

Exchange Programmes expose students to diverse cultures: Priya

Excelsior Correspondent
SRINAGAR, Apr 15: Lauding the Student Exchange Programme launched by the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and J&K's School Education Department, Minister of State for Education, Culture and Tourism, Priya Sethi today said such programmes help students not only to gain experience and maturity but also make them understand the beauty of diverse cultures.

"Hundreds of students from J&K have visited various parts of the country under the Exchange Programme while their counterparts from other States have also visited J&K to get first-hand knowledge of the State and its composite culture," the Minister said while addressing the concluding ceremony of Student Exchange Programme at State Institute of Education (SIE) here.

Secretary MHRD, Anil Swarup, Additional Secretary MHRD, Nigaar Fatima,

Secretary School Education, J&K, Farooq Ahmad Shah, Director School Education Kashmir, Dr G N Itoo, Director SSA, Abdul Rashid War, Director RMSA, Tufail Madoo and other officers and officials of the Education Department were present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Secretary MHRD said that he was overwhelmed by the successful completion of this exchange programme which has helped build new bonds of academic camaraderie between the students of J&K and their counterparts from other States.

He said that these types of programmes help the students in understanding culture and education system of each other and this will help in making the efforts of bringing new zeal in the education sector.

Talking about the ability and efficiency of the students of Jammu and Kashmir, he said that these students are excelling in every field and the efforts of the administrators and the officers heading the department are

also appreciable.

Secretary School Education, Farooq Ahmad Shah presented a brief overview of the initiatives in the State's educational sector including the Student Exchange Programme. He said around 600 students from J&K have already visited different States including the farthest areas like Andaman and Nicobar Islands under this programme while around 500 students from other States visited J&K. He said for the current year the department has set a target of sending around 10000 students from the State under Exchange Programme while the same number would be invited from other states to visit J&K.

On the occasion students of the State and outside the State enthralled the audiences by presenting many cultural programmes. A Qawaali was presented by the students of Girls Higher Secondary School Nawakadal.

During the function some students from outside the State and students from Jammu and Kashmir shared their experiences of the Exchange Programme.

Kohli for effective monitoring of rural development schemes

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Apr 15: Minister for Animal, Sheep Husbandry and Fisheries, Abdul Gani Kohli, today said that the Government is working with an agenda of equitable development to ensure the welfare of every section of society with special focus on population living in rural areas.

The Minister said this at a public grievances redressal camp held in remote village of Garan in Kalakote constituency of Rajouri district today where the locals put forth various development issues of the area.

The Minister said that Government is determined to develop the rural belts including remote and far-flung habitations of Kalakote constituency at par with the urban areas and stressed on infrastructural growth for the overall development of the State. He emphasized on effective monitoring of the rural development schemes launched by the Government for the socio-economic development of the rural population.

Highlighting various development works initiated in

Kalakote constituency, Kohli said that the promise of development is not merely on papers and one can assess the progressive work done in the rural areas of Kalakote. He said the Government has laid full focus on development of infrastructure and provide better civic amenities to the people in rural areas with special focus on improving basic requirements of the people.

Responding to the demands put forth by the locals on the occasion, the Minister assured the people that all their genuine demands would be looked into on priority and directed the concerned officials to take all necessary measures to address their issues at the earliest. He asked the concerned officers to assess the developmental need of the area and instructed them to put in place a proper mechanism to meet the aspiration of the locals.

Kohli sought active participation in rural developmental programmes launched by the Government and called for regular public grievances camps to redress the grievances of people in rural pockets.

Bali for equipping every hospital with modern healthcare facilities

Excelsior Correspondent
AKHNOOR, Apr 15: Minister for Health and Medical Education Bali Bhagat today said the Government has taken various path-breaking steps to equip the hospitals in the State with ultra-modern healthcare facilities with special focus on the health centres functioning in the border and far-off areas.

