

# JAMMU & KASHMIR

## CM inaugurates 'Know Your Artisan' under Soulful Kashmir initiative at Kashmir Haat

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS  
JAMMU, APR 15

In a major boost to promote Kashmir craft sector, Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, today inaugurated the 'Know Your Artisan' programme at Kashmir Haat here, under the Handicrafts and Handloom's on-going 'Soulful Kashmir' brand promotion campaign.

He also inaugurated the new GI Testing Lab, Giant LED Video Walls and launched high precision fibre analysis equipment along with DesignNWeave software, designed by ICT Srinagar.

Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, Advisor to Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani, MLA Zadibal, Tanvir Sadiq, MLA Hazratbal, Salman Sagar along with Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce, Vikramjit Singh and other senior officers of Industries & Commerce Department were also present on the occasion.

The latest edition of Soulful Kashmir campaign continues the momentum built over the past year, in line with Chief Minister's commitments made during his Budget Speech, aimed at strengthening 'Brand Jammu & Kashmir' and promoting the region's rich handicrafts and handloom heritage.

Immediately after his arrival, the Chief Minister inaugurated the Giant LED Video Wall installed at Kashmir Haat and the Know Your Artisan programme. He also inspected the Department's new initiative of Live Demos under



'Try Your Hands' segment, set up to provide an immersive experience to the visitors and tourists so that they feel the hard work of artisans and back-end processes involved in making such niche crafts.

The Chief Minister himself tried his hands at warping of yarn, an arduous exercise that goes into handweaving of pashmina. He was specifically impressed by the prototypes on display designed by the School of Designs and CDI.

The Chief Minister later visited the main Exhibition Gallery where 30 display-cum-sale counters offering authentic handmade products have been set up. During his interaction with various Shilp Guru, National and J&K Awardees, he expressed deep appreciation for the initiative and the remarkable craftsmanship on display.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said the initiative marks a significant step in promoting Brand J&K and enhancing

the visibility of the handicrafts sector. He emphasized that artisans are the custodians of the region's cultural identity and said the programme aims to provide them direct market access, ensure fair value for their work, and strengthen the authenticity of traditional products.

Chief Minister emphasised upon holding of such events with greater frequency and duration, so that the 'golden hands' and rich cultural heritage of Jammu & Kashmir are provided an ideal platform to reach out to a larger target audience. He directed the Handicrafts and Handloom Department to institutionalize the 'Know Your Artisan' initiative as a regular feature and to extend the present edition to maximize the outreach and impact.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has urged people to visit Kashmir Haat to experience the world-class art and craft created by the "magical hands" of Kashmiri artisans.

He emphasized that such visits not only allow people to witness the rich cultural heritage of Jammu & Kashmir firsthand, but also directly support local artisans by encouraging the purchase of authentic handmade products.

Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, who also holds the Industries & Commerce portfolio, reaffirmed the department's commitment to continue organizing such initiatives across multiple locations, ensuring wider visibility, enhanced market access, greater footprint of visitors and buyers and sustained socio-economic upliftment of the artisan and weaver community.

The event is expected to witness overwhelming response from visitors, tourists and stakeholders, marking yet another significant milestone in the ongoing efforts to position Jammu & Kashmir as a global hub for high-quality handicrafts and handloom products.

## HP Statehood Day celebrated at Lok Niwas under EBSB Bharat initiative

LEH, APRIL 15: Himachal Day, commemorating the foundation of Himachal Pradesh, was celebrated with enthusiasm at Lok Niwas, UT Ladakh, under the aegis of the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat initiative of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. The event witnessed participation from armed forces personnel hailing from Himachal Pradesh and serving in Ladakh, along with officials and staff of the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat.

Himachal Day is observed annually on April 15 to mark the formation of Himachal Pradesh as a Chief Commissioner's Province in 1948, following the merger of 30 princely hill states. While the state attained full statehood on January 25, 1971, April 15 continues to hold immense significance as a celebration of the region's foundational identity and its rich cultural heritage, often referred to as "Dev Bhoomi."

Speaking on the occasion, Under Secretary Ms. Sumera Shafi highlighted the importance of celebrating the unity and diversity



of India through the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat initiative, which aims to foster greater cultural exchange and understanding among states and Union Territories. She emphasised the cultural and geographical similarities between Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh, particularly in the high-altitude regions of Lahaul and Spiti, which share common traditions, religious practices, and landscapes.

