GDC Kathua signs MoU with LBS College of Education Kathua

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHUA: A Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Government Degree College (Boys), Kathua with Lal Bahadur Shastri College of Education, Rajbagh, Kathua for the period of five years. The objectives of MOU are to promote mutual understanding and cooperation in the areas of teaching-learning process, research, education, student exchange, faculty exchange, joint programs and Internship activities.

Faculty members of GDC Kathua and LBS College during signing of MoU.

The institutions agree to cooperate in the areas viz. Student Exchange, Faculty Exchange, Joint Research Projects, Conferences, Seminars and Workshops, Resource Sharing, NEP-2020 Implementation, Promotion of Indian Knowledge System, Faculty Development Programmes, Promotion of Arts, Culture & Languages, Book Publications and Internship Programmes.

Both institutions will facilitate the exchange of students for short-term educational programs. Faculty members from both institutions will collaborate in teaching, research and other academic activities. Collaborative research projects will be encouraged and supported by both institutions in areas of common interest.

The institutions will jointly organize and participate in academic conferences, seminars and workshops.

Both institutions agree to share academic resources, such as libraries, laboratories and databases.

The institutions will share the ideas and take initiatives for the successful implementation of NEP-2020 with regard to curriculum designing, teaching-learning and evaluation practices.

The institutions will establish IKS cells and organise activities /programmes regarding rich Indian Knowledge system. The institutions will jointly organise faculty development programmes annually for the faculty members for upskilling and updating them regarding new trends in the field of education.

Both Institutions will take initiatives for the promotion of local arts, culture and regional languages.The faculty of both institutions shall be involved in the publication of books with ISBN for the students of Degree colleges and B.Ed. colleges of UT of J&K.

Lal Bahadur Shastri College of Education will train the students of subject Education of FYUGP (under NEP-2020) of Government Degree College (Boys), Kathua in different approaches of lesson planning under internship programs.

The MoU came into effect on Wednesday and will remain in effect for a period of 05 years. The MOU was signed by the Principals of both institutions namely Prof. Seema Mir and Dr. Brij Bala Kohli in the presence ofDr. Ram Singh, Head, Department of Education and Prof. Ravinder Kour, Convener, IQAC, GDC Kathua and Harbans Singh, Administrative and Priyanka Sharma, Convener, IQAC, LBS College of Education, Rajbagh Kathua. Prof. Sanjay Karlupia, Prof. Neelam Bhagat, Prof. Shalini Sharma, Dr. Dinesh Jasrotia, Dr. R.K. Manhas, Dr. Yash Pal Sharma and Prof. Ambika Rajput also graced the occasion.

SVEEP cultural extravaganza inspires voter participation at Joggers Park Poonch

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

POONCH: In a vibrant celebration of democracy, the District Election Office Poonch organized a cultural event, here today under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) initiative. The cultural extravaganza was held on sprawling Joggers Park, alongside the scenic Pulast River.

Artists performing during the event.

The event aimed to promote voter awareness and participation, skillfully blending art with civic responsibility. The audience, comprising evening walkers and locals, enjoyed an array of cultural dances, patriotic musical performances and thought-provoking street plays (Nukkad Natak), all centered around encouraging voter turnout for the upcoming elections.

Chief Education Officer Poonch, Lal Hussain (Nodal Officer for SVEEP) was the Chief Guest. He highlighted the significance of such initiatives in promoting active electoral participation.

"The SVEEP program seeks to educate and motivate citizens to exercise their right to vote. Through this cultural event, we aim to engage the public creatively and encourage them to cast their votes on September 25th," he stated.

Lal Hussain added, "This event reflects our commitment to an inclusive democracy, ensuring every eligible voter understands their role in the electoral process." Pamphlets reminding citizens of the election date were distributed, with many first-time voters in attendance.

The event attracted hundreds of locals, who declared it a resounding success and a meaningful reminder that "Every Vote Matters." Senior officials from Election Authorities of Poonch, including Anjuman SAhaheen, Principals HSS Girls, ZEO Kanuyian Anwar Hussain, ZEPO Poonch Vijay Kumar and other senior district administration officers attended the event.

