

AJKGBC raises voice for tribal rights and welfare

Calls for immediate Constitution of Tribal Advisory Group, compensation, employment measures

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
ANANTNAG: A significant Gujjar-Bakerwal Conference was held in Anantnag under the chairmanship of Choudhary Ajaz Ahmed Khan, former Minister in the Jammu and Kashmir Government.

The event witnessed participation from delegates representing Anantnag, Srinagar, Pulwama, and other adjoining areas.

The gathering collectively raised several urgent and long-standing issues concerning the Gujjar and Bakerwal tribal communities and demanded action from the government on a priority basis.

One of the foremost demands put forth at the conference was the immediate constitution of a Tribal Advisory Group within the Tribal Affairs Department, to be headed by the Minister of Tribal Affairs. The speakers emphasized that tribal welfare and development cannot be left solely to the discretion of MLAs, many of whom are not adequately familiar with the problems faced by nomadic and forest-dwelling communities. They argued that the tribal population needs dedicated representation through an institutional body to ensure effective policy planning and execution.



MLA Ch. Ajaz Ahmed Khan and AJKGBC members at a meeting.

Another major concern raised was the recent order by the Finance Department placing tribal funds at the disposal of MLAs. Ch. Ajaz Ahmed Khan criticized this move, stating that such a mechanism sidelines the actual needs and priorities of the tribal population. He insisted that tribal-specific works must only be taken up after proper identification and recommendation by the concerned Tribal Advisory Group.

The conference also focused on compensation and disaster relief. Delegates demanded immediate financial assistance to those families whose cattle perished during recent unexpected snowfalls and hailstorms on high mountain peaks. They called upon the administration to release relief funds under the State Disaster Response Fund

(SDRF) without delay. Special mention was made of families affected by a recent fire incident in Makbara Shangus, where homes belonging to Yasin Chouhan and Intiaz Khan of Pahalgam were destroyed. The participants appealed to the Deputy Commissioner Anantnag to provide immediate relief through the Red Cross and other emergency measures.

The need for restoration of tribal grazing rights was another prominent issue discussed. The speakers noted that the Grazing Committee has not held a meeting in many years, which has adversely affected the seasonal migratory routes and access to traditional pastures. The conference demanded the urgent revival of these meetings to protect the livelihood of nomadic shepherds.

Furthermore, the participants emphasized the need for the development of six tribal routes which have already been identified by the Tribal Department. Implementation of this plan was urged without further delay.

A deep sense of frustration was expressed over the lack of recruitment since 2019, which has hit educated tribal youth the hardest. Ch. Rashid Azam Inqlabi, a senior community leader, highlighted the importance of technical and professional education for the younger generation. He demanded that the government provide unemployment allowance to the educated tribal youth - ₹10,000 per month for graduates, ₹7,000 for undergraduates, and ₹5,000 for matriculates and below - until regular employment avenues are created.

The issue of Forest Rights also found strong mention. The speakers criticized the government for failing to implement the Forest Rights Act (FRA) in letter and spirit. They demanded that both individual and community rights be conferred to those tribal families who have been residing in forest areas for generations. Moreover, they urged the government to rehabilitate tribal families displaced due

to tourism development in areas like Pahalgam, Surinsar, Gulmarg, Sonamarg, and other tourist circuits.

The conference was also addressed by key office bearers of the All Jammu and Kashmir Gujjar-Bakerwal Conference, including President Mohd Yousaf Majnu, Secretary Yasin Poswal, and Provincial Secretary Maulana Abul Wahid. Several grassroots leaders and intellectuals including Qari Abdul Rehman Sahib, Farooq Khattana, Master Tahir, Mohd Younis Chichi, Amjad Khattana, Yar Mohammad (Pulwama), Qari Shafi Sahib, Mohd Akram (Udhampur), Altaf Nizami, Habib Ur Rehman, Javeed Ahmed (Mahore), Master Naseem (Gulabgarh), and Riaz Ahmed Poswal also spoke on the occasion.

