

VAJK officer bearers felicitate Kuldeep Magotra for bringing pride to volleyball at international level

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a proud moment for the sporting community of Jammu & Kashmir, Kuldeep Magotra, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Volleyball Association of J&K (VAJK), was warmly felicitated by the association's office bearers, players, and coaches at MA Stadium, here on Tuesday.

This recognition follows his recent appointment as Manager of the Indian Under-19 Men's Volleyball Team for the prestigious CAVA U-19 Men's Volleyball Championship 2025, held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, from June 10 to 16, 2025.

The Indian Under-19 Men's Volleyball Team won Bronze medal in the afore-said Championship.

Magotra's selection by the Adhoc Committee of the Volleyball Federation of India (VFI) is a testament to his decades-long contribution to Indian volleyball. His leader-



VAJK office bearers felicitating Kuldeep Magotra for representing bronze medal winner Indian Under-19 Men's Volleyball Team as Manager.

ship and administrative acumen, especially from Jammu & Kashmir, have consistently earned national and international accolades.

The felicitation ceremony was attended by key figures from VAJK, including General Secretary Vijay Kumar Magotra, Treasurer Ramesh Sharma, Joint Secretary Mohd Tariq,

Executive Member Subash Sharma, Coaches Naresh Kumar and Pretik Kumar, senior player Romi Bhagat, along with a number of budding players.

The gathering congratulated Magotra for his continued service to the sport and expressed confidence in his leadership for the upcoming championship.

Kuldeep Magotra's legacy spans numerous international appointments: as Technical Delegate in the 5th Asian Junior Volleyball Championship in Bangkok (1986), Manager in the 7th Asian Senior Men's Championship in Seoul (1989), SAF Games in Kathmandu (1999), Rashid Gold Cup in Dubai (2006),

15th Asian Junior Women's Championship in Vietnam (2010), President's Cup in Kazakhstan (2011), Asian Senior Men's Championship in Tehran (2015), and AVC Cup for Men in Thailand (2022).

Domestically, Magotra was the Organising Secretary for four National Championships hosted in J&K: Sub-Junior (2008), Juniors (1990 and 2022), and Senior (1995). He also served as Competition Director for the volleyball event at the Khelo India School Games (KISG) in Delhi (2018).

Honoured with the prestigious Sher-e-Kashmir Gold Medal in 1987, Magotra continues to elevate the profile of J&K in Indian volleyball. His recent appointment has not only brought honour to the Union Territory but also renewed hope and inspiration for young athletes across the region.

Secy JKSC opens Taekwondo Cup



Secretary JKSC, Nuzhat Gul with players and officials at inaugural ceremony.

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SRINAGAR: The J&K Taekwondo Association Cup, organised in memory of D N Pangotra by the J&K Taekwondo Association (JKTA) under the aegis of J&K Sports Council, commenced today at the Sher-e-Kashmir Indoor Sports Complex (SKISC), here.

The event, being supported by Atul International Taekwondo Academy, Gameon Foundation and Colour World Advertiser, declared open by Nuzhat Gul, Secretary of J&K Sports Council (JKSC),

who was chief guest. Speaking to the gathering, the chief guest congratulated the participating athletes and the organisers.

The ceremony was also attended by Nissar Hussain, senior vice president of JKTA, and Maqsood Ahmed Khan, Manager of SKISC Srinagar, as guests of honour. Saadat Sogami, chairman of Team Red NGO was guest of honour.

The championship is being held under the guidance of Rajesh Pangotra, president, JKTA; Ramesh Chander Sharma, general

secretary, JKTA; Nissar Hussain and Ashiq Hussain (convenor of the event).

The organising team was headed Burhan Ud Din Khan and included Vinod Grewal, Danish Manzoor and Anees.

The technical panel included Sunil Kumar, Zaheer Abbas Khan, Bashir Sheikh, Shanaz Parveen, Ashaq Hussain, Vansh Rakwal, Raghav Mehra, Achutam Dev Singh, Hashim Majeed, Devansh Mehra, Shivansh Rajput, Dushyant Kapta, Amit Kumar, and Abrar Ul Akbar Batt.