She also paid tribute to the armed forces personnel from Himachal Pradesh who are serving in Ladakh

under challenging conditions. Acknowledging their dedication and sacrifice, she commended their commitment to safeguarding the nation despite being stationed far from their homes and families in extreme weather conditions.

Extending her greetings on Himachal Day, Ms. Shafi noted that such celebrations not only strengthen emotional bonds between regions but also reaffirm the spirit of national integration and shared heritage.

The armed forces personnel from Himachal Pradesh expressed their gratitude to

the UT Administration for organising the celebration. They shared their experiences of serving in Ladakh, describing it as both challenging and rewarding. They also spoke about the rich cultural heritage, natural beauty, and spiritual significance of Himachal Pradesh, popularly known as the "Abode of Snow," and highlighted its prominent tourist and religious destinations.

Officials and staff of Lok Niwas and the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat were present during the occasion.

## Dialysis Unit and Digital X-Ray Machine Inaugurated at SDH Baderwah

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In a major boost to healthcare services in the region, a Dialysis Unit was formally inaugurated by Director Health Services Jammu, Dr. Abdul Hamid Zargar at Sub District Hospital Baderwah in the presence of Chief Medical Officer Doda, Dr. Tanveer Ahmed Rather, BMO Baderwah Dr Versha Sharma and other officers and officials.

Two dialysis machines have been installed in the newly established unit, which will cater to two patients at a time, significantly improving access to dialysis services for patients suffering from kidney-related ailments in Baderwah and adjoining areas.

During the inauguration, two patients were provided dialysis services, marking the formal operationalization of the dialysis unit and bringing relief to patients who earlier had to travel long distances for treatment.

On the occasion, the Director Health Services Jammu also inaugurated a newly installed Digital X-Ray Machine (DR-600) at SDH Baderwah. The installation of the advanced



digital X-ray system will enhance diagnostic services and ensure faster and more accurate imaging facilities for patients.

Speaking on the occasion, DHS Jammu Dr. Abdul Hamid Zargar termed the establishment of the Dialysis Unit and installation of the Digital X-Ray Machine as significant steps towards strengthening specialized

healthcare services at SDH Baderwah. He emphasized that the Health Department is committed to enhancing healthcare infrastructure and ensuring quality medical services at the grassroots level. He further appreciated the efforts of the district health administration for making these facilities operational.

Chief Medical Officer

Doda, Dr. Tanveer Ahmed Rather, expressed gratitude to DHS Jammu for his continuous support and guidance in strengthening healthcare facilities in District Doda. He stated that the dialysis unit and digital X-ray facility will greatly benefit patients and reduce their financial and physical burden of traveling to distant hospitals.

## Run for Health, Walk for Change: Srinagar's Youth Unites for Nasha Mukht J&K

SRINAGAR, APRIL 15: It wasn't just about running or walking. It was about reclaiming lives.

A powerful wave of unity and determination swept through the heart of Srinagar as the Directorate of Youth Services and Sports J&K, under the direct and compassionate supervision of the department's Director General Anuradha Gupta, organized a heartfelt Mega Unity March and a spirited Mini Marathon. The event was held in close collaboration with the District Administration Srinagar, as part of the ongoing Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyan.

The morning came alive at the historic Ghanta Ghar in Lal Chowk, where the flag-off ceremony was led by DYSSO Srinagar, Ghulam Hassan Lone, alongside the Chief Education Officer Srinagar Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Bhat. But the real heroes of the day were the young participants over 1,159 determined girls and 718 motivated boys who poured into the streets with a single, loud message: we



choose life over addiction. Parents, teachers, and officials from the Youth Services and Sports Department walked shoulder to shoulder with the students, turning the rally into a true people's movement.

The march concluded at Sher-i-Kashmir Park, where the air was filled not just with exhaustion, but with pride. Winners of the mini

marathon were honored with medals, but every participant left with something greater: a renewed sense of purpose.

This initiative is a vital part of the "100 Days Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan" launched by the J&K Administration. Before the actual start of the marathon, every attendee took a solemn anti-drug pledge to them-

selves, their families, and their society.

Speaking to the gathering, DYSSO Srinagar didn't just deliver a speech; he shared a heartfelt appeal. He spoke of the urgent need to pull the younger generation away from the grip of substance abuse, and urged every student to become a torchbearer of change in their neighborhoods and schools.

