

Jammu-Punjab-Haryana Pustak Parikrama 2026 flagged off from Samba to promote reading culture

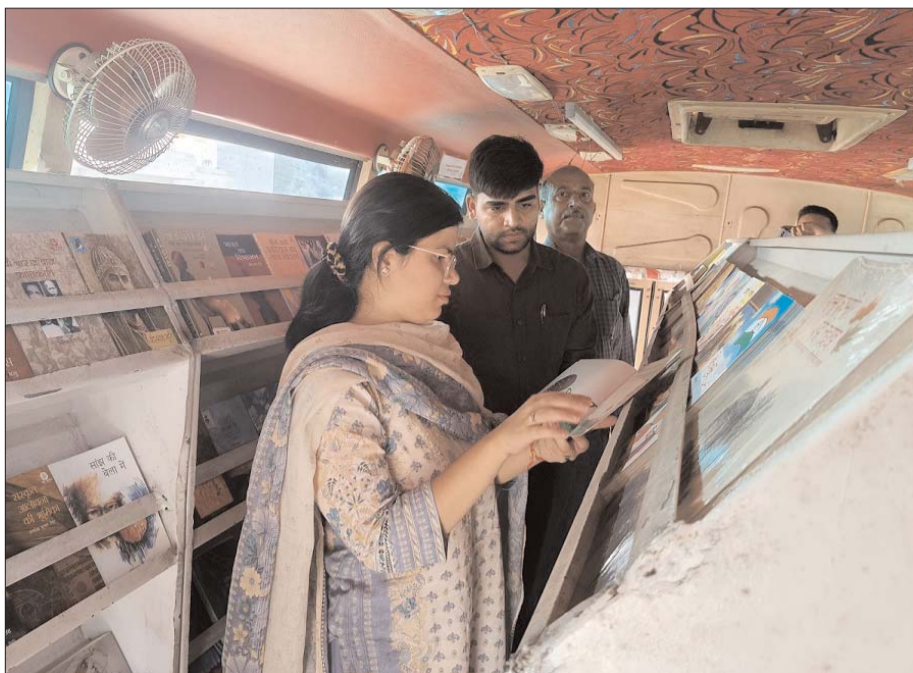
HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, MAY 19

National Book Trust India under the Ministry of Education, Government of India today flagged off the Jammu-Punjab-Haryana Pustak Parikrama 2026-a Mobile Book Exhibition under the Books on Wheels scheme here from the Office of the Deputy Commissioner Samba.

The Mobile Book Exhibition was inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner Ayushi Sudan along with Chief Education Officer Yash Paul Sharma.

The Deputy Commissioner appreciated the rich collection of books displayed in the Mobile Exhibition Bus. She interacted with officials and visitors present and lauded the initiative of NBT India for making quality books accessible to readers at their doorstep. The DC herself purchased books to encourage reading habits and promote a vibrant reading culture in the district.

The exhibition offers a wide range of books available at affordable prices across diverse subjects including Indian history, ge-



ography, biographies and autobiographies, health and wellness, yoga, mental health, science, environment, culture, art, literature, personality development, inspirational writings and books for children and young readers.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner appealed to students, teachers, parents and book lovers to visit the Mobile Exhibition Bus and explore books according to their interests. She remarked that books

play a vital role in preserving knowledge, heritage, culture and the collective wisdom of society while connecting readers from ancient India to the modern world.

NBT India has also launched the Rashtriya e-Pustakalaya initiative through which citizens can access more than 7,000 titles across diverse subjects through a free mobile application.

The Mobile Book Exhibition Bus shall travel across

different districts of the Jammu region till June 26, 2026, covering Samba, Jammu, Rajouri, Poonch, Reasi, Ramban, Kishtwar, Doda, Udhampur and Kathua before proceeding towards Punjab.

The Pustak Parikrama shall visit schools, colleges, libraries, universities and prominent public locations, bringing quality books directly to readers and inspiring young minds towards lifelong learning, creativity and knowledge-sharing.

Koul call for drug-free, responsible society at Al Rahim's 'Asluk Aalaw' in Budgam

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J&K BJP General Secretary (Organization) Ashok Koul, accompanied by J&K Waqf Board Chairperson Dr. Darakhshan Andrabi, addressed the 3rd event of "Asluk Aalaw" organized by Al Rahim Trust at Town Hall, Budgam, Kashmir.