CUJ bags top honor for Excellence in higher education at Government Achievements & Schemes Expo-2025 in New Delhi

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Central University of Jammu (CUJ) has brought laurels to the region by securing first place in the "Excellence in Higher Education" category at the prestigious Government Achievements & Schemes Expo 2025, held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, from 20th to 23rd June 2025. The award was conferred on 23rd June 2025 in recognition of CUJ's outstanding contributions to academia, research, and innovation.

The expo, organized by the NNS Media Group, showcased groundbreaking initiatives and achievements from institutions across India. The Central University of Jammu delegation included Prof. Ritu Bakshi (Professor & Dean, Students Welfare), Dr.

Shveta Kohli (Associate Professor, Dept. of Economics), and Dr. Rajan Badyal (Public Relations Officer), represented the university and interacted with dignitaries, academicians, media representatives, and visitors.

The key highlights from CUJ's Participation are cutting-edge Himalayan High Altitude Atmospheric & Climate Research Centre (H2A2CR) and its MoU's collaborations drew significant attention. Promotion of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) Initiatives like Faculty Development Programs (FDPs) and the International Seminars in the Light of Indian Tradition and Culture were widely appreciated. The university's stall attracted engagement from delegates of

IITs, Central Universities, NITs, IIMs, incubation centers, state government departments, students and visitors.

Under the dynamic leadership of Prof. Sanjeev Jain, Vice-Chancellor, Central University of Jammu has scaled new heights in education and research. Prof. Jain commended the efforts of the university community, faculty, students, and stakeholders for their relentless dedication. He also expressed gratitude to the Ministry of Education, Government of India, for its unwavering support in fostering academic excellence.

This accolade reinforces CUJ's commitment to quality education, innovation, and societal impact, positioning it as a leading institution in India's higher education landscape.

11th Rugby District Championship 2025 concludes with exciting finals

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JAMMU: The 11th Rugby District Championship 2025, organized by the Rugby District Association Jammu, concluded with exciting finals at the Green Field Stadium, Gandhi Nagar. Held over two days on June 23rd and 24th, the tournament featured 16 teams from clubs across the district competing fiercely. The event was conducted under the banner of the J&K Rugby Association and sponsored by the J&K Sports Council, aiming to promote rugby and provide a platform for talented young athletes in the region.

The championship was officially inaugurated by Anil Sharma, Sports Manager of Green Field Stadium. On the closing day, the event was graced



Participating teams of 11th Rugby District Championship 2025 posing with officials and dignitaries.

by Chief Guest Sanjeev Kumar Sharma (President Awardee), Guest of Honour Sanjay Sharma, Senior Editor of State Times, and Harmeet Singh, General Secretary of Jammu Rugby Association. They distributed medals and mementos to outstanding players and

officials who demonstrated exceptional skills and sportsmanship throughout the tournament.

In his address, Chief Guest Sanjeev Kumar Sharma encouraged the participants to choose sports over drugs, emphasizing the importance of leading a healthy and active lifestyle. He also expressed gratitude to the

organizing body for conducting such events in remote areas of Jammu district, ensuring the sport reaches every corner of the region.

The championship witnessed remarkable performances across categories. In the under-18 girls category, Jammu Ruggers emerged as winners, followed by Jammu

Shakti in second place and Bravers securing third place. The senior women's category saw Jhelum Warriors claim the top spot, with Stikers finishing second and Rugby Avengers taking third place. Among the under-18 boys, Phoenix Rugby Club secured first place, Singh 7 was runner-up, and Jammu Ruggers came third. In the senior men's category, Jammu Palatoon took first place, Jammu Bulls were second, and Jammu Brave Hearts finished third.

The Rugby District Association Jammu congratulated all participants, winners, and organizers for making the championship a grand success. They noted that such events not only nurture athletic excellence but also inspire youth to pursue sports as a means of personal growth and community development.

