

25th Mahaan Gurmat Samagam concludes at Gurdwara Khari Dharamsal

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
POONCH: The 25th Mahaan Gurmat Samagam, a month-long spiritual journey rooted in the timeless teachings of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, concluded with deep devotion and humility at Gurdwara Yaadgar Sant Bhai Bahadur Singh Ji Dehri Sahib, Dharamsal Khari, nestled near the Zero Line at Chakkan Da Bagh in district Poonch.

The Samagam saw the blessed presence of Singh Sahib Gyani Harmiter Singh Ji, esteemed religious preacher from Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar, and Hazoori Raagi Bhai Sandeep Singh Ji, whose divine kirtan filled the atmosphere with spiritual bliss. Throughout the Samagam, Gyani Sahib Ji enlightened the Sangat with the sacred history and supreme sacrifice of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, along with Shaheed Bhai



Mati Dass Ji, Bhai Sati Dass Ji, and Bhai Dayala Ji, who stood steadfast in the face of tyranny to uphold dharma and protect freedom of faith. Emphasis was laid on the relevance of Sikh philosophy today-centered on unity, service (seva), and living in accordance with the divine guidance of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

The Samagam resonated with soul-stirring kirtan by Bhai Sandeep Singh Ji, supported by local raagis and parcharaks, who shared the timeless messages of

Gurmat with heartfelt devotion. A special 12-day spiritual camp for children was also organized, nurturing the next generation with moral, spiritual, and cultural values grounded in Sikhi.

In line with the Sikh principle of Sarbat da Bhala (welfare of all), the Samagam included a one-day multi-speciality medical camp, a women's awareness programme, spiritual seminars by AISSF and Sikh Missionary College, and interactive sessions for children, extending support and

care to all sections of the community. A special Ardas (prayer) was solemnly offered in remembrance of the innocent lives lost in recent shelling incidents, seeking peace for the departed souls and strength for their families. The spirit of Chardi Kala prevailed as the entire Sangat stood united in prayer and remembrance.

The event was graced by MLA Haveli Ajaz Jan and senior officers from the district administration including Deputy Commissioner Poonch Vikas Kundal, Senior Superintendent of Police Shafket Hussain, Additional DDC, Tehsildar Haveli, Lt Col Mandeep Singh 10 Bdg, CO 6 Madras, CO BRO / GREF and other officers from defence forces, whose presence symbolized communal harmony and shared reverence. The Gurdwara Management Committee extended heartfelt thanks to Sri Guru

Garanth Sahib, Sangat and the district administration, Army authorities, and all volunteers whose tireless support ensured the success of the Samagam.

Harcharn Singh Khalsa, while addressing the Sangat, emphasized the historical and spiritual significance of the Samagam and urged the community to follow the divine path shown by Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji and the teachings enshrined in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. He humbly appealed to the Sangat to remain united and committed to the service of humanity and righteousness.

With an estimated gathering of over 15,000 devotees, the Samagam was a true reflection of Sikh values-spiritual awakening, selfless service, unity, and resilience. As the event concluded, hearts were filled with gratitude, minds were inspired with divine wisdom, and souls were uplifted with the grace of the Guru.

MLA Pawan inaugurates 250 KVA Transformer at Krimchi



MLA Pawan Kumar Gupta along with locals after inaugurating transformer.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
UDHAMPUR: Pawan Kumar Gupta, MLA of Udhampur West, on Sunday inaugurated a 250 kVA transformer at Krimchi, constructed at an estimated cost of ₹9 lakhs. The installation of this transformer will significantly improve the electricity supply in the area, benefiting hundreds of residents by ensuring better voltage stability and reducing frequent power cuts. This demand of the people was languishing for the last over five years.

