgotra, Agedat Dogra, Vanika Verma, Vivaan Verma, Aariya Shan, Shreen Shaan, Vivaan, Saanchi Dutta, Dwijesh Dutta, Ruhaan Chandan, Dhanak Chandan, Mahira Singh, Amayra Mahajan, Viyaan Sharma, Advik Sharma, Adira Sharma, Nandita Mahajan, Reyansh Vaid, Kavish Sharma, Adhesha Singh, Aashrita Sharma, Nirvana Shah, Jazz Shah, Tanishqa Sharma, Vivan Kaljuria, Krishna singh, Akshaj Mehta, Anvay Mehta and Mehak Chib.

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DODA: The revered Mindhal Mata Chandi Yatra commenced on June 1, 2025, with immense spiritual fervor and participation from thousands of devotees across Jammu and Kashmir. Organized by the Aadi Shakti Devi Chandike Sewak Sanstha (ASDCSS), Doda (J&K), the yatra marks the sacred journey from Maa Chandi Mandir Balasu, Doda to the holy shrine at Mindhal in Himachal Pradesh.

The holy Charri Mubarak was flagged off from Doda on June 1 by ADC Doda, Anil Kotwal, in the presence of religious leaders and hundreds of pilgrims.

The Charri is being led by Sh. Pyar Singh Ji, Maa Sewak and Chief Patron of the Sanstha, under the spiritual guidance of Prof. D.S. Manhas, President ASDCSS.

The Yatra schedule includes night halts at key spiritual locations including Gauri Shanker Mandir, Kishtwar. Thousands of yatrias are part of this divine journey, being provided with langar, medical



ADC Doda, Anil Kotwal flagging off holy Charri Mubarak.

facilities, and all necessary amenities by the Sanstha in collaboration with various regional Langer Committees and temple trusts.

The District Administration of Doda, in coordination with the Sanstha and local stakeholders, has made elaborate arrangements to ensure the safe and smooth conduct of the yatra. The contribution of the civil and police administration has been widely appreciated for their seamless coordination.

The six-day spiritual journey will culminate at the Mindhal Mata Temple

in Himachal Pradesh on June 6, 2025, with the final darshan and religious rituals being performed at the sacred shrine.

ASDCSS has extended gratitude to all volunteers, district officials, donors, and the devotees for their unwavering support and cooperation. The yatra is not only a spiritual expedition but also a symbol of the rich cultural and religious heritage of the region.

For more details and contact information, devotees may refer to the official list of regional coordinators or connect directly with the ASDCSS Doda office.

Abhay Bakaya leads delegation to Mohalla CRPF Camp Nalla, highlights plight of 2014 flood victims



Abhay Bakaya, District President Jammu Urban with others at a meeting.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Abhay Bakaya, District President Jammu Urban, accompanied by prominent party leaders Shakti Devi and Susham Kumari, on Sunday visited Mohalla CRPF Camp Nalla ward 71 to assess the living conditions of 12 families who continue to suffer the aftermath of the devastating 2014 floods. During the visit, the delegation witnessed the distressing situation faced by these families, who are still

residing in a highly unfavorable environment. The families, all of whom are documented land owners, have been persistently demanding proper rehabilitation since the tragedy. Despite repeated appeals, no compensation has been provided to them, and their living conditions remain deplorable.

Abhay Bakaya expressed deep concern over the administration's failure to address the plight of these victims. "It is unacceptable that these fami-

lies, who lost everything in the 2014 floods, are still awaiting justice and rehabilitation. They have valid land records in their names, yet no compensation or support has been extended to them," said Bakaya. Bakaya questioned the delay in providing each family with 5 marlas of land under the Prime Minister's Har Ghar Yojna scheme. "Why is the government not fulfilling its promise of providing land under the PM's scheme? The affected families are entitled to relief and rehabilitation, but their pleas have fallen on deaf ears," he added. The delegation called upon the concerned authorities to expedite the compensation process and provide these families with the promised land and support, in line with the government's commitment to disaster-affected citizens.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: While delivering a soulful discourse at Rakhbandhu, Jammu, Sadguru Shri Madhuparamhans Ji Maharaj, revered spiritual leader of Sahib Bandagi, captivated the congregation with profound spiritual insights. He spoke on the immortality and purity of the soul, stressing the importance of meditation to reconnect with the true self.

Sadguru Ji reminded devotees that while we universally accept that the soul is immortal, most people continue to live bound by Maya (illusion)

and the mind's distractions. "There is no flaw in the soul-it is natural, conscious, and blissful. It is the unending energy of the Divine," he said. Comparing the inherited qualities of children from parents, he explained that, likewise, being a part of God, the soul carries divine attributes.

Despite this knowledge, people are entangled in lust, anger, greed, and worldly attachments. "We all know that the soul is veiled by Maya, yet we make no effort to move forward spiritually. We are living physical lives, trapped by forces that constantly pull us away from



truth," he explained.

He urged devotees to identify and overcome these inner obstacles through understanding and discipline. Highlighting the futility of conflicts and inner battles, Sadguru Ji explained that our internal opposing forces often make us act against

better judgment.

Quoting the teachings of Sahib, he said, "The whole world is blind; no one truly understands." The only means to attain the soul, he said, is meditation. "The consciousness within your body is the soul-it is tied to the inert body. Meditation helps in uniting the conscious soul with the Supreme," he stated.

Drawing analogies, he added, "Just as the essence of oil is in sesame and the essence of ghee is in milk, the essence of consciousness lies in the body. Through meditation, we must extract that essence." But, he acknowl-

edged, unseen forces within us resist meditation-the mind wavers, the body fidgets, and thoughts wander.

He concluded by saying that the goal of meditation is complete stability-of the body, mind, and consciousness. "That one moment of deep stillness is equivalent to an entire cycle of time. Caring for our consciousness and stabilizing it is the true way to reach the Divine," Sadguru Ji emphasized.

The discourse left the audience deeply moved, inspiring many to commit themselves to the path of meditation and self-realization.