Rain, Speed & Gold: J&K skaters dazzle at National Skating Meet in Kolkata

Kartikeya, Puneesh Puri & Arshjyot Singh clinch gold

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: With immense pride and gratitude, Jammu & Kashmir's roller skaters delivered a remarkable performance at the 9th Open National Ranking Roller Skating Championship 2025, held in Kolkata, West Bengal. Despite battling tough monsoon conditions, the young athletes from the Union Territory stood tall among over 2,500 skaters from across the country, displaying exceptional talent, dedication, and resilience.

"Once again skaters from Jammu & Kashmir rise, shine, and represent their home Union Territory with glory," said GS Khurmi, President of the Jammu and Kashmir Roller Skating Association (JKRSA). His words echoed the pride felt across the state, as its athletes continued to make their mark on the national stage.

Leading the charge was Kartikeya Puri, who competed in the Senior Boys (Above-18) Quads category. Kartikeya claimed two Gold Medals - in the 1 Lap Road Race and the 3000m Road Race - under extremely



wet and slippery conditions, showcasing not only physical skill but immense mental strength. His performance was a powerful reflection of the unwavering spirit that defines J&K's rising sporting culture.

Matching that spirit was Puneesh

Puri, who represented J&K in the U-15 Sub-Junior Boys Inline category. He too clinched two Gold Medals - in the 1 Lap Road Race and the 5000m Elimination Race - proving that focus, discipline, and dedication can overcome even the most difficult challenges. His triumphs stood as a symbol of what is possible when talent meets tenacity.

Adding to the medal haul, Arshjyot Singh delivered an inspiring performance in the 15-18 Boys Quads, winning a Gold Medal in the 1 Lap Road Race. His execution and composure during the event were widely praised, reinforcing the strength and depth of J&K's skating contingent.

Alongside the medalists, skaters Rajveer Singh Sarotia, Vanshaj Sharma, Divay Jamwal, and Arnav Singh Salathia competed with fierce determination and pride. Though they didn't make it to the podium, their efforts were no less inspiring, as they went head-to-head with the nation's top talent and demonstrated the steady rise of competitive skating in Jammu & Kashmir.

The athletes and members of JKRSA extended heartfelt thanks to GS Khurmi, acknowledging his pivotal role as the guiding force behind this movement. His vision and commitment have created a nurturing platform for youth across the Union Territory, enabling them to chase their dreams and compete at the highest level. Gratitude was also expressed to Mamta Ma'am, whose passionate and soulful commentary throughout the championship inspired both athletes and spectators. Her words captured the "jazba" - the spirit, emotion, and relentless drive of every skater on the track - and served as a source of motivation during the most demanding moments.

The skaters returned home not just with medals, but with memories of resilience, unity, and personal growth. This event was more than a competition - it was a celebration of belief, a reflection of hard work, and a reminder that with the right support, dreams born in the UT of J&K can shine brightly on the national stage.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Indian Youth Congress (IYC) National President Uday Bhanu Chib on Tuesday met and felicitated the Jammu & Kashmir Deaf Sports Association team at the IYC Headquarters, following their stellar performance at the 27th National Deaf Senior Sports Championship.

The J&K team, with Team Manager Ranjodh Singh (Vice President & Chairman, JKPYC Sports Cell) and Mohd Saleem (Vice Chairman, J&K Sports Association of the Deaf), secured an impressive 12 medals across various categories, reflecting their unwavering dedication, hard work, and sporting excellence.

Chib arranged an online interactive session with Olympian Bajrang Punia, who lauded the athletes'



IYC National President Uday Bhanu Chib felicitating J&K Deaf Sports Association team.

achievements and motivated them to continue striving for greatness in their sporting careers.

The National IYC President commended the team's spirit and said, "These young athletes from J&K have proved that passion and perseverance can overcome any challenge. IYC stands with them and all differ-

ently-abled sportspersons who continue to make India proud."

State General Secretary of JKPYC, Anirudh Sawhney, also congratulated the athletes and support staff, appreciating their efforts and commitment to representing the Union Territory with pride on the national stage.