Speaking at the inaugura-

tion ceremony, Gupta reiterated his commitment to strengthening the basic infrastructure of rural areas and providing uninterrupted power supply to every household. He emphasized that consistent efforts are being made to upgrade power infrastructure across the constituency to fulfill the aspirations of the people. The people of Panchayat Krimchi also submitted their Memorandum of demands to which the Hon'ble MLA assured his commitment for timely addressing the same to

the satisfaction of the people. Local residents and prominent members of the community expressed their gratitude for the initiative, stating that the new transformer will ease daily hardships caused by poor electricity supply and contribute to the overall development of the region. The event was attended by officials from the Power Development Department, local panchayat members, and enthusiastic villagers who welcomed the move as a major step towards improving their standard of living.

Kesri leads awareness drive against drug abuse

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
ARNIA: Members of Shiv Sena Hindustan, led by Jammu and Kashmir President Pt Rajesh Kesri, conducted an awareness drive against drug abuse in villages under Arnia Block, including Merol Sherchak and parts of Arnia Town. The initiative aimed to educate parents and community members about the dangers of substance abuse and ways to prevent it. The drive highlighted the need for community support in preventing substance abuse. The awareness drive was attended by prominent members of Shiv Sena Hindustan, including State Vice President Balbir Kumar, Block Presidents Balwant Saini and Suresh Kumar, and other local leaders and residents.



SSH President Pt Rajesh Kesri briefing media.

ship with their children to prevent them from falling prey to substance abuse. He suggested that parents should regularly monitor their children's activities, including checking their clothes and belongings for any signs of substance use. Kesri urged parents, social workers, and local authorities to work together to identify and report suspicious activities related to substance trafficking. The initiative acknowledged the efforts of the police in cracking down on substance traffickers,

including sealing their properties and taking them into custody. However, it emphasized the need for continued support from the community to effectively combat substance abuse, said Kesri. The initiative concluded with a call to action for community members to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activities related to substance trafficking. By working together, the community can help prevent substance abuse and ensure a brighter future for its youth, added Kesri.

JKTJAC demands resolution of key issues for teaching community

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
UDHAMPUR: The Jammu Kashmir Teachers' Joint Action Committee (JKT-JAC) held its monthly meeting today under the leadership of UT President Vinod Sharma and District President Lekh Raj Parihar. The meeting was attended by executive and apex body members from all eleven zones of the district.

Addressing the gathering, Vinod Sharma highlighted several genuine and burning issues faced by the teaching fraternity. He appealed to the Education Minister and Secretary of School Education for urgent resolution in the welfare interests of thousands of teachers.

A major demand was the implementation of Government Order No. 469 Edu of 2014 regarding a comprehensive transfer policy for teachers appointed under the ReT scheme. Sharma noted that the Hon'ble Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) has directed that post-regularization, ReT teachers



Members of JKTJAC during the meeting at Udhampur.

are equivalent to general line teachers and should be eligible for transfers within the district without discrimination.

Sharma also raised the long-pending issue of the Old Pension Scheme for employees appointed on or after January 1, 2010, urging the government to implement it promptly.

Another critical concern was the delay in release of Mid Day Meal (MDM) funds. Sharma said teachers have been managing MDM expenses from their own pockets while funds are only

released for 3-4 months of the year 2024-25, with 7-8 months still pending. He warned that if the dues are not cleared immediately, Mid Day Meal services may be stopped after the summer vacation.

He further urged the issuance of regularization orders for left-out ReTs who have completed five years, and the conversion of RRETs to Teachers Grade II/III to ensure their salary payments. The demand for Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC) clearance to address backlog promo-

tions from teachers to masters was also emphasized. Sharma called for the delegation of Drawing and Disbursing Officer (DDO) powers to headless zones and schools, a pending issue causing administrative difficulties for over one and a half months. He requested that a system be established for immediate delegation whenever a zone or school becomes headless. Expressing strong disapproval, Sharma condemned a recent order by the CEO Rajouri targeting the ReT community over school enrollment drops, stating

that blaming only ReTs is unjustified. He warned that if the order is not revoked, the JKTJAC will take to the streets, holding the CEO personally responsible. Other demands included the benefit of cash in lieu for teachers, conversion of headteacher posts into non-plan master posts, release of time-barred arrears, raising teacher grades to match counterparts in other Union Territories, earned leave for teachers engaged during vacation camps, and filling vacant headmaster posts in headless schools. District President Lekh Raj Parihar urged the Chief Education Officer to direct DDOs to complete pending service books of teachers and called for a transparent rationalization of staff, opposing any "pick and choose" policy. The meeting saw participation and speeches from many leaders, including Sham Sharma, Sukesh Khajuria, Pritam Goswami, Chain Singh, Ravinder Singh Rathore, and several others.

