

Three-Day Basohli Utsav concludes with enthralling cultural and sporting Events

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, OCT 12:

The 3 days Basohli Utsav, which was a celebration of culture, tradition, and community, concluded with great success, leaving visitors captivated by a diverse array of events.

Organized under the supervision of Divisional Administration, the festival took place in the scenic town of Basohli, also known as Vishwasthali, highlighting the region's rich cultural heritage.

On the concluding day of Basohli Utsav, Principal Secretary Culture and School Education, Suresh Kumar Gupta appealed youth to be passionate about the glorious heritage and play ambassador role in highlighting the cultural legacy of the area. He said efforts will be made to make Basohli Utsav a grand event in coming times.

Encouraging the local community to take pride in their heritage, he urged the residents of Basohli to become ambassadors of Basohli art by incorporating traditional Basohli art forms at the front of their homes, thus preserving and promoting the region's cultural legacy.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, in his address emphasized that the festival was organized to restore the town's



historical significance as Vishwasthali, a title that reflects Basohli's past as a flourishing hub of trade, renowned for its Pashmina, Basohli paintings, and its strategic location.

He highlighted that the mention of Basohli Utsav by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during Mann Ki Baat last year serves as an inspiration to intensify efforts to preserve and promote the region's rich cultural heritage. He added that Basohli holds immense potential to feature prominently on India's cultural and tourism map due to its unique heritage assets.

The Divisional Commissioner expressed confidence that with the continued support of the Department of Culture, Archaeology, the Indira Gandhi National Centre for

the Arts (IGNCA), and the District Administration, the Utsav will gain further momentum and expand in scope with each passing year.

He also directed the Deputy Commissioner, Kathua, to prepare a year-round activity calendar showcasing live demonstrations of Basohli paintings and Pashmina weaving to attract tourists.

Director ACB, Shakti Pathak in his welcome address, highlighted the rich legacy of Vishwasthali, once a thriving center of culture, tradition, art, and craft. He noted that Basohli was not only renowned for its artistic and cultural heritage but also served as a hub for financial trade and commercial activities due to its strategic importance. He emphasized the significance of reviving this legacy

through events like Basohli Utsav and reinforcing the town's historical stature.

The festival featuring world famous Basohli Ramlila in the evening times besides multi-discipline sporting events, which saw enthusiastic participation from local schools.

Later, the prizes were distributed among the top three winners of Paintings, Story Telling, Shaloka Vyakhya and Sports disciplines viz Kabaddi, Santolia, Tug of war etc.

DC Kathua Dr Rakesh Minhas, Secretary Academy of Art & Culture Harvinder Kour, Director Handicraft and Handloom Suraj Rakwal, Regional Director IGNCA Shruti Awasthi, ADC Basohli Anil Kumar Thakur, CEO BBDA Ajeet Singh were also present on the occasion.

Shopian Admin acts tough against illegal mining, seizes 2 Vehicles in overnight inspection at Heff

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In order to review the enforcement departments and agencies efforts to curb illegal mining in the district, Deputy Commissioner, Shopian, Mohamad Shahid Saleem Dar today visited Darazpora and Heff village of Shopian district.

The visit was taken to see the on-the-spot ground situation of the area and take comprehensive assessment after his last night visit to the area during which the authorities had executed a crackdown in the Heff against the illegal mining and seized two vehicles involved in unauthorized excavation of minor minerals in the village.

The DC during his visit emphasized the district's commitment to preserve its natural resources and ensure sustainable mining of minor minerals as per laid norms and practices.

He urged the public to report any suspicious mining activities to the dedi-



cated District Control Room, and assured that stringent action will be taken against those found violating mining regulations.

The visit was also aimed to strengthen on-ground law enforcement against the malpractice of certain individuals where he directed for constituting the

joint team of civil and Police officers to check the illegal mining in the district.