Oriental School Udhampur group leaves for trekking



President of District Mountaineering Association Udhampur, Verinder Slathia flagging off fifth batch for trekking.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

UDHAMPUR: President of District Mountaineering Association, Udhampur, Verinder Slathia along with Kiran Jamwal, Principal of Aryan Oriental Convent Higher Secondary School, Udhampur flagged off the fifth batch comprising 90 students of School for Dharamshalla to participate in a Trekking Programme being organized by Tawi Trekkers J&K in Dharamshalla-

Meleodganj area of Himachal Pradesh.

Chairman of the School, Upkar Singh Jamwal along with four teachers Shruti Ghalotra, Dhunakshi Thakur, Vicky Sharma and Mangal Singh also accompanied the group escorted by Vikas Singh and Kashish Bharti, both sport climbers.

With this, the total participation in the programme has gone upto about 500, reflecting the growing interest of the youth in

adventure and nature based activities.

The purpose of this programme was to catch the young minds early and introduce them to the joys of adventure activities, foster a love for nature and offer them a welcome break from the heat and dust of urban life.

Apart from trekking in the lush green trails of Dhauladhar range the students shall also visit iconic and spiritual sites including

the Dalai Lama temple, Norbulingka Monastery, the beautiful Dharamshala Cricket Stadium, tea garden and a tea manufacturing factory, the serene Bhagshu waterfall and Chamunda temple thus allowing them to experience both the natural beauty and cultural heritage of the region.

It may be mentioned here that Aryan Oriental Convent Higher Secondary School, which has been participating in trekking programme of the club for the past over two decades has also been promoting sport climbing by deputed substantial number of climbers for the sport climbing competition at Jammu.

Meanwhile, the Club is making the necessary arrangements for the conduct of a high altitude trekking programme to Triund meadow, situated at an altitude of over 10000ft.

Devotional Album 'Jai Ho Laddu Gopal' released

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: BJP Jammu & Kashmir President Sat Sharma, accompanied by senior party leaders, released a soulful devotional album titled "Jai Ho Laddu Gopal (Laddu Gopal Chalisa)" at the BJP headquarters in Trikuta Nagar, here on Tuesday.

The album, sung and written by noted devotional artist Sita Singh, features melodious music composed by Dr. V. Kaith and has been visually brought to life under the direction of KK Malhotra.

It is jointly produced by Sita Singh and her husband, Swami Narayan Das. Present at the launch were her daughter Ambika Solanki and several family members, reflecting a personal and spiritual milestone for the family.

The programme was coordinated by Sahil Mahajan, Co-Convenor of BJP Sanskriti, Art & Culture Cell. Also in attendance were BJP General



BJP J&K President Sat Sharma and others releasing devotional album.

Secretary and MLA Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal, MLA Rajeev Bhagat, All Cells Incharge Rakesh Mahajan, Office Secretary Tilak Raj Gupta, Spokesperson Balbir Ram Rattan, and Media Incharge Dr. Pardeep Mahotra. Others present included Jaideep Sambyal, Ravinder Singh Jamwal, Er. TK Sharma, Sanjay Bakshi, and Rajesh Sharma.

Sat praised the album as a divine expression of devotion,

stating that it not only promotes spiritual values but also reflects the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's women-centric initiatives like Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao, by showcasing women empowerment through art.

Dr. Devinder Manyal emphasized the importance of such spiritual contributions in preserving India's rich cultural heritage. MLA Rajeev Bhagat lauded the team for spreading Lord Krishna's eternal message.

Rakesh Mahajan hailed Sita Singh's devotion and creative talent as an inspiration, while Dr. Pardeep Mahotra, who conducted the event, spoke on the spiritual relevance of the Laddu Gopal Chalisa.

Sita Singh expressed her heartfelt gratitude, stating the album was crafted with immense love and reverence. Sahil Mahajan concluded with a vote of thanks, affirming BJP's commitment to cultural promotion through its Sanskriti Cell.