

Women Entrepreneurship, SHG Mela organized in Ganderbal to mark International Women's Day

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, MAR 08

To commemorate International Women's Day, a district-level Women Entrepreneurship and Self Help Group (SHG) Mela was organized today at the lawns of Mini Secretariat, Ganderbal.

The event witnessed active participation from hundreds of women from the district as well as involvement of several departments including Social Welfare Department, District Employment and Counseling Centre Ganderbal, Agriculture, Health, Education, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Handicrafts, Industries and banking institutions.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore presided over the event as chief guest, while Additional District Development Commissioner, Manzoor Ahmad; Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Medical Officer, Chief Education Officer, Assistant Director Employment, Lead District Manager, Cluster Head J&K Bank and other officers and officials were also present on the occasion.

The DC visited stalls set up by several departments



including Agriculture, Jal Shakti, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Health, Handicrafts & Handloom, along with agencies such as the Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (UMED), Jammu and Kashmir Bank, Rural Self Employment Training Institutes, District Employment and Counselling Centre and District Industries Centre.

The stalls showcased a variety of locally produced items including handicrafts, processed food products, traditional garments and other SHG products. Women entrepreneurs and SHG members interacted with visitors and shared their experiences of starting and running small enterprises.

Addressing the gathering, the DC extended greet-

ings on the occasion of International Women's Day to all women present. He said that March 8 is celebrated across the world as International Women's Day, and to mark the occasion, a Women Entrepreneurship Mela along with an awareness camp on various government schemes was organized in the district.

He said the objective of the event was to make women aware of various government schemes to help them in becoming empowered and self-reliant. He highlighted that departments across the district are working in coordination to promote women's welfare, skill development and entrepreneurship by providing training, financial assistance and market linkages.

The DC said he interacted with several women entrepreneurs during the mela and it was encouraging to see them performing well in various fields.

On the occasion, the DC felicitated girl toppers of 10th and 12th classes including specially-abled students, sportspersons, Anganwadi Workers and inspiring women entrepreneurs.

He also distributed Field Testing Kits, nutrition kits among new mothers, hygiene kits among adolescent girls, and stationery and sports kits among school students.

During the event, certificates were presented to IDDS beneficiaries, letters of appreciation were given for Mushroom Cultivation and Apiculture by the Agriculture Department, and Mission YUVA sanction letters were distributed among beneficiaries.

Departments also highlighted various women-centric schemes aimed at improving livelihoods, health services, education and financial inclusion.

Information, Education and Communication (IEC) material was also distributed among participants on the occasion, while departments disseminated awareness about nutrition.

Deputy CM tours RS Pura, pushes for border area development

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, MAR 08

Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today conducted an extensive tour of border areas in R.S. Pura to review the progress of developmental works and address the public grievances.

During the visit, the Deputy Chief Minister convened a day long public outreach programme at Village Sai, where he interacted with a large gathering of residents and listened to their concerns.

Pushing for holistic development of border areas, the Deputy Chief Minister directed the concerned departments to identify suitable land patches for construction of a Community Hall, an Industrial Estate and other public facilities in the area.

"Our emphasis is on sustainable and inclusive development and the government is determined to strengthen the infrastructure and improve livelihood opportunities in border regions," he said.

He asked the officials to explore the possibilities for establishment of an Industrial Estate on available government land, making it clear that industries



would not be set up by acquiring farmers' land.

Highlighting the importance of skill development, the Deputy Chief Minister also called for strengthening training opportunities and skilling local youth for better livelihood opportunities.

He further directed the concerned departments to organise awareness-cum-registration camps under the Labour and Employment Department so that eligible residents can avail welfare benefits.

"I urge all the residents to register for labour cards, which provide benefits such as marriage assistance for daughters, scholarships for child education and health insurance coverage for the workers," he said.

Earlier, the Deputy Chief Minister paid obeisance at the revered Baba Hare Peer Dargah and prayed for peace, harmony and pros-

perity in Jammu and Kashmir.

Later, he inspected the restoration work of the Hare Peer Bridge at Sai Kalan and expressed serious concern over the poor design and execution of the project.

Taking strong notice of the delay and technical shortcomings, he directed the concerned authorities to conduct an enquiry into the matter. He stressed that permanent restoration, including strengthening and protection of the existing infrastructure, must be completed at the earliest to ensure seamless connectivity for residents of the border areas.

During the tour, the Deputy Chief Minister also inspected the ongoing construction work on Sai Fagal Bridge (Aik Nallah) and reviewed its progress, directing the executing agencies

to expedite the pace of work for its timely completion.

During the outreach programme, the local residents raised several issues relating to development and basic services. Key concerns included the ownership rights of West Pakistan Refugee (WPR) legal allottees, improvement in irrigation water supply, maintenance of canals such as D-17 and Jagobal and relief in electricity bills for farmers cultivating land beyond the border fencing.

The locals also highlighted the need for improved sanitation facilities, construction of ladies' bathrooms, verification of individual bunkers in border areas, better public transport services including e-buses and timely restoration of infrastructure damaged due to floods and other natural causes.

The Deputy Chief Minister directed the concerned officers to take prompt action on the issues raised and ensure speedy implementation of development works in the border areas.

The Dy CM was accompanied by MLA Surchetgarh, Garhu Ram Bhagat, former DDC members, Chief Engineers of PMGSY and PWD, Concerned SDM and other senior officers.

DDC Anantnag takes stock of facilities at Religious Sites

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, MAR 08

District Development Commissioner (DDC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiud Din Bhat on Saturday visited prominent religious sites in the district and reviewed the facilities and ongoing infrastructure and development works aimed at their revival and restoration alongwith improving amenities for devotees and visitors.

During the visit, the DDC inspected the historic Martand Temple Mattan and reviewed the arrangements made for tourists and pilgrims visiting the site. He interacted with members of the local management and emphasized the need for maintaining cleanliness, proper infrastructure, and improved visitor facilities. He also took stock of the ongoing construction works



being undertaken as part of the Revival and Restoration of Heritage Sites Scheme.

The DDC also visited Gurdwara Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Mattan, where he interacted with the management committee. Various issues related to infrastructure and facilities for devotees were discussed during the interaction. The DDC assured that necessary steps would be taken to address the concerns raised.

Later, the DDC visited the revered shrine of Astan-e-Aaliya Hazrat Sakhi Zainud-Din Wali (RA) at Aishmuqam, where he inspected the arrangements and developmental works underway at the shrine.

Speaking on the occasion, the DDC highlighted the commitment to improving infrastructure and facilities at important religious and heritage sites to ensure convenience for the devotees.

He said the works are being implemented by the ASI in collaboration with the district administration, and that DPRs have been prepared to ensure the necessary upgradation and revamping of infrastructure. He further informed that at Martand Temple, a Rs 5 Crore project for the revival of the heritage site is under execution, which is monitored routinely by the executing agency and senior officers from the administration.

Emphasizing the holistic development of the heritage and religious sites, Dr. Bilal noted the same be achieved through effective implementation of the relevant Central Government Schemes.

The DDC was accompanied by the ADC along with officers from various line departments, executing and construction agencies, and the concerned ULBs.

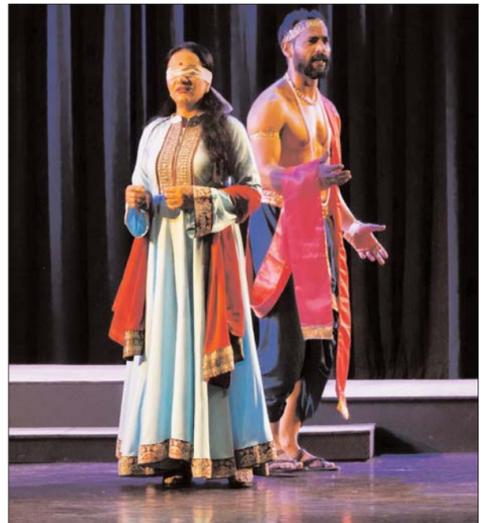
JKAACL stages "Komal Gandhar" to mark International Women's Day

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, MAR 08

To mark International Women's Day, Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL) staged the renowned Hindi play "Komal Gandhar", written by eminent playwright Shankar Shesh, at Abhinav Theatre on Sunday evening.

Former Minister, Priya Sethi graced the occasion as the Chief Guest and appreciated JKAACL for presenting a wonderful theatrical production. She lauded the efforts of the Academy in organizing meaningful cultural programmes and also appreciated the artists for their powerful performances. The event, organized under the guidance of Secretary, J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, Harvinder Kour, reflected the Academy's continued commitment to promoting theatre and meaningful cultural expression in Jammu and Kashmir.

The play was directed by



noted theatre personality Bhupinder Jamwal and witnessed an enthusiastic response from theatre lovers, artists, students and people from all walks of life. The audience highly appreciated the performances of the artists. Arvind Anand portrayed Bishma with remarkable intensity, while Gurmeet Jamwal delivered a compelling performance

as Gandhari. Soham Kashyap as Sanjaya, Mukesh Bakshi as Shakuni, Balwinder Singh as Dhritarashtra, Rishab Manhas as Duryodhan, and Deepshikha as Dasi also impressed the audience with their strong stage presence. The chorus included Sahil Bazaz, Narved Singh Jamwal, Rakesh Kumar, and Dhariya Singh.

The production was particularly notable for its aesthetically rich stage design by eminent theatre personality Deepak Kumar, whose thoughtfully crafted sets created a powerful visual backdrop for the play and effectively evoked the epic atmosphere required for the narrative.

Other production credits included Ashish Sharma for Music Operation; Pankaj Sharma and Aditya Bharti for Light Design and Execution; Sahil Qureshi for Costume Design; Shiv Dev Singh and Pintu Bhat for Make-up; Ajay Kumar for Props and Set Execution; and Jyeshtha Jambwal for Brochure and Poster Design. Ravi Sharma and Sahil Bazaz served as Assistant Directors, while Mohit Singh Chib worked as Production Manager.

Secretary, JKAACL presented the vote of thanks and appreciated the artists for their commendable performances as well as the audience for their enthusiastic participation and support to theatre activities of the Academy.

SMVDU Researchers Represent at International Conference at Amritsar

JAMMU, MAR 08: A

team of researchers and students from School of Biotechnology, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU), Katra actively participated at the International Conference on Recent Advances in Plant and Environmental Sciences organized at Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar by the Department of Botanical and Environmental Sciences with support from RUSA 2.0.

The Conference brought together leading academicians, researchers, and industry experts from India and abroad; to deliberate on emerging trends in plant sciences, environmental sustainability, and biotechnological innovations. The SMVDU team from the Tissue Culture Lab, Biotechnology presented their ongoing research work carried out on selected native medicinal plants of the region. The team shared their recent progress in plant tissue culture, conservation methods, phytochemical studies and reports on novel and memory enhancing properties.

The results on estimating and analysing key secondary endophytes carried out under the Research Project granted by Higher Education Department, J&K Govt. entitled: Establishment of Transdisciplinary Research



and Innovation Hub (for Jammu Division Colleges), RP-127; which The project supports the research ecosystem in the region, enabling access to advanced resources, coordination across disciplines, and practical outcomes benefiting the higher education institutions in the Jammu Division.

The experimental research at the Lab mainly focuses on selected medicinal plants known for their anti-diabetic, hepatoprotective metabolites responsible for anti-diabetic activity to better understand their therapeutic potential is one of the major finding from the team, besides being actively involved in in vitro regeneration, propagation and devising methods for enhancing the metabolites contents of these medicinal plants under controlled laboratory conditions. They are also ex-

ploring how the levels of key secondary metabolites get altered during in vitro growth under the influence of abiotic and biotic elicitors, helping to understand whether such techniques can be scaled up to commercial levels.

The team is also conducting studies on molecular aspects of the plant samples collected from different regions of Jammu and Kashmir to explore their diversity and variation in range of metabolite production. Through this work, the team aims to enhance the medicinal value of these plants and promote their sustainable use for future healthcare applications creating an awareness among the local population for taking up cultivation of elite accessions as a source of continued economic income.

The scholars Mr. Abhishek Bokadiya and Ms.

Nandita Sharma working under the guidance of Prof. Sharada M. Potukuchi, whose mentorship and academic leadership have been instrumental in advancing high-quality research in medicinal plant biotechnology at SMVDU made Oral Presentations. They were also accompanied Poster Presentations made by budding PG students - Ms. Palveen Kour, Ms. Madhu Sharma, Ms. Vishali and Mr. Vikas Taak (DBT supported student).

The participants are deeply indebted to the encouragement and support provided by Prof. (Dr.) Pragati Kumar, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor SMVDU along with Dean, Faculty of Sciences and Head, School of Biotechnology who continuously facilitate research and innovation in areas like plant tissue culture and medicinal plant biotechnology, inspiring the team to present their work at such prestigious platforms.

The opportunity is a source of inspiration to the team for striving towards achieving superior lab results and their interaction with eminent experts at the Conference opened up avenues to explore new concepts and techniques in their on-going experiments.

MVD conducts special enforcement drive across Jammu Division

JAMMU, MARCH 08: The Motor Vehicle Department (MVD) conducted a special drive across the Jammu Division district to enforce compliance with provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 and to enhance overall road safety.

The enforcement drive was carried out on the directions of Transport Commissioner J&K Vishesh Paul Mahajan in the districts of Jammu, Udhampur, Samba, Reasi, Rajouri, Poonch, Ramban, Kishtwar and Doda. A total of 24 nakas were established at strategic locations where 2494 vehicles were checked.

During the enforcement operation, 445 challans were issued for the violation of the Motor Vehicles Act and 60 vehicles were seized for serious offences. Additionally, 64 driving licences (D/Ls) and 20 registration certificates (RCs) were recommended for suspension for grave violations affecting road safety. The total challan amount realized during the drive was Rs. 18.18 lakh.

The District-wise enforcement revealed significant violations including overloading, driving without valid documents, permit violations, speeding, dangerous driving and

other breaches of transport regulations. In Jammu district, 400 vehicles were checked, resulting in 44 challans and 2 vehicle seizures, with 5 driving licences recommended for suspension, amounting to Rs. 1.86 lakh in penalties.

In Udhampur district, 260 vehicles were inspected, leading to 47 challans and 5 vehicle seizures, with 9 driving licences and 5 RCs recommended for suspension, generating Rs. 2.90 lakh in penalties.

Similarly, in Samba district, 163 vehicles were checked and 31 challans issued, with 5 driving licences recommended for suspension and Rs. 2.43 lakh collected as penalties.

In Reasi district, 300 vehicles were inspected, resulting in 43 challans, 4 vehicle seizures and 10 driving licences recommended for suspension, with Rs. 2.24 lakh realized as penalty.

In Rajouri district, 26 vehicles were checked, leading to 52 challans, 11 vehicle seizures and 2 driving licences recommended for suspension, with Rs. 1.14 lakh collected.

In Poonch district, 280 vehicles were inspected, resulting in 52 challans, 6 vehicle seizures and 7 driving licences recommended for suspension, with penalties amounting to Rs.

1.07 lakh.

In Ramban district, 250 vehicles were checked, resulting in 50 challans, 4 vehicle seizures and 4 driving licences recommended for suspension, with Rs. 1.46 lakh collected.

In Kishtwar district, 410 vehicles were inspected, leading to 37 challans, 14 vehicle seizures, with 5 driving licences and 3 RCs recommended for suspension and Rs. 1.04 lakh realized in penalties.

In Doda district, 405 vehicles were checked, resulting in 89 challans, 14 vehicle seizures and 17 driving licences along with 12 RCs recommended for suspension, with penalties amounting to Rs. 4.04 lakh.

The enforcement teams in all districts were headed by the concerned ARTOs along with Motor Vehicle Inspectors (MVIs) and other enforcement staff. The overall operation in Jammu District was closely supervised by RTO Jammu S, Jasmeet Singh ensuring effective coordination and strict implementation of enforcement measures. Such special enforcement drives are regularly undertaken by the Transport Department to enhance road safety, curb traffic violations and promote responsible driving behaviour among motorists.