While interacting with the locals, the DC also took stock of the traffic stalemate in the Trenz area due to road bottlenecks. He directed for immediate removal of encroachments at Darazpora to facilitate the smooth traffic movement

in view of the annual harvesting season of the Apple.

The DC was accompanied by ADDC, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone, ADC, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz, district officers associated with the enforcement activities including DMO, Ex. Engineer, Tehsildar and Police officers.

Natrang stages 'Colors of J&K' at auditorium of IIT Jammu

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Natrang showcased the diverse dance traditions of Jammu & Kashmir in a unique programme entitled 'Colors of Jammu & Kashmir' at the auditorium of IIT Jammu. This programme was a part of pre convocation events organised by IIT Jammu ahead of their 5th convocation. Prof. Manoj Singh Gaur, Director IIT Jammu was the Chief Guest on the occasion. Prominent amongst those who attended this high-profile event included Prof. S.N. Singh, Prof. Kanan Iyer and Padamshree Balwant Thakur.

Dr. Quleen Kaur Bijral, faculty, HSS and Dr. Ankit Kathuria were the organisers of the pre-convocation cultural event in which in addition to the mega event 'Colors of Jammu Kashmir' by Natrang, performances by students and faculty members also featured.

Conceptualized and designed by Natrang Director Padamshree Balwant Thakur, 'Colors of Jammu Kashmir' is a unique cultural album of Jammu and Kashmir showcasing the variegated variety of different colours, rhythms, costumes, design patterns and artistic expressions, ex-



pressed through the diverse dances of J&K. This amazing bouquet of rarest dance traditions unfolded the mesmerizing artistic traditions of the crown of incredible India. Each dance presentation despite being different from the other in rhythm and pace was artistically and aesthetically blended with each other so as to present their harmony and wonderful correlation.

Jammu Kashmir has a diverse blend of many cultures. It has a composite culture created by people from different religions. The cultural significance and the amazing diversity of this place is great. The people of J&K have made

huge contributions towards the world culture in the form of their arts, performing arts, crafts, literature, oral histories, science, and philosophy. Most of the world visits here to experience the tradition and culture of J&K.

The presentation 'Colors of Jammu & Kashmir' expresses the true essence of the cultural ethos of this region. This is a unique event created by Natrang which has won accolades worldwide for its highly professional presentation structure and artistic excellence. Artists who brilliantly depicted the requisite energy and festivity included Sunny Mujoo (Choreographer), Radhika Sharma,

Radhika Khajuria, Palshin Dutta, Kananpreet Kaur, Mehak Singh, Sukriti Singh, Ritika, Arun Sharma, Arun Dev, Vishal Sharma, Sanket Bhagat, Vansh Pandotra, Sana Chouhan, Isha Gupta, Suneha Angural, Simran Bhagat, Sakshi Gupta, Mahi Verma, Harmandeep Kaur, Aradhana Soodan, Amit Rana and Sahil Narwalia.

The lights of the event were designed and operated by Suraj Ganjoo who was supported by Shivam Singh, Brijesh Avtar Sharma and Kartik Kumar. The sound of the show was operated by Mohd. Yaseen and the show was coordinated by Neeraj Kant.

Director Agriculture holds interaction with a group of Mushroom farmers from Kargil

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 12: The Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhury Mohammad Iqbal today held an interaction session with the progressive mushroom farmers from Kargil.

Pertinently a large number of mushroom farmers and agriculture officers from Kargil district, UT of Ladakh are participating in a training and awareness programme on mushroom cultivation techniques, Hi-tech nursery management, pest and diseases management and control in organic vegetable crop cultivation, green house technology, vermin-compost method and soil health management.

Speaking to the farmers, Director Agriculture highlighted the importance of conducting such training programmes. He said the main aim of such programmes is to improve the overall knowledge and skill of the farmers and early adoption of latest agricultural innovations and technologies by the farmers on



their farms, fields.

Director Agriculture assured the visiting farmers of providing technical guidance from the department of agriculture Kashmir for the development of agriculture and allied activities in Kargil district and other areas of UT of Ladakh.