At the end of the session, an Adhoc District Committee for Anantnag was announced to coordinate local tribal affairs and mobilize further community initiatives.

The conference concluded with a unanimous resolve to continue advocating for the socio-economic upliftment, rights, and dignity of the Gujjar-Bakerwal community across Jammu and Kashmir.

ICAI J&K Branch hosts health awareness programme featuring leading oncology experts



ICAI officials with ASCOMS faculty at a programme.

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
JAMMU: The Jammu & Kashmir Branch of the Northern India Regional Council (NIRC) of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) successfully organised a Health Awareness Programme on Monday at ICAI Bhawan, Canal Road, Jammu.

The initiative was aimed at promoting preventive healthcare and was part of ICAI's broader commitment to the holistic well-being of its members and the society at large.

The programme featured expert sessions and on-site consultations by two eminent specialists from the American Oncology Institute (AOI), ASCOMS Hospital-Dr. Deepak Abrol, Senior Radiation Oncologist, an award-winning consultant with over 50 research papers and recipient of the CME

Excellence Award and Dr. Surbhi Kudyar, Consultant-Breast Services, J&K's first certified Breast Oncoplastic Surgeon, with over 11 years of distinguished service in her field.

The interactive session included valuable discussions on cancer awareness, early detection, and lifestyle-related preventive measures.

It was well attended by ICAI members and students, reflecting the growing awareness among professionals about prioritizing health in demanding careers.

In addition to the ICAI fraternity, the programme also featured participation from several respected social and service organizations, including the Rotary Club Jammu City, DIET Institute, B.Ed. College Canal Road, Aradhana Trust, Guru Nanak Langar Mission Trust, and Egra Foundation, adding further value and

diversity to the dialogue on health and wellness.

CA Sourav Pargal, Chairman of the J&K Branch, welcomed the gathering and stressed the need for greater integration of health awareness into professional routines. "As professionals, we often overlook health. Programmes like these are essential in reminding us that good health is foundational to sustained productivity and service," he said.

The event was coordinated by CA Jatin Malhotra, Secretary and conclude by a vote of thanks by the Vice - Chairman CA Amit Gupta.

This programme formed part of ICAI's "Vishvasniya" campaign, commemorating 75 years of trusted service to the nation, and reinforcing the Institute's commitment to public welfare beyond the realm of finance and accounting.

Yogatvam brings Yoga to young minds at 2nd Invitational Chess Tournament



Yogatvam member posing with chess players and officials.

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
JAMMU: Yogatvam was honoured to participate in the 2nd Invitational Chess Tournament organized by Star Chess Academy Jammu. On the invitation of the organizers, Sahil Mehra from Yogatvam conducted a special yoga demonstration and motivational session for the young chess enthusiasts.

The session focused on how

yoga can significantly improve concentration, mental clarity, and emotional balance-skills that are crucial for excelling not just in chess, but in all areas of life.

The young participants responded with great enthusiasm, showing keen interest in how yoga can strengthen the mind, sharpen focus, and support better performance both on and off the chess-

board. Special thanks to Star Chess Academy Jammu and Arvind Sharma for providing this valuable platform to introduce yoga's role in holistic development alongside sports.

Yogatvam remains committed to contributing to youth-focused initiatives that promote balance, mindfulness, and personal growth.

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
JAMMU: In a first of kind, International Dental Expert Congress (IDEC) 2025 under the banner of Sensodyne/ Haleon conducted a dental master class in Jammu for the second time in association with (Prof) Dr. Azhar Malik, HOD Department of Conservative & Endodontics, Indira Gandhi Government Dental College (IGGDC) Jammu.

Haleon under the banner of International Dental expert Congress has conducted the largest ever webinar in India, in over 71 major cities like Kolkata, Chennai, New Delhi, Mumbai etc in one country and this initiative took by Dr. Azhar Malik made it possible for the dentistry of J&K to connect and nurture a scientific landscape in the field of dentistry



Dr Azhar Malik HOD IGGDC with the participants during IDEC Congress.

under the online programme. The master class witnessed several insights and key points related to advanced clinical procedures and research and technology in the field of dentistry.