Ex-servicemen rally, mega veterans outreach programme held

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
MENDHAR: In a historic first, an Ex-Servicemen Rally and Mega Veterans Outreach Programme was held by the Krishna Ghati Brigade of the Indian Army at the Balnoi Base, located close to the Line of Control (LOC), on Sunday. This landmark event, which follows the success of Operation Sindoor, aimed to honour the bravery, sacrifice, and enduring spirit of the Armed Forces veterans, including Veer Naris, Veer Matas, war widows, and civilians. The event saw an overwhelming participation of 400 veterans and their families, alongside 200 civilians, all of whom were present to pay tribute to their selfless service to the nation. The rally not only strengthened



Brigadier Anand Raj Singh honouring media-person.

the camaraderie within the Armed Forces community but also provided a platform to address several welfare concerns and challenges faced by veterans. The rally included a diverse array of welfare stalls and help desks set up by various organizations, including the Ex-Servicemen Contributory

Health Scheme (ECHS), ESM Help Desk, Grievance Cell, Medical Check-up, Dental Check-up, Financial Planning, Artificial Limb provision, and more. The event's focus was to resolve pension and entitlement issues, provide artificial limbs to those in need, offer medical assistance, and serve

as a liaison between veterans and welfare agencies. Specialized services, including Gynaecological and Veterinary care, were also available, alongside the provision of four-wheelers and two-wheelers for veterans. The rally was officially inaugurated by Brigadier Anand Raj Singh, the Commander of the 10 Infantry Brigade. Senior Armed Forces officers, as well as civil dignitaries, attended the event, emphasizing the unity and solidarity between the military and the ex-servicemen community. In recognition of the veterans' outstanding service, special gifts were distributed to them, including caps, cups, dinner sets, and essential mobility aids like wheel-

chairs, clutches, walking sticks, and hearing aids. These items were generously sponsored by Bhagwan Mahaveer Vikalaang Sahayata Samiti. A team of medical professionals from Kiwanis Club of New Delhi also provided free services, including the fitting of artificial limbs for disabled veterans, Veer Naris, Veer Matas, and civilians in the border areas of Poonch district. The rally hosted medical and dental camps, where specialized doctors offered their services to veterans and their families, addressing a wide range of health issues. This was part of the broader effort to ensure that veterans receive continuous support even after their service to the nation.

Birth Anniversary of Shyama Prasad Mukherjee celebrated

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
SUNDERBANI: 125th Birthday of Late Shyama Prasad Mukherjee was celebrated with great enthusiasm in the Anganwari centre Panchayat Hathal A Block Sunderbani under the banner of MY Bharat Rajouri. Several youth including members of Young India Youth Club, Shakti Mahila Mandal, Anmol Cultural Club Sunderbani, J&K Social & Cultural Council Sunderbani and several other youth clubs participated in the occasion. The Speakers highlighted the role of Dr Mukherjee in the country before and after independence. Plantation drive was also carried out during the pro-



Tributes being paid to Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee.

gram. Vishav Kumar Sharma presided over the function as the Chief Guest. Among others who participated in the program included Amarjeet Sharma (President J&KSCC),

Akshay Sharma (President Young India Youth Club), Samriti Sharma (President Shakti Mahila Mandal) ZorawarSingh president of NGO Anmol Cultural Club Sunderbani etc.

Tributes paid to Kargil Martyr Gurdeep Singh

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
SUNDERBANI: Rich tributes were paid to Kargil war martyr S. Gurdeep Singh in a function held at his home village Kanara in Nowshera sector today. Besides some Army personnels, locals of the area and family members of the martyr attended the function and paid floral tributes to Shaheed Gurdeep Singh. Martyr's



brother Mohan Singh alleges that today first time no any honour (slaami) by army has been given only offered Reet on memorial place. Family members of martyr's urged to GOC Rajouri & Northern commander J&K for intervenes that matter & initiate enquiry why avoiding honour to martyrs. They said ten days ago we have given invitation letter to commander of Nowshera Brigade. Hailing from Kanara village in Nowshera sector of

Rajouri district, Sepoy Gurdeep Singh from 8th Sikh Regiment laid on down own his life for motherland on 06 July 1999 during Kargil war. The programme commenced with 'Akhand Path' on July 4, 2019 and today was the Bhog. A large number of people attended the programme. The three youths from Nowshera sector were martyred during Kargil war. This conflict first on July 6, 1999

Gurdeep Singh resident of Kanara, second on July 7, 1999 Hardeep Singh, resident of Rajpur Bhatta and third on July 25, 1999 Joginder Singh, resident of Qila Darhal. No one from District of Sub Divisional Administrators or political field reached on this day to pay tributes to Kargil Martyr. Only a Captain and soldiers of 8th Sikh Regiment visited the place, people of the area gathered on the memorial and paid tributes at the statue of Shaheed Gurdeep Singh. During Kargil war, 527 brave souls laid down their lives for India. On this occasion Capt Gurdev Singh, Sub Ranjeet Singh, Capt Daljeet Singh, Gurjeet Singh, Dara Singh and others were present. Martyrdom Day of another Shaheed Hardeep Singh will be observed at village Rajpur Bhatta tomorrow.

Road connectivity brings offbeat tourist destination into spotlight in Doda

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
BHADERWAH: Bhal-Padri in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district is all set to host its first tourism festival this month after the high altitude scenic meadow was recently connected by road, bringing cheer to tourist stakeholders. Unexplored till now, the 11,000 feet high Bhal Padri is just 10 km from another tourist hot spot - Padri, the highest point along Bhaderwah-Chamba interstate road in this sub-district popularly known as 'mini-Kashmir' for its scenic beauty. The district administration Doda and Jammu and Kashmir Tourism department is all set to attract tourists by organising a festival on July 20 in Bhal-Padri to boost

tourism footfall, officials said. The meadow spread over 11 km was unexplored till now due to non-availability of connectivity. It is popular among locals and tribals besides botanists for its unique and diverse flora. "The breathtaking valley of flowers is all set to shine as Jammu and Kashmir's next big tourist hotspot," Deputy Commissioner, Doda, Harvinder Singh told PTI. Singh, who visited Bhal-Padri after it was connected by road recently, urged tourists to explore the beauty and vibrant tribal culture of this hidden gem. "With new road access, this scenic meadow is now just a drive away from Padri Top on Bhaderwah-Chamba interstate road

and will soon get alternate connectivity from Gandoh as well," the deputy commissioner said. Adventure tour operators are upbeat about bringing the untapped tourist destination on the tourism map of the Union Territory. "This Himalayan marvel has got all natural ingredients to attract a diverse section of visitors, especially adventure enthusiasts and flower lovers. The landscape, the water bodies and especially the multi-coloured wild flowers spread across miles can have a mesmerising effect on anyone," Mehran Ganai, an adventure tour operator, said. He expressed confidence that Bhal-Padri is going to become a trump card of J&K's tourism in general and

that of Bhadarwah in particular as it has got the required potential. Jammu Tourism department in collaboration with district administration and Education Environmental Social Sports and Cultural Society of Bhalessa will organise the mega tourism festival. "We are thankful to the authorities for projecting the Bhal-Padri as a new tourism destination. It will surely pave the way for economic upliftment of the area," chairman of the society, Ayub Zargar said. He said the maiden festival would act as a catalyst to present the unique culture and breathtaking beauty of the area to the outer world and also foster brotherhood and communal harmony.

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