The Minister said this while addressing a public meeting at Khour wherein a large number of people hailing from all sections of the society participated.

MP, Jammu-Poonch constituency Jugal Kishore Sharma, MLA, Akhnoor Rajeev Sharma, MLA, Chhamb Dr Krishan Lal Bhagat and officers of line department were present in the public meeting.

Stressing that the Government's commitment is to provide healthcare facilities to the people at their doorsteps, the Minister said that sufficient number of doctors and paramedical staff would be placed in hospitals in Akhnoor, Khour and Chhamb for providing timely treatment to the patients, besides

installing ultrasound machines in these hospitals.

He directed the concerned to conduct health awareness camps in the rural areas to educate the

nectivity has been improved drastically in the last three years. He said that the construction work on 2 km long bridge over river Chenab between



Health Minister, Bali Bhagat, MP Jugal Kishore Sharma and others during public meeting at Akhnoor on Sunday.

masses about various diseases, preventive measures, sanitation and benefits of clean environment for good health.

Speaking on the occasion, MP Jammu-Poonch constituency Jugal Kishore Sharma said the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken various historic steps in the national interest.

Termining medicare as the lifeline for the poor and downtrodden sections of the society, the MP informed that the Central Government would cover 100 diseases under Ayushman Bharat, which would provide health insurance cover of Rs 5 lakh per eligible family per year.

Enumerating various steps taken by the Government for the development of the area, Jugal Kishore informed that road con-

nectivity has been improved drastically in the last three years. He said that the construction work on 2 km long bridge over river Chenab between



Women lawyers during a press conference at Press Club, Jammu. -Excelsior/Rakesh

National media wrongly projected agitation of Bar: Women lawyers

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Apr 15: The women wing of J&K High Court Bar Association (JKHCBA) today said that the electronic media at National level has wrongly projected the on-going agitation of the Association only in support of the alleged accused in Ransana rape and murder case, which in fact was one of the issues for rendering justice to the victim family through a CBI probe.

Addressing a press conference here at Press Club, senior Advocate and JKHCBA member, Surinder Kour, said that there were wrongful attempts to project the Bar Association as "pro-rapist" or "anti-national" and their agitation as an attempt to save the culprits involved in the heinous crime, though the agitation was mainly for deportation of Rohingyas and Bangladeshies from Jammu region, withdrawal of minutes of meeting/illegal directions of Tribal Affairs Department, and fair and independent CBI probe in Ransana murder case.

She also clarified that no office bearer of the J&K High Court Bar Association, Jammu, has ever restrained or stopped any lawyer to appear in any case including the case of Ransana rape and murder case.

Kour also clarified that the statement attributable to the Bar Association president, BS Slathia with regard to inciting of youth for raising Arms is factually incorrect, baseless and has been quoted out of context. "In fact Slathia had only warned the State Government not to create any situation by rehabilitating the Rohingyas and Bangladeshies in

and around Jammu city which is creating grave threat to security as admitted by the State and Central Governments.

She further stated that Salathia had urged the Government to immediately address the issues being agitated by them and don't allow the situation to reach at an alarming stage as that in Kashmir where the youth find them self trapped and exploited.

It was also pointed out by Kour that the case has been politicized which is evident by the fact that the Chief Minister who is the Minister Incharge of the Home Department has written to the Chief Justice of J&K High Court for conducting the trial within 90 days when the matter is yet admittedly to be further investigated by the Crime Branch and there are 221 witnesses cited in the said challan.

Amongst those who were present in the press conference include Radha Sharma, Deepali Arora, Anju Sharma, Prabhat Kour, Surbhi Gupta, Jyoti Sharma, Deepali Kapoor, Shalni Sharma, Smiley Gupta, Seema Sharma, Meenakshi Slathia, Nishu Kanth, Deepa Sharma, Isha, Alisha Kohli, Gyatri Dogra, Bhomika and Sushma Sharma.

Kashmir-Jammu-Punjab drugs cartel busted Narco smuggler arrested with Rs 1 lakh heroin, Rs 2.25 lakh cash

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Apr 15: Keeping hawk's eye over narcotics smugglers, Gandhi Nagar police under 'Operation Sanjeevani' busted a Kashmir-Jammu-Punjab drugs cartel with the arrest of the Kashmir based narcotics smuggler along with 10 grams heroin valuing Rs 1 lakh and Rs 2.25 lakh cash.

As per police sources, on reliable information, a team from Gandhi Nagar Police Station laid a naka at Last Mohr and asked a pedestrian to stop for checking, as he was moving under suspicious circumstances.

On seeing police cops, the pedestrian escaped from the spot and entered into a nearby by-lane. Stinking something fishy, the cops chased and intercepted the pedestrian.

During checking, police recovered 10 grams heroin worth Rs 1 lakh and Rs 2.25 lakh cash from the possession of the pedestrian and arrested him.

The arrested person has been identified as Showkat Ahmed Dar, son of Ghulam Qadir Dar, a resident of district Anantnag.

The drug peddler had brought the consignment from Kashmir and was indulged in selling the consignment among the youth in Jammu and Punjab. It is assumed that Rs 2.25 lakh cash, which has been recovered from him, has been gained by selling the heroin.

With his arrest, police busted a drug cartel operating between Kashmir, Jammu and Punjab and also saved the youth from becoming drug addicts.

A case under FIR Number 85/18 under Section 8/21/22 Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act has been registered at Gandhi Nagar Police Station and investigation started.

Police team led by SHO Gandhi Nagar Inspector Sunil Singh Jasrotia and assisted by ASI Shesh Pal busted the drugs cartel under the supervision of SDPO South Mohammad Rafiq Manhas, SP South Sandeep Choudhary and SSP Jammu Vivek Gupta.

JKTF condemns SDM order on inspection of schools by Patwaris

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Apr 15: Jammu and Kashmir Teachers Forum has strongly condemned the order issued by SDM Mahore authorizing Patwaris to inspect Government schools and further stating that teachers can be suspended even on the report of ex-Sarpanch.

"It is very shocking and shameful on the part of Government as teaching community is being humiliated in such a manner by low rank employees of other department who have nothing to do with the Education Department," observed an emergency meeting of central body of Jammu Kashmir Teachers Forum, which was held under the chairmanship of S Soorat Singh Toofani, provincial general secretary, here today.

The meet also stressed upon the authorities to strengthen the internal mechanism by constituting inspections and monitoring department committees or to appoint nodal officers from Education Department if need arises to monitor and check the schools.

The Forum appealed the

Education Minister to intervene for withdrawal of such type of illogical, biased and draconian order which can dent the image of teachers and honour and dignity of teaching fraternity. JKTF will be compelled to adopt agitational path to restore the dignity of teachers fraternity if the Government does not withdraw this controversial order, the meet warned.

The JKTF also appealed to the teaching community to work with zeal and dedication for the betterment of students, to improve work culture and discourage the tendencies of absenteeism in order to achieve academic excellence.

Those who attended the meeting, included Yograj Slathia, Rajender Gupta, Ravinder Singh, Kuldeep Singh, Mohd. Iqbal, Shayam Badyal, Darshan Sharma, Shankar Chib, Kuldeep Singh Bhandral, Shanti Saroop, Bharat Bhushan, P D Singh, Majid Choudhary, Rajeshwar Sambhal, Subhash Sharma, Surinder Sharma, Vinod Sharma, Rohit Gupta, Shiv Kumar, Subhash Singh, Narinder Chib, Jaswinder Singh and others.

Chrungoo re-elected president PK organises Annual Executive Council meeting, KP Nirvasan Samvat Prog

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Apr 15: Panun Kashmir organised its Annual Executive Council meeting and the 'Kashmiri Pandit Nirvasan Samvat-29 Programme', here today.

The function was presided over by Prof ML Raina and the proceedings were conducted by Kamal Bagati, Chairman of the Organizing Committee and PK Bhan.

The election to the post of President of Panun Kashmir was also held in the specially convened meeting, wherein Ashwani Kumar Chungoo was re-elected the President of Panun Kashmir unanimously for a period of five years.

Ramesh Arora, MLC and Ashwani Sharma, former MLA were the special guests in the function while Commodore (Retd) Sardar DS Sodhi was the guest of honour in the programme. The programme was inaugurated by lighting 29 earthen lamps symbolizing 29 years of exile of the Kashmiri Pandit community.

On the occasion, the newly elected President, Chungoo, announced a Team of office bearers of daughters of Panun Kashmir comprising Moheni Raina as the Patron, Dr. Nidhi Tikoo Mitra, the new Chairperson, Vimla Chungoo, Secretary, Dr. Ritu Bakshi, Vice Chairperson and Vijay Sapru, Assistant Secretary.

He also announced the prestigious annual Award named Pt Amarnath Vaishnavi Award-2018 in favour of Utpal Kaul, veteran senior leader of KP community. The coveted Award will be conferred upon him on April 30, 2018 at Jammu.

Chrungoo will be undertaking Kashmir Sankalp Yatra (Phase-6) today and will cover five Indian cities in this regard for two weeks.

The vote of thanks was presented by Virender Raina.

Chrungoo in his address reiterated the seven-point charter of demands presented by the leadership of Panun Kashmir.

He said that the three points raised by the lawyer community of Jammu are genuine and represent the geo-political aspirations of the Jammu region.

Arora in his remarks emphasized the need of coordinated struggle to achieve the desired results.

He said that the resettlement issue of Kashmiri Pandits in Kashmir is a very important concern for which Panun Kashmir is committed and is working with perfect intent.

Ashwani Sharma appreciated the role of the Kashmiri Pandit community in bringing awareness in Jammu about the health and education scenario, while Prof Raina, Sodhi and Dr Nidhi Tikoo Mitra also spoke on the occasion.

Main wing of HC to close on Apr 27

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Apr 15: Main wing of the High Court and office of Registrar Vigilance will close at Jammu on April 27 after office hours and will reopen at Srinagar on May 7.

State High Court and the Subordinate Courts shall function for the Summer Season with effect from May 1.

As per the time schedule notified by the Registrar General of High Court, Sanjay Dhar, the timing of Jammu Wing of the High Court will be from 8 am to 2 pm while as timing of the Srinagar Wing of the High Court will be from 5

pm to 4 pm from May 1.

The timing of the Subordinate Courts of Jammu Province except courts located at Baderwah, Doda, Kishtwar, Gandoh (Bhallesa), Batote, Banihal, Gool and Bani will be from 8 am to 1.30 pm.

The Subordinate Courts of Kashmir Province will observe timing from 10.30 am to 4.30 pm with lunch break from 1 pm to 1.30 pm. This timing will also be applicable to the courts located at Baderwah, Doda, Kishtwar, Gandoh (Bhallesa), Batote, Banihal, Gool and Bani.

Rivaah by Tanishq offers a

Kashmir society largely believes in peace: Justice Sharma Rajnath assures more support to J&K from NFCH

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Apr 15: The 21st meeting of General Council of the National Foundation for Communal Harmony was held at Union Capital under the chairmanship of Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh.

Speaking on the occasion, Home Minister said that India has always remained a tolerant and a peaceful country to give shelter to all the victims of religious bigotry as well as other persecuted ethnic groups throughout the world and allowed them to practise their respective religious beliefs.

"In response they too have in their own way contributed for the advancement of the Indian culture in every sphere of life", he said, adding "peace in the society is the main factor for the development of the country and making her a strong nation".

He assured that more Government assistance both monetarily and administratively would be provided so that mislead youth of the country and other members of the society are engaged in the nation building. He particularly named Jammu and Kashmir which is at the top of communal disharmony followed by other States.

"Jammu and Kashmir is at the top to receive the financial help from NFCH for the victims of communal violence and large numbers of student community are receiving education and scholarships", he further said while assuring more support to the State.

Justice (Retd) G D Sharma representing the State of Jammu and Kashmir gave a detailed history accompanied by documentary evidence showing thereby how Jehadi elements had succeeded in high-jacking the recognized religious, harmonious culture of the State at the behest of inimical foreign hands and assisted by local elements.

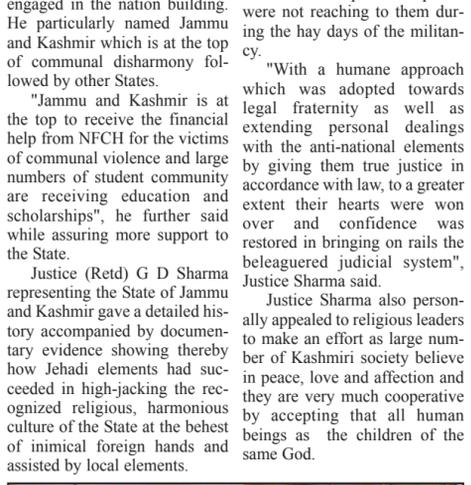
"The then people at the helm of Government had failed in dealing with them in accordance with the law of land. Rather, in some cases they encouraged the Jehadi elements for vote bank gains", he said and spelled out 14 specified cases mentioned in the record which was submitted to the Home Minister.

One case pertained to Jehadi attack on Raghunath Mandir in the city of Jammu. The other case was specified in the meeting regarding the massacre of family members of armed forces in Kaluchak military residential area. "The sanctioned for the prosecution of the named persons was intentionally withheld in order to enable the accused to get bails from the trial court. Similar practice was adopted in the remaining twelve specified cases pending before the trial court", he added.

He also brought to the notice of the dignitaries representing the whole country how Islamic Jehadi courts were established in the rural areas of the Kashmir valley where the writ of the courts and the power of police were not reaching to them during the hay days of the militancy.

"With a humane approach which was adopted towards legal fraternity as well as extending personal dealings with the anti-national elements by giving them true justice in accordance with law, to a greater extent their hearts were won over and confidence was restored in bringing on rails the beleaguered judicial system", Justice Sharma said.

Justice Sharma also personally appealed to religious leaders to make an effort as large number of Kashmiri society believe in peace, love and affection and they are very much cooperative by accepting that all human beings as the children of the same God.



Customers purchasing gold and diamond jewellery at Tanishq showroom at Jammu on Sunday.

Tanishq offers discounts on Akshaya Tritiya

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Apr 15: Tanishq, India's most preferred jewellery brand that stands for quality and purity and has served more than 5 million customers is offering discounts on the day of Akshaya Tritiya.

Tanishq offers upto 25 per cent off on making charges of gold and diamond jewellery value, starting from April 13 to 18.

Tanishq, being one of the most trusted jewellery brands in the country, customers can upgrade their old jewellery by exchanging and getting 100 per cent value on their old gold jewellery.

Tanishq has introduced new collection called as Mangalam, which offers wide range of designs starting from Rs 10,000.

Rivaah by Tanishq offers a

range of stunning handcrafted wedding jewellery for brides across India, which comprises of ornate creations in gold, diamond, Kundan and polki. With the wedding season round the corner, there is no time better than an Akshaya Tritiya season to shop.

Deepika Sabharwal Tewari, Associate Vice-President of Marketing at Tanishq said, "Akshaya Tritiya is an auspicious occasion for us. For 20 years, Tanishq has strived to be a part of every customer, and hence again this year, Tanishq is introducing special offers on gold and diamond jewellery. Customers can exchange and get 100 per cent value for old gold jewellery. With this policy, we believe, we would have an opportunity to serve new customers, while making our existing customers even happier".



Pitamber Nath Sharma receiving Prof Ram Nath Shastri Memorial Award in Jammu.

Pitamber bags Prof Ram Nath Shastri Memorial Award

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Apr 15: Prof Ram Nath Shastri Memorial Award for the year 2018 has been conferred on Pitamber Nath Sharma for his Dogri novel "Bhagaali".

The award instituted by the family members of Late Shastri, the doyen of Dogri, is aimed at encouraging the new writers. The award carries a cheque for Rs.21000, a memento and a shawl.

The award ceremony was organized under the auspices of Dogri Sanstha, to which Shastri remained associated throughout his life.

The award function which was held in K.L. Sehgal Hall was presided over by Padmashri Prof. Ved Ghai and attended by a large gathering of writers, the family members of Shastri and Pitamber Sharma and prominent citi-

zens.

Prof Ghai, who had a long association with Shastri, narrated many outstanding qualities of head and heart of Shastri, which made him a towering personality during his lifetime and an icon of Dogri after his death. She specially emphasized his foresightedness, his leadership qualities and his total dedication to the cause of Dogri.

Earlier, Prof Lalit Magotra, President of Dogri Sanstha presented welcome address.

On the occasion, Prof. Veena Gupta read a citation about Pitamber Nath Sharma and also spoke in detail of the merit of the awarded novel.

Dr Nirmal Vinod, General Secretary of Dogri Sanstha conducted the programme, while Dr Chanchal Bhasin, Secretary of Dogri Sanstha presented the vote of thanks.



Kirtan Darbar at Gurudwara Baba Chanda Singh on eve of Khalsa Sajna Divas.

Kirtan Darbar organized on eve of Khalsa Sajna Divas

Excelsior Correspondent
JAMMU, Apr 15: An impressive Kirtan Darbar was organized at Gurudwara Baba Chanda Singh Ji, Jain Bazar, Jammu, by the management committee on the eve of Khalsa Sajna Divas.

The day was celebrated with gaiety and religious fervor in which Sangat from surrounding areas of Jammu city reached Gurudwara Sahib for listening to the Kirtan Darbar. On the occasion, the Guru Ka Langar (Free Kitchen) was also distributed amongst the Sangat.

Bhai Sahib Bhai Amarpal Singh and Jatha, Bhai Sahib, Bhai Sukhdev Singh and Dr Tejinder Singh recited the Kirtan and highlighted the biography of Sahib-E-Kamal.

While speaking on the occasion, S Sukhbir Singh said that Anand Marriage Act be implemented in the J&K State and minority community status be given to the Sikh community. Further, he added, the allotment of land for reconstruction of Gurudwara Charan Kamal Asthan Guru Nanak Ser Manjila be immediately done.

He appealed to the Government to name Kunjwani Chowk as Baba Banda Singh Bahadur Chowk, remove extended sheds of shops of Municipal Committee in Chand Nagar and shift the shops falling in the precincts of Gurudwara Sahib to another place as the Gurudwara Sahib is historical importance belonging to First Guru Guru Nanak Dev Jee.

The Sangat also demanded punishment to those persons who are responsible for 1984 riots, implementation of Ansari Commission report on 1989 anti Sikh riots in J&K and settlement of claims, gazetted holiday on the Martyr's Day of Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Ji Maharaj, settlement of the claims of 1947 by giving them property rights of Evacuee Property and compensation so that matter is solved once for all, appointment of Punjab teachers in school/colleges

All the office bearer, including Amarjeet Singh, Jagbir Singh, Dr Tejinder Singh, Bikram Singh Jagjeet Singh Nanu, Jagdeep Singh, Janmeet Singh, Surjeet Singh and Parveen Singh were also present on the occasion.