Eminent renowned international speaker Dr. Mohammed Hasan HAMMO (Jordan) and Dr.

Ajay Bajaj explained in detail about the management of daily challenges in the dental practice of the further prospective of

endodontics.

International Dental Congress in association with international organizations like FDI, IADR, EFP

'The - Sara' distributes sanitary pads among industrial workers

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
JAMMU: Continuing its mission to promote health, dignity, and well-being among marginalized communities, 'The - Sara' a registered non-governmental organization organized a sanitary pad distribution drive for women industrial workers at JK Oil Industries Gangyal Jammu, under its flagship health initiative 'Health is Wealth'.

This distribution marks the culmination of 'The - Sara's Study Project titled Menstrual Health & Hygiene Status of Women Industrial Workers in Jammu, conducted with due permission from the Directorate of Industries And Commerce Jammu.

'The - Sara' initiative focuses on raising awareness about menstrual health and hygiene management (MHMM) and addressing the challenges faced by women working in industrial sectors, many of whom lack access to afford-



The - Sara' team during distribution programme.

able and safe menstrual products.

During the distribution event, 'The - Sara' team members and field interns led by Ms. Kamla Punj also interacted with the workers, creating a safe and open space to talk about menstruation-related health issues, myths, and best hygiene practices.

The event was well received by the workers and the management of JK Oil Industries,

who appreciated the NGO's commitment to supporting the health of women employees.

'The - Sara has been actively working in Jammu & Kashmir to improve healthcare access, women's empowerment, and relief outreach in underserved regions. The organization plans to continue expanding its menstrual hygiene initiatives in other industrial clusters and rural belts across the region.

Maj Gen G.S Jamwal inducted as INTACH Life Member

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
JAMMU: In a moment of great pride and honour for the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), particularly for its Jammu Chapter, Maj Gen (Retd) G.S. Jamwal, a stalwart and veteran of 97 years, has been inducted as a Life Member of INTACH. This significant induction marks a celebration of his lifelong association with the organisation and his unwavering dedication to preserving India's rich heritage.

The induction letter and the ceremonial INTACH pin were presented to Maj Gen Jamwal by Rashim Kashyap, along with the Core Group of the Jammu Chapter, in a brief but



Maj Gen (Retd) G.S. Jamwal being inducted as Life Member of INTACH.

meaningful event that celebrated his illustrious contribution to heritage and culture.

Maj Gen Jamwal has been associated with INTACH since its inception in Delhi and became an active member of the Jammu Chapter

in 1990-91. Over the years, his commitment to preserving the military and cultural heritage of the region has earned him the role of Advisor, Military Heritage, INTACH Jammu Chapter. His induction as a Life Member is a fitting tribute

to his legacy and enduring passion.

The occasion was graced by S.M Sahni, Convener of INTACH Jammu Chapter; Kuldeep Wahi, Co-Convener; and core members Kripal Singh, Ajay Gandotra, Rashim

Kashyap, and Rakesh Singh (Volunteer), who felicitated Gen Jamwal on this proud moment.

Also present was Jyotisna Singh, daughter of Dr Karan Singh, and a member of the INTACH Core Group, who shared her appreciation for the General's distinguished role in promoting heritage awareness.

This induction stands as a testament to INTACH's commitment to recognising and honouring individuals who have played a vital role in heritage conservation.

It reinforces the Jammu Chapter's dynamic contribution to the national cause of preserving India's invaluable legacy.

GDC Kathua honours NCC Cadet Mohit Kanathia



GDC Kathua faculty honouring NCC Cadet Mohit Kanathia.

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
KATHUA: GDC Kathua hosted a grand welcome ceremony to honour NCC Cadet Mohit Kanathia, a student of the college who recently brought laurels and pride to the college and 4 J&K NCC Battalion by climbing Mount Everest, the world's highest peak at 8,848.86 meters on May 18, 2025.

On 3rd April 2025, Sh. Rajnath Singh, Defence Minister of India officially flagged off the NCC Everest Expedition 2025 comprising of ten cadets selected nationwide after rigorous selection process in which Cadet Mohit Kanathia, NCC cadet, 4 J&K NCC Battalion was representing GDC Kathua. His remarkable endurance, commit-

ment, and rigorous training earned him the distinction of being the sole representative from Jammu & Kashmir on this historic mission.

On his arrival at college, the college faculty and NCC wings extended a grand welcome to celebrate his exceptional achievement.

The event was graced by Dr. Savi Bahl, Principal of the college in the presence of senior faculty members, Prof. Sanjeev Gupta, Prof. Rakesh Jasrotia, Dr. R. K. Manhas, Dr. Ram Singh, Dr. Yash Paul, Anil's Dr. Daya Ram and Dr. Pinkey, other faculty members, NCC cadets, students, invited guests and his parents, who congratulated Mohit and applauded his journey.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Savi Bahl said, "Mohit's achievement is a source of immense pride for our college, JKUT as well as for

India. He has shown exemplary determination, dedication and discipline to achieve this success. She added that his story will inspire many more students to aim high and push their limits."

The Associate NCC Officer (ANO), Lt. (Dr.) Daya Ram and Caretaker Dr. Pinkey of 4 J&K Bn NCC also praised Mohit's dedication and spirit. "Mohit has set a shining example for all cadets." His success is the result of consistent hard work, mental strength, and an unshakable will. We are extremely proud of him," the ANO Lt. (Dr.) Daya Ram said during the event.

Cadet Mohit also shared his emotional and inspiring moments from his Everest journey from battling harsh weather to overcoming moments of self-doubt and finally standing atop the highest peak in the world.

ICC Panel Umpire Anil Chaudhary terms J&K Umpiring aspirants 'fit for job'

Says bad decisions can blow death-knell to game

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
JAMMU: Renowned ICC Panel Umpire, Anil Chaudhary termed the aspirants attending the Umpires Clinic at Jammu 'fit for the job', keeping in view their enthusiasm, fitness factor, keenness during the classes, body language, besides zeal and zest to learn.

Chaudhary stated this during a historic Umpires Clinic of Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA), being held at JKCA Hostel Ground, here.

The Clinic at Jammu in which 17 candidates, with 14 male and 3 female, have been shortlisted, commenced on June 28 and will conclude with an exam on July 2, 2025.

Anil Chaudhary said though Umpiring is a thankless job,



yet it gives immense satisfaction when the job is done well, adding good Umpiring at the grass-root level is directly proportional to the good health of the players and the Association.

He said, his focus during the Clinic is on the body language of the candidates, besides inculcating discipline, punctuality and spirit among them.

"The Umpires should enjoy the game and should consider

the players as the heroes in the middle because they are for their welfare. A single good or bad decision can make a huge impact on the career of a player. So the Umpires are needed to be utterly honest and professional," asserted Chaudhary.

He said, if the selection of the players is done with professional Umpiring Panel officiating the selection matches, better results will always follow, otherwise, expecting promotion of good teams is simply to cry for the moon.

"To set an example in the field of Umpiring, one needs to concentrate on decision making only rather than other things. Bad decisions can blow death-knell to the game. I reckon, J&K produces good number of quality Umpires,"

Chaudhary maintained.

"There are only 42 Laws of Cricket, but a cricket match can throw thousands of problems which are not written anywhere. You are entrusted with the responsibility of managing 22 players," Anil Choudhary.

Anil Chaudhary, Ex International Umpire/IPL Umpire has the honour of being the only Indian Umpire to do Asia Cup Final -2022 in United Arab Emirates (UAE), besides having the distinction of being the Umpire with a maximum number of games (226) in the Indian Premier League (IPL), apart from having the experience of 12 Test Matches, 27 ODI Matches, World Cup, Asia Cup and Afghanistan Premier League (APL).