Along with the "Nasha Mukht Abhiyan", the programme focused on five major themes including social harmony and brotherhood, awakening Swadeshi sentiments, civic duties and responsibilities, environment conservation, and family enlightenment.

Prominent religious and social personalities including Moulana Owais Qadri, Moulana Maharaj-ud-Din, Chairman of Asluk Aalaw Trust Nazir Gilkar, and several other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

Ashok Koul, addressing the gathering, said that drug addiction is one of the biggest threats to society



and particularly to the younger generation. He stressed that the youth must channelize their energy towards constructive activities such as sports, fitness, education, and social service to build a healthy and prosperous future. He said that society, religious institutions, social organizations, and families must work collectively to eradicate the menace of drugs from Jammu & Kashmir.

Ashok Koul further said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has consistently emphasized the impor-

tance of a healthy, disciplined, and self-reliant youth for nation building. He laid stress on the social harmony and brotherhood and the strengthening of local economy by using indigenous products.

Dr. Darakhshan Andrabi, while addressing the programme, said that awareness and moral guidance are essential to protect society from social evils like drug abuse. She appreciated the efforts of Al Rahim Trust for organizing such awareness programmes and said that religious and

social leaders have a major responsibility in guiding the youth towards positivity, discipline, and moral values. She laid stress on the environment conservation to gift our generations the better tomorrow.

Moulana Owais Qadri elaborated on civic duties and highlighted the emphasis laid by Islam on social responsibility, discipline, and duties towards society. He urged the people to contribute positively towards community welfare and work collectively for peace and harmony.

IGNOU launches Certificate Programme in Criminal Justice Social Work

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IGNOU has launched a special certificate programme in Social Work and Criminal Justice System (CSWCJS). The aim of the programme is to train paraprofessionals, NGO personnel, and legal workers for interventions in correctional settings. The ODL (Open and Distance Learning) programme is specifically designed to bridge the gap between social work and the judicial system.

The programme is of six month duration and any graduate from any discipline is eligible to seek admission. The CSWCJS pro-



gramme would be available in both English and Hindi. The programme covers crucial topics like Social Work Intervention in Correctional Settings, Social Work and Criminal

Justice, protection of vulnerable groups and legal remedies, and criminal justice research and advocacy.

After successfully completing the programme,

graduates would be equipped for roles in probation and prison homes, child care institutions, family courts, and NGOs focusing on the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders. The programme is going to be acclaimed for providing formal, affordable training to NGO staff, police personnel, and community advocates.

"Due to its bilingual approach and distance-learning format, it will not only make the legal literacy accessible to remote areas, but also help in bridging the divide between formal legal systems and human-centric social work", said Dr. Sandeep Gupta, Regional Director, IGNOU Regional Centre Jammu.

Mission Shakti intensifies Anti-Drug Campaign with awareness session at NCC Academy Nagrota

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To strengthen the fight against substance abuse, Mission Shakti District Hub for Empowerment of Women - Department of Social Welfare organised an impactful Drug Awareness Session at NCC Academy - Nagrota- the aim was to encourage the cadets to become ambassadors of a healthy, disciplined and drug-free society.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from NCC cadets,

faculty members and officials, creating an atmosphere of active engagement and social responsibility. The session was delivered by Advocate Kiran Thakur, who sensitised young minds about the alarming consequences of drug addiction, the importance of mental resilience and the crucial role youth can play in protecting society from the growing menace of narcotics.

Addressing the gathering, District Mission Coordinator Mission Shakti Shagun Manchanda emphasised that today's

youth possess the power to transform society through awareness, discipline and positive leadership. She encouraged cadets to remain vigilant against peer pressure and harmful influences while promoting a culture of fitness, confidence and responsible decision-making.

The programme was conducted under the supervision of Colonel Kuldeep Kachru, Commanding Officer, 4 J&K BN NCC Jammu, who appreciated Mission Shakti Jammu for its continuous support and commitment towards

youth awareness and social welfare initiatives.

