

## Lok Rang Tusav-2026: National Festival showcases unity in diversity, celebrates India's rich folk heritage

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**JAMMU:** The five-day National Level Music-cum-Cultural Festival "Lok Rang Utsav 2026", organised by the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL) in collaboration with the North Zone Cultural Centre (NZCC), Patiala, concluded Saturday at the open ground in Gulabgarh, Paddar (District Kishtwar).



Gujarat, along with a local troupe from Kishtwar.

The festival, which commenced on March 24 across various venues of Jammu Division, culminated with a vibrant finale in the picturesque valley of Paddar, attracting a large gathering of people from all walks of life.

The concluding event showcased the rich cultural diversity of the country through captivating folk performances by artists from Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, Bihar and

The colourful performances mesmerized the audience and created an atmosphere of celebration and cultural harmony.

Tehsildar Paddar, Vijay Kumar, who was the Chief Guest on the occasion, appreciated the initiative of organising such a prestigious national-level programme in the remote yet culturally rich region of Paddar. He remarked that

culture forms the core of identity and acts as a bridge connecting communities and generations. Highlighting the unique traditions, folk music and vibrant festivals of Paddar, he said that such initiatives provide a valuable platform to showcase the region's heritage at the national level while strengthening the spirit of unity in diversity. He also encouraged youth to actively participate in preserving traditional art

forms. Assistant Director, NZCC Patiala, Ravinder Sharma, reiterated the Centre's commitment to promoting cultural exchange and providing national platforms to regional artists through such programmes.

Among others present were Additional Secretary, JKAACL, Lal Chand; SDPO Paddar, Vijay Kumar Bhagat; Principal, GHSS Gulabgarh, Dalbir Singh; Chief Editor Sheeraza

Punjabi, Popinder Singh Paras; ZEO Gulabgarh, besides a large number of students, teachers and local residents.

Addressing the gathering, Additional Secretary JKAACL described the festival as a celebration of India's living traditions and collective identity. Chief Editor Sheeraza Punjabi highlighted the Academy's literary initiatives and encouraged students to take up creative writing.

The programme was conducted by Sanjiv Shaad and publications of the Academy were also displayed.

With its successful conclusion, Lok Rang Utsav 2026 not only showcased diverse folk traditions but also reinforced the message of cultural unity, leaving the audience with lasting memories of music, dance and shared heritage.

## Working of JKCIP based youth clubs assessed DC Pankaj Kumar emphasises community development, effective youth engagement

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**KISHTWAR:** Deputy Commissioner, Pankaj Kumar Sharma Saturday chaired a meeting of District Level Committee (DLC) on the Jammu & Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement in Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project (JKCIP).

The meeting assessed the activities of Youth Club Dool, Youth Club Galhar and Youth Club Dadpeth constituted to promote the project initiatives.

The DC stressed on the involvement of youth clubs in environmental conservation, community development and promotion of livelihood initiatives aimed at strengthening resilience and promoting improved agricultural and allied sector practices in the district. Officers from the Agriculture and allied



departments participated in the meeting and shared their inputs for effective implementation of the programme. Emphasis was laid on encouraging youth participation, spreading awareness on sustainable practices and promoting grassroots-level engagement in community development activities.

The meeting concluded with minor modifications to the Youth Club DPRs, including conducting two anti-drug campaigns per month, inclusion of the Forest Department in plantation drives, implementation of 2.5% administrative charges and strengthening of awareness and cleanliness drives.

## Mega Multi-Specialty Health Camp held at Breswana- Doda

**DODA:** To bring healthcare services to the doorstep of people living in far-flung areas, a Mega Multi-Specialty Health Camp was organized Saturday at Village Breswana, Panchayat Pershulla-B in Medical Block Ghat.

The camp was inaugurated by former Sarpanch of the area, Haji Mohammad Saleem in the presence of local residents and health staff. The locals appreciated the initiative and expressed gratitude to the Health Department for organizing the camp in such a remote area.

A medical team provided a wide range of healthcare services, including general health check-ups, NCD screening, dental check-up, Hb screening, besides on-spot ultrasound services. Free medicines were also provided to the beneficiaries as their individual requirement. A health awareness session was also conducted by the health staff, sensitizing the public to preventive healthcare and healthy lifestyle practices.

The services were rendered by a dedicated team comprising Dr. Hamid Parry, Dr Mirza Nadeem, Dr. Waqas Majid, Dr. Tanveer Ahmed, Dr. Sarwar Khan, Dr. Muneeza Iqbal, Dr. Touseef Aslam, Dr. Imtiaz Natoo (MLHP), Ashok Shan (MMPHW), Yasir Yousof (Dental Technician), Azra Kouser (MTS), besides the local staff of AAM Sub Centre Breswana and MMU Doda.

More than 300 patients from Breswana and adjoining areas availed healthcare services during the camp and benefited from the initiative.

## Mission Yuva -Job Fair Mela, Entrepreneurship Programme attracts massive youth participation

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**DODA:** A Job Fair Mela-cum-Entrepreneurship Programme was successfully organized Saturday at Government Degree College, Doda, under the aegis of Mission YUVA.

The objective was to provide employment and self-employment opportunities to the youth of the district.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from job seekers across Doda and adjoining areas.

More than 15 companies participated in the fair, offering over 500 vacancies across diverse sectors including retail, banking, hospitality and technical services. Prominent companies such as Maruti Suzuki, Bajaj Finance,



Tata Motors and SBI Life Insurance were among the key participants.

During the programme, candidates were provided with on-the-spot interview opportunities along with career guidance and counselling sessions. Several youth secured direct

placements, while many others were shortlisted for further recruitment processes.

In addition to facilitating job placements, the mela also promoted entrepreneurship and self-employment avenues. Officials from government

departments highlighted the government schemes under Mission YUVA and other initiatives, encouraging youth to explore startup opportunities, skill development programmes and financial assistance schemes.

The Chief Guest, District Development Commissioner, Krishan Lal, inspected the stalls set up at the venue and interacted with representatives of participating companies. He inquired about employment opportunities and entrepreneurial prospects for the youth. He appreciated the efforts of all stakeholders for organizing the event and emphasized the role of Mission YUVA in paving the way for employment generation and creation of sustainable livelihood opportunities.

## Census 2027 training at Ramban: Technical aspects covered on Day 2

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**RAMBAN:** The three-day district-level training programme for Phase-I of Census 2027 (House Listing & Housing Census) being held at the Conference Hall, District Administrative Complex Maitra, Ramban focused on technical aspects on Day 2. The training programme, being held under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner, Mohammad Alyas Khan, aims to strengthen the capacity of officers and officials involved in the census operations and to ensure the smooth implementation of House Listing and Housing Census activities in the district.

District Statistics and Evaluation Officer, Ashfaq Ur Rehman; Tehsildars from Ramban, Khari, Batote, Ukhral and Rajgarh; CEO, Municipal Council; besides

other concerned officers and officials attended the session. The resource persons and Master Trainers from the Directorate of Census Operations, J&K, including Nodal Officer Balbir Singh and District Coordinator Chandra Shekhar Singh, conducted the session. The participants were imparted theoretical and practical training on technical aspects, including HLB carving through the HLB Creator and preparation of layout maps. The officers were also trained on the Census Management and Monitoring System (CMMS), covering training management, preparation of village, town, charge registers and use of dashboards, self-enumeration process and the role and responsibilities of informants, enumerators and supervisors.

## DC Raina pitches for strict enforcement of COTPA, promotion of tobacco-free Villages

**KATHUA:** One-day Training-cum-Workshop on the National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) was held Saturday at the Conference Hall of DC Office Kathua.

At the outset, the Chief Medical Officer Dr Vijay Raina highlighted the objectives of the workshop, emphasizing the importance of inter-departmental coordination for effective implementation of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003.

During the technical session, Divisional Coordinator NTCP Shveta Raina delivered a detailed presentation covering key components of the programme, including enforcement of COTPA provisions, role and responsibilities of stakeholders, awareness generation strategies, tobacco cessation services and monitoring mechanisms, thereby enhancing the capacity of participants on tobacco control measures.

Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma, in his address, stressed strict enforcement of tobacco control laws and called for robust coordination among departments. He emphasized regular inspections, intensified awareness campaigns and active community participation to curb tobacco use, besides directing officers to ensure tobacco-free public places and institutions.

To promote tobacco-free environments at the grassroots level, Tobacco-Free Village signboards were handed over by DC to the Block Development Officer (HO) for installation in identified villages.

The meeting was attended by ADC Vishavjeet Singh; ASP Rahul Charak; RTO Surinder Sharma, officers from various departments, members of DLCC and other stakeholders.

## SWD organises Rally, debate competition on Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan at Doda

**DODA:** The Department of Social Welfare Doda on Saturday organised a Rally and Debate competition to promote Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan and generate awareness about the harmful effects of substance abuse.

The programme witnessed active participation from students, officials and members of the civil society. The rally marched through key areas carrying banners, placards and raising slogans such as "Say No to Drugs".

The initiative, led by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, focused on sensitizing the public especially the youth about the serious consequences of substance abuse and the importance of adopting a healthy and disciplined lifestyle.

A debate competition was also held where participants expressed their views on the rising menace of drug abuse and suggested measures for its prevention. The speakers highlighted the need for collective responsibility involving families, educational institutions and society at large.

## Police recover stolen motorcycles, arrest accused under Op AVTAR

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**JAMMU:** Jammu Police, South Zone, continues to achieve significant success under Operation AVTAR (Anti Vehicle Theft and Recovery)—a focused initiative aimed at curbing motor vehicle theft across Jammu district.

Under this operation, Jammu Police is closely monitoring and steering anti-vehicle theft efforts across the district. In just 88 days of 2026, a total of 33 stolen vehicles have been recovered, including 26 two-wheelers and 7 four-wheelers. Notably, the South Zone alone accounted for 24 of these recoveries, marking a major breakthrough against organized vehicle theft networks.

Working professionally Police Station Gangyal

successfully solved a motorcycle theft case and apprehended the accused and recovered. The operation was conducted under the guidance of SP South and SDPO South, with active supervision of the SHO, Police Station Gangyal.

The case originated from a complaint lodged by Karandeep Singh, a resident of Phinder, R.S. Pura, Jammu, regarding the theft of his Hero Splendor Pro motorcycle (Regn. No. JK02CL-1800) on 22 March 2026 from outside Sai Sehyog Hotel, Gangyal.

Acting swiftly, FIR No. 31/2026 was registered under Section 303(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). During the investigation, police teams conducted sustained searches and developed

critical leads, which led to the arrest of the accused, Manmeet Singh S/o Jagjit Singh R/o Simbal Camp Jammu.

Further interrogation of the accused resulted in the recovery of four additional stolen motorcycles, thereby helping solve multiple theft cases.

The continued success of Operation AVTAR highlights the professionalism, vigilance, and commitment of Jammu Police, South Zone, in protecting public property and dismantling criminal networks.

The anti-vehicle theft drive will continue with renewed focus and intensified efforts. Jammu Police remains committed to the safety and security of life and property of citizens.

## DC Ramban leads mega event under 'Vande Mataram' campaign

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**RAMBAN:** In Continuation to nationwide commemoration marking 150 years of the National Song 'Vande Mataram', the District Administration Ramban Saturday organized a series of activities across the district under a special phase celebration being observed from March 23 to 30.

Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Alyas Khan led a grand 'Vande Mataram' event held here in the premises of the District Administrative Complex, Maitra. The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from officers, officials and students.

Among others present on the occasion were Additional Deputy Commissioner Varunjeet Singh Charak;



Additional Commissioner Revenue Shokat Hayat Mattoo; Chief Planning Officer Dr. Shakeeb Ahmed Rafter; Chief Education Officer M.S. Khan; Assistant Labour Commissioner Amit Kumar; Chief Agriculture Officer Dr. Vinay Jandyal; Tehsildar Headquarters Reejuta Mahajan; ARTO,

DSHO, DYSSO and several other officers and officials.

Paying rich tributes to the national heroes Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Shaheed Sukhdev and Shaheed Rajguru, who laid down their lives for the freedom of the motherland, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted their supreme sacrifices.

## Speaker emphasizes on timely completion to ensure paperless functioning of Assembly

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**JAMMU:** Speaker, J&K Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather Saturday chaired the High Level Apex Committee (HLAC) meeting at Assembly Complex here to review and accelerate the implementation of the National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA) project in J&K Legislative Assembly.

The meeting was attended by MLAs Justice (Retd.) Hasnain Masoodi, Nizamuddin Bhat, Tanvir Sadiq, Arjun Singh Raju, Dr Sunil Bhardwaj, Waheed ur Rehman Para and Dr Bharat Bhushan; Secretary J&K Legislative Assembly, Manoj Kumar Pandita besides other senior officers from IT, NIC and NICS.

During the meeting,



the Speaker emphasised on the importance of timely completion and integration of NeVA project to modernize the legislative processes and ensure a paperless functioning of J&K Assembly.

He directed the concerned officers to

expedite the remaining tasks like procurement of hardware and other necessary network equipment for both Assembly Complexes at Srinagar and Jammu.

The Speaker urged all departments to maintain coordination while

executing the project and keep HLAC updated regarding progress achieved.

He underlined that the primary aim of the project is to modernize the J&K Assembly by making its operations completely paperless and digital.

## DC Ramban chairs District Telecom Committee meeting

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**RAMBAN:** Deputy Commissioner Ramban Mohammad Alyas Khan Saturday chaired a meeting of the District Level Telecom Committee to review the overall telecom services and connectivity scenario in the district. The meeting aimed at ensuring seamless and reliable connectivity across the district, with special focus on remote areas and the National Highway.

The meeting was attended by SSP Arun Gupta; Divisional Engineer Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) Luxmi Narayan Saini; Tehsildar Headquarters Reejuta Mahajan; Dy. SP Police Telecom Mushtaq SDMS, other concerned officers and representatives from private telecom companies joined the meeting virtually. The Deputy Commissioner directed BSNL and representatives of private telecom service providers

including Reliance Jio and Bharti Airtel, to expedite the process of covering all identified shadow areas in the district to ensure complete coverage. He emphasized improving connectivity along the National Highway from Nashri to Banihal, as well as at other vulnerable and strategically important locations, including potential religious and public gathering sites. He further instructed that the coverage areas of already installed towers be revisited to maximize outreach. Emphasizing public convenience and safety, the Deputy Commissioner directed to ensure round the clock functioning of all existing telecom towers. He stressed the need for adequate power backup and fuel arrangements at tower sites to ensure uninterrupted services, particularly during adverse weather conditions and natural calamities to avoid communication lapses at the time of emergencies.