SPPND GDC Samba signs MoU with Social Welfare & IIMCSD Samba

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SAMBA: In a landmark initiative to empower students and enhance educational outcomes, Shri Pandit Prem Nath Dogra Government Degree College, Samba signed two significant Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with the Social Welfare Department Samba and also with Institute of Mass Communication and Skill Development (IMCSD), Sarore Samba. The signing ceremony was graced by Nawaz Sharief, District Social Welfare Officer, from Social Welfare Department and Vikas Sharma, Managing Director/CEO of IMCSD. The partnership aims to provide comprehensive skill development training and Internship programmes with special focus on mass communication and other vocational modules thereby preparing the youth for emerging industry in alignment with the governments Skill

Officials during signing of MoU.

India Mission. The partnership marks a significant milestone to equip the young learners with essential skills for their future careers under different schemes like Mission Shakti and Mission Vatsalya.

The Social Welfare department will also sponsor the education expenses of the meritorious and financially weaker female students of the college under 'Beti Padao, Beti Bachao' Scheme. The MoU with IMCSD exemplifies the commitment to bridging the gap between education and industry, by providing exposure to students of SPPND GDC Samba in various aspects of journalism including news reporting, anchoring, content writing, camera facing, digital media, communication skills and broadcasting.

This collaboration signifies a proactive approach to addressing the skill gap in the region ensuring that students from College are not only academically proficient but also career-ready.

ELC of GDC Neeli Nallah organizes multifarious activities under SVEEP

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

UDHAMPUR: In a significant stride towards fostering a culture of responsibility among the electorate, GDC Neeli Nallah Udhampur, organized a series of activities under SVEEP ahead of the J&K Assembly Election 2024, with an aim to increase the voter turnout across the UT under the Mentorship of Principal of the college, Prof. Dr. Seema Arora.

Faculty members along with students during the event.

In sequel, a voter's pledge was launched under SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation), a flagship programme of the Election Commission of India (ECI) to promote voter education and participation in elections commencing on 18 September, 2024 across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Voters' Pledge campaign aimed to inspire all the citizens of J&K UT to endorse the initiative and pledge their unwavering support to actively participate in the upcoming Assembly Elections.

It was followed by the Electoral Literacy Club work on ELC Wall and a beautiful wall prepared by Electoral Club in which importance of voting and vote was shown with the help of pictures and quotations. In other initiative to create awareness a screening of short movie had been done.

The Screening took place at the conference hall of GDC Neeli Nallah Udhampur in the presence of college students and several dignitaries.

The Principal, Prof. Dr. Seema Arora appreciated the efforts of the Staff and Students. She stressed that the purpose of this event is to enlighten, enable and empower every citizen to register as a voter and cast his/her vote at every election in an informed and ethical manner. Further she emphasized the importance of voting and the role of the youth in ensuring high voter turnout.

She encouraged students to actively participate in the electoral process and urged all eligible voters to exercise their democratic right.

This was followed by an awareness programme where students from various classes participate with great enthusiasm. The theme of the programme was "My vote My Right".

The Convenor Prof.Shaista Yasmeen highlighted the essence of Indian democracy, underscoring the rights and duties of citizens in building a strong and responsible nation.

These awareness initiatives were yet another step by G.D.C Neeli Nallah Udhampur towards creating a well-informed, active, and responsible electorate, playing a pivotal role in strengthening the democratic fabric of the nation.

All the events were successfully conducted by Prof. Shaista Yasmeen, in charge of the Electoral Literacy Club. Others present in the event were Dr. Maansi Sharma, and Prof. Rekha Sharma and Rajeshwar Singh Jamwal.

Natrang stages 6 shows of 'Loktantra Ka Asli Mantra' in Rajouri-Poonch

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAJOURI: Natrang sensitized masses of 6 major towns of Rajouri and Poonch districts through its highly powerful play 'Loktantra Ka Asli Mantra' which was staged at Surankote, Mendhar, Poonch, Rajouri, Nowshera and Sunderbani. Innovatively written by Padamshree Balwant Thakur and directed by Neeraj Kant, these shows are sponsored by the office of the Chief Electoral Officer, J&K and were locally organised efficiently by the district Election Offices of Poonch and Rajouri. Aimed at making the larger population aware about their voting rights, Balwant Thakur has exclusively devised a highly motivational play using local idioms, cultural expressions and story-telling forms. Interestingly wherever this play is performed, the actors are trained to use the local language in their effective narratives which makes a strong connection with the audiences and they (audience) also identify with the local characters being portrayed in this mind

Artists performing during the play.

blowing play.On the occasion Natrang Director Balwant Thakur thanked the Chief Electoral Officer, J&K for giving Natrang this amazing opportunity to use arts for a larger national cause.

All the three shows in Anantnag received standing ovations and people were seen acknowledging the fact that this play has impacted them very effectively and have prompted the audience to become the ambassadors of this strong message.

The play 'Loktantra Ka Asli Mantra' opens with the aggression of the disillusioned, frustrated youth who are struggling to survive in the contaminated air of corruption, scandals and dishonesty. They do not see any hope in the future as their present is being rotten by the corrupt system. They want to devastate everything around them in rage but when questioned by an educated person that 'what are they doing to come out of this unfortunate situation?. Busy in their illusionary world created by the social media, they are speechless as they just want the things to happen but are not ready to be part of that change and want everything without making any required effort. Terming them as the most vibrant human resource of the world, the educated person prompts them to come forward, take the command and change their fate.

The most effective way of changing the fate of a country is the way of voting, this is the highly peaceful and effective way to bring big reforms of their choices.

As the play proceeds, different age groups and varied sections of people are shown in satirical manner who have their petty reasons to not vote and also whom to vote. This ignorance and arrogance of the masses leaves huge space for the vested interests to exploit this situation. Through this play all the sections of society are prompted not to run away from their ultimate responsibility of voting for the stronger democracy of India. Vote has the only and ultimate power to change the fate of the country and everyone through this play is motivated to ensure that this right of voting of every citizen should not go waste. Let's pledge to vote!

The artists who participated in the play Loktantra Ka Asli Mantra included Neeraj Kant, Subash Jamwal, Mohd. Yaseen, Vrinda Gujral, Brijesh Avtar Sharma, Vansh Pandotra, Vishal Sharma, Palshin Dutta, Mihir Gujral, Ananya Verma, Aadesh Dhar, Kushal Bhat, Lalita Sharma, Kananpreet Kaur, Pratibha Verma and Lal Mohd.

The music of the play was operated by Mohd. Yaseen & Palshin Dutta.

Mohan Lal promises resolution of smart meters issue, major employment initiatives

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

AKHNOOR: In a significant outreach effort, BJP candidate Mohan Lal conducted a comprehensive tour of Dabra, Devipur, Chanjwan, Badyala Chak, and Palwan villages of the Akhnoor Assembly Constituency-81. He was accompanied by several prominent party members, including Pravasi Prabhari MLA Lalla Ram, SC Morcha District President Dev Raj Bhagat, Bharat Bhushan Gupta, Ex-Sarpanch Verinder Kumar Babbi, Ex-Sarpanch Ganesh Kumar, Ex-Sarpanch Jagdish Bhagat and Others.

BJP candidate Mohan Lal addressing gathering.

Addressing a large gathering, Mohan Lal emphasized that the contentious issue of smart meters would be resolved immediately after the BJP forms the government in Jammu & Kashmir. He further elaborated on BJP's key promises as outlined in their Sankalp Patra, including the provision of ?3000 monthly pensions for the elderly, widows, and persons with disabilities. Lal assured that the BJP would create 5 lakh employment opportunities to tackle the pressing issue of unemployment among the youth in Jammu & Kashmir.

He also announced a groundbreaking welfare initiative aimed at empowering women, with the promise of ?18,000 per year for the senior-most woman in every household in Jammu & Kashmir. Highlighting the success of the Ayushman Sehat Yojana, which has made top-class healthcare accessible to the economically weaker sections, Mohan Lal pledged that the BJP would increase the scheme's coverage to ?8 lakh, ensuring better healthcare for all. Calling for a vote for development, security, and prosperity, Mohan Lal stated, "The vision of a prosperous Jammu & Kashmir can only be realized with the BJP at the helm." He appealed to the people to support the party for a brighter future.

In addition to welfare schemes, Lal addressed local concerns, assuring residents that revetment work would begin immediately along the Chenab River to protect their lands from erosion.

GDC Sunderbani organizes workshop under SVEEP

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SUNDERBANI: The Electoral Literacy Club of GDC Sunderbani in collaboration with District SVEEP team Rajouri organized a workshop to aware eligible voters to cast their vote by abiding faith in democracy and to uphold the democratic tradition of our country without being influenced by consideration of religion, race, caste community or any inducement.

The programme began with Pledge taking ceremony and ended with a rally in this regard. The whole programme was conducted under the sage guidance of Dr. Ashu Vashisht, Principal of the college.

The event saw enthusiastic participation of large number of students along with the faculty member of the college. Nodal Officer, SVEEP Babu Singh, Dr. Dustyant Pardeep, Muddasir Mughal shared their valuable experiences.