The interactive session highlighted the psychological, social and legal repercussions associated with drug abuse and stressed the importance of early intervention, community participation and sustained awareness campaigns. Cadets actively participated in the discussion and pledged to spread the message of a drug-free India within their communities, reaffirming their commitment towards building a healthier and stronger nation.

DC Kathua reviews progress under PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, smart metering

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Deputy Commissioner Kathua Rajesh Sharma today reviewed the progress achieved under the Prime Minister Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana and the Smart Metering Programme at a meeting attended by concerned officers and representatives of the implementing agencies.

The meeting was informed that so far a total of 3228 applications seeking solar installation under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana have been received in the district, of which 2993 applicants have selected vendors for installation of rooftop solar panels. It was further given out that rooftop solar panels have been installed in 1915 cases in addition to 1828 already commissioned installation.

The meeting was further apprised that subsidy has been redeemed in 1792 cases and reimbursement has been completed in 1714 cases, reflecting steady progress in implementation of the flagship scheme aimed at promoting clean and affordable energy solutions among households.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed the need for intensifying awareness and public outreach



activities to encourage the maximum number of households to avail the benefits of the scheme. He directed the concerned departments and field functionaries to organise awareness camps at Panchayat, ward and village levels to educate the masses about the benefits, application procedure and subsidy provisions under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana.

While reviewing the

pace of Smart Meters, the meeting was informed that Kathua district has shown better performance in Jammu Division in implementation of the programme in the last fiscal.

The Deputy Commissioner impressed upon concerned officers to further accelerate the coverage of households under smart metering, stating that the scope for expansion remains immense.

He emphasised that smart metering would help improve transparency, energy efficiency and consumer convenience while ensuring better management of electricity consumption and distribution.

SE Ashok Kumar Chhiber, CPO Kathua Ranjeet Thakur, XEN JPDCL Mohammed Shafi, AEEs and representatives of concerned agencies were also present.

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Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan today reviewed the preparations for the smooth and successful conduct of the Annual Baba Chamliyal Mela and Baba Sidh Gorla Ji Mela in the District.

The meeting discussed in detail the arrangements related to security, sanitation, drinking water, uninterrupted power supply, medical facilities, traffic management, transport facilities, fire and emergency services, tourism promotion and overall convenience of the devotees expected to visit the shrines during the mela days.

The Deputy Commissioner exhorted concerned departments to ensure timely completion of assigned works and maintain close coordination for seamless management of the religious events.

Directions were issued to the Police Department for foolproof security arrangements and traffic regulation, while the PWD Department was asked to



ensure improvement and maintenance of roads leading to the shrine.

The Jal Shakti Department was directed to provide adequate drinking water facilities and installation of additional water points, whereas the Power Development Department was instructed to ensure uninterrupted power supply during the mela period. The Health Department was asked to deploy doctors, ambulances and paramedical

staff round the clock at the venue.

The Municipal Committees concerned were directed to maintain cleanliness and sanitation in and around the shrine area and ensure deployment of sufficient sanitation staff and mobile toilet facilities.

Fire & Emergency Services, Transport Department and Food Safety authorities were also instructed to make necessary arrangements for public safety and convenience.

The Tourism Department was asked to undertake beautification, publicity and installation of hoardings and signages at key locations for guidance of pilgrims and visitors.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized that all departments must work in a coordinated manner to ensure peaceful, safe and smooth conduct of the mela and facilitate the devotees visiting the holy shrine.

Awareness, Health Screening & Plantation drive held at Village Chakwa- Ramban

RAMBAN, MAY 19: A series of awareness and outreach activities were conducted today at Panchayat Chakwa, Village Chakwa, Block Batote in District Ramban as part of "Jan Bhagidaari - Sabse Door, Sabse Pehle" campaign being conducted Nationwide under the aegis of PM JANMAN and DA-

JGUA. The programmes were organized under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan and supervised by the local Block Development Officer, who served as the Nodal Officer for the day-long activities. The event witnessed active participation from the line

departments, field functionaries and members of the tribal community.

As part of the campaign, Health Screening Camps were organized to facilitate local population to have access to essential healthcare services. Simultaneously, Saturation Camps were conducted by different departments to

generate awareness and ensure eligible beneficiaries to register for various Government welfare schemes.

A Plantation Drive was also carried out in the tribal village to promote environmental awareness and encourage community participation in conservation efforts.