## NFSA integration of Migrant ration cards reviewed

JAMMU, APRIL 15: Relief & Rehabilitation Commissioner (M) J&K Dr Arvind Karwani today chaired a meeting to review the progress of integration of ration cards of Kashmiri and Jammu migrants in the National Food Security Act (NFSA) database.

The arrangements put in place for distribution of free ration to Relief Category Ration Card Holders as per the Special Relief Ration Scheme notified vide Government Order No. 15-JK(FCS&CA) of 2026 dated 05-03-2026 were also assessed. The meeting also reviewed the extension of benefits of social sector schemes to migrant beneficiaries.

Deputy Commissioner (Relief), As-

sistant Commissioners, Deputy Director FCS&CA, Zonal Officers / Camp Commandants of the Relief Organization, concerned Tehsildars and officials from different line departments attended the meeting.

With the digitization and integration of their Ration cards with the NFSA database, the migrant beneficiaries can avail benefits of the social sector schemes like old age pension, scholarships and marriage assistance. After the launching of the new PDS portal by the Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department, the process of integration of about 50,000 migrant families into the national database has been initiated.

The migrants were also facing difficulties in availing benefits under Ayushman Bharat Scheme, which has also been redressed after transition into the NFSA database.

It was enjoined upon all the officers to ensure time bound completion of the exercise of integration and other preparations to ensure uninterrupted ration supply to all migrant ration card holders.

Pertinently, the existing scale of ration to the migrants registered under the Relief Category (irrespective of categorization of ration card and norms/procedures for Inclusion, Deletion, Bifurcation, Conversion, Correction of Ration Cards) shall continue under the new Scheme.

## Thousands throng Devika Baisakhi Mela on day-2

UDHAMPUR, APRIL 15: A vibrant cultural celebration marked the second day of the historic Devika Baisakhi Mela being held on the sacred banks of the Devika rivulet in Udhampur town.

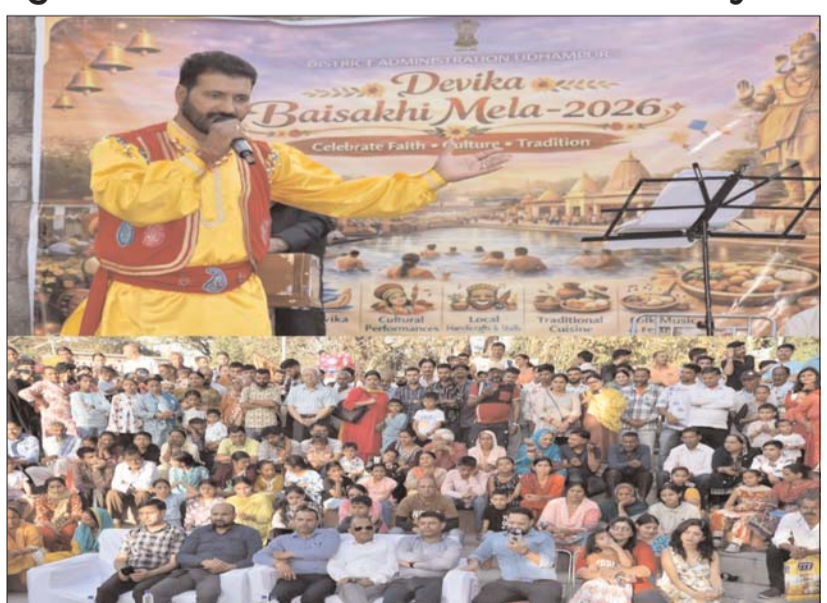
A mega cultural programme, organised by Department of Information and Public Relations District Centre, enthralled the audience with scintillating performances showcasing the rich cultural heritage of the region.

Students of KC Gurukul Public school presented a theme based Nukkad Natak on Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan.

A large number of people from all walks of life gathered to witness the cultural bonanza. The audience was treated to captivating Dogri music and folk dances performed by local artists and enthusiastic students.

The performances received thunderous applause and were highly appreciated by one and all.

Thousands of visitors and devotees



from within and outside the district thronged the Devika Ghat to take a holy dip in the sacred river, continuing the age-old spiritual tradition associated with the Baisakhi festival.

Adding to the festive spirit, temporary stalls offering sweets, toys and accessories witnessed heavy footfall, making the mela a lively and joyful experience for visitors of all ages.