The Principal of the college appreciated the efforts of Electoral Literacy Club members namely Dr. Kuldeep Raj Sharma, Prof. Davinder Kumar, Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Prof. Nisha Kumari, Prof. Jyoti Sharma.

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Polling staff imparted training across all 5 Assembly Constituencies of District Rajouri

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAJOURI: In preparation for the upcoming General Elections to the Legislative Assembly, UT of J&K, comprehensive training programs were successfully conducted for polling staff across all five Assembly Constituencies (ACs) of Rajouri district, today. The training sessions were held at different venues, including Government Degree College (GDC) Kalakote for AC-83 Kalakote-Sunderbani, GDC Nowshera for AC-84 Nowshera, Post Graduate College Rajouri for AC-85 Rajouri (ST), Dak Bungalow Koteranka for AC-86 Budhal (ST) and PG College Rajouri for AC-87 Thanamandi (ST).

Held under the supervision of District Election Officer, Abhishek Sharma, the training programs focused on equipping polling personnel with the necessary skills and knowledge for the efficient management of the election process.

The training sessions were addressed by senior officials, including the General Observers and Returning Officers (ROs) of the respective constituencies. They interacted with the trainees to ensure that all polling personnel understood their roles and responsibilities thoroughly.

At AC-84 Nowshera, training was facilitated by the District Election Officer Rajouri, General Observer, and RO Nowshera, while the General Observer and RO Kalakote addressed trainees at GDC Kalakote for AC-83 Kalakote-Sunderbani. Similarly, at PG College Rajouri, the General Observer and RO Rajouri conducted the training for AC-85 Rajouri (ST). The training for AC-86 Budhal (ST) was held at Dak Bungalow Koteranka, and for AC-87 Thanamandi (ST) at PG College Rajouri, where the General Observer and RO Thanamandi engaged with the polling staff. The training programs were coordinated by Dr. Naseem Ahmed, Associate Professor and Nodal Officer for Election Training, and facilitated by dedicated teams of District Level Master Trainers (DLMTs) and Assembly Level Master Trainers (ALMTs). The teams provided detailed presentations and hands-on practice sessions, particularly focused on the operation of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trails (VVPATs).

Polling officers, designated as PO, P1, P2 and P3 were briefed on the election process and their critical roles in ensuring the smooth conduct of elections. They were also trained on maintaining the secrecy, transparency, and integrity of the electoral process, which is essential to uphold public trust.

Training Teams and Participation included DLMTs/ALMTs of all five assembly constituencies. The comprehensive training programs ensure that all personnel are well-prepared to conduct the elections smoothly and efficiently.

Observers conduct thorough inspections to ensure smooth voting process in Ramban

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAMBAN: On polling day, General Observer Himanshu Kumar Rai, Police Observer Kunal Aggarwal and Expenditure Observer Sulekh Chand Jain carried out extensive inspections across various polling stations in Ramban district. Their mission was to ensure a seamless and transparent voting process in the Assembly Constituencies-55-Banihal and 54-Ramban.

The Observers meticulously monitored voting procedures and evaluated the Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) provided under the supervision of District Election Officer (DEO), Baseer-Ul-Haq Choudhary. Special attention was given to enhancing voter accessibility, particularly for elderly voters and Persons with Disabilities (PwD), ensuring they faced no barriers during the voting process. Key polling stations inspected during their visit included Pink Booth at Maitra, Government Model Higher Secondary School (GMHHS) Ramban, GHS Kanga, PS Sharor, Middle School Dharmkund, GUPS Sailkund and GMS Sharakundi Dhalwa.

The Observers assessed the overall arrangements and reviewed security measures to ensure a peaceful and orderly election environment.

General Observer AC Basohli briefs contesting candidates, Political representatives about ECI guidelines

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHUA: General Observer for 65- Basohli AC, Sunil Kumar Yadav today convened a meeting with contesting candidates and representatives of various political parties here at DIET Basohli.

In presence of Returning Officer AC-65 Basohli, Anil Kumar Thakur, Zonal Officer Bharat Gupta, the General Observer explained crucial procedures regarding the electoral process to the representatives. He urged them to cooperate in ensuring a transparent, fair, and peaceful election.

The Observer also discussed the Election Commission guidelines and explained the Worry List process, instructing all political parties to submit their lists to the Returning Officer for further action.

He further informed that voter slips will be provided to all eligible voters and each voter must bring a valid identification document to the polling station.

Additionally, the Observer shared detailed information about alternative identification documents that can be used on Election Day.