He asked the visiting mushroom farmers, partic-

ipants of the training programme, that there is a huge scope of employment generation and economic sustenance in agriculture and allied sectors. He impressed upon the farmers to get acquainted with the modern trends and technologies in the field of mushroom cultivation and apply them at their fields

for becoming successful agripreneurs.

Earlier, the farmers from Kargil visited Integrated Mushroom Development Centre Lalmandi where they were briefed by the concerned experts regarding the different procedures, practices for a successful mushroom cultivation.

IOCL, SMVD Shrine Board make strides in support of deaf children in J&K

Katra, 12.10.2024: -

The commitment to improving the lives of children with hearing impairments in Jammu and Kashmir has received a significant boost through the collaborative efforts of the Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) and the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB). Under the expert guidance of Dr. Rohan Gupta, a Consultant ENT and Cochlear Implant Surgeon at the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Narayana Superspecialty Hospital, Katragroundbreaking Cochlear Implant Program has been transforming the lives of children affected by profound deafness in the region.

Cochlear implants are revolutionary biomedical devices that provide critical auditory access to children with severe to profound sensorineural hearing loss. The device comprises an internal implant and an external sound processor, which channels sound into meaning-

ful auditory signals. In tandem with the surgery, patients undergo extensive speech therapy to facilitate language development, significantly enhancing their quality of life.

Thanks to the dedication of Dr. Rohan Gupta and his team, dozens of successful surgeries have been performed at SMVD NH, eliminating the need for families to travel to distant locations like Chandigarh or Delhi for treatment. Moreover, the Shrine Board has stepped in to alleviate the financial burden on low-income families by providing Cochlear Implant devices at no cost.

In February 2024, when the Cochlear Implant program faced a funding shortfall, Dr. Rohan Gupta appealed to the Shrine Board for additional support. Responding wholeheartedly, IOCL generously contributed over ₹75 lakhs to the initiative, enabling 11 children to access this life-changing technology. Dr. Rohan Gupta emphasized the importance of



timely intervention for congenitally deaf children, advocating for treatment procedures to be performed as early as 1 to 1.5 years of age to optimize outcomes.

Dr. Rohan Gupta expressed

profound gratitude to IOCL for their invaluable support, referring to them as "messiahs" for the children of J&K. He urged them to continue their mission to extend assistance to more families in the future, highlight-

ing that the burden of deafness affects not just the child but reverberates through their entire family and community.

Dr. M. Muthumathavan, Facility Director of SMVDSNH, reiterated the hospital's com-

mitment to ensuring that every patient receives top-notch healthcare, regardless of their financial circumstances. He praised the hospital's recognition as one of the best in the region and encouraged Dr. Rohan Gupta to persist in his outreach efforts to identify children with hearing loss early and promote awareness around newborn screening and treatment.

To further enhance accessibility, Dr. Rohan Gupta will conduct outreach clinics in Srinagar at Kashmir Clinics Central, Karan Nagar, on the second Monday of each month. This initiative aims to address the higher prevalence of congenital deafness in the region. Moreover, the Hans Foundation has pledged financial assistance to support Cochlear Implant surgeries for underprivileged children in J&K.

Dr. Yashpal Sharma, Executive Director, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Institute of Medical Excellence, affirmed the

Board's unwavering commitment to supporting needy children, promising to engage more corporate partners to promote corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives for such noble causes. He highlighted the success stories of children who have benefitted from Cochlear Implant surgeries, showcasing their joyful moments and newfound abilities.

"The transformation we witness in these children's lives is monumental. With continued support and partnerships, we hope to ensure that every child with hearing impairment has the opportunity for a brighter future," Dr. Yashpal Sharma stated passionately.

The collaborative efforts of IOCL, SMVDSNH, and the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board stand as a testament to compassionate service and collective action, exemplifying how dedicated stakeholders can come together to make a profound impact on the lives of those who need it most.