

India Today Tourism Survey and Awards announced

J&K wins best adventure tourism destination award

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Feb 24: The India Today Tourism Survey has chosen J&K Tourism for best adventure tourism destination award.

components of the GDP-consumption through domestic travel, investment through the booming private sector and exports through the sale of locally made handicrafts and products to foreign tourists.

In his address, Union Tourism



Union Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal presenting award to the official of J&K Tourism Department at New Delhi.

Parliamentary Affairs, Arjun Ram Meghwal at a glittering function after the results of the survey were announced.

The award has been given to the Tourism Department in recognition of its sustained efforts in promoting Gulmarg as an adventure destination of international order.

Speaking on the occasion, Meghwal highlighted the value of tourism in contributing to the GDP of the country.

Secretary, Arvind Singh gave an overview of the steps being taken by the Union Government to further improve the tourism sector.

Editor, India Today Group, Raj Chengappa welcomed the participant States and UTs and gave a broad outline of the survey.

The award was received by Deputy Director, Tourism, Alyas Ahmad on behalf of the Department.

Ministers from Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, represen-

tatives of Tourism Boards of several states and UTs, representatives of national travel trade and business bodies were present on the occasion.

On the sidelines of the event, discussions on best practices and sustainable tourism were held.

It may be recalled that the India Today award comes just within a month of the South Asian Travel Trade Expo(SATTE), one of the best trade expos in the country in which the J&K Tourism Department was awarded for its efforts in post COVID-19 recovery of the tourism sector.

It is in place to mention here that last year J&K received a record number of tourists and the Department for the last two years has been consistently diversifying its tourism products which has gone well among the tourists.

The Department during the last two years has taken several new initiatives for the quick revival of tourism in the UT. This winter, besides Gulmarg, resorts of Pahalgam, Sonamarg, Doodhpathri and other resorts were kept open and these destinations received a considerable footfall.

Besides, new trekking routes, rafting and adventure activities were added to the recreation portfolio for sustaining the interest of coming tourists. This is besides the opening of new areas like Gurez and other border areas for tourism which has enhanced the attraction and urge for visiting J&K.

Last year Gurez was adjudged as the best offbeat destination in the country.

DGP chairs Task Force meeting on Border Management

*PHQ promotes 7 SIs, 21 ASIs, 30 HCs

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 24: Director General of Police (DGP), J&K, Dilbag Singh today chaired a meeting of the Border Management Task Force, which was attended by various senior officers of Army, BSF, Police and Civil Administration, to review the management of the International Border.

The agenda of the meeting covered various issues on Border Management like better interagency coordination, problems being faced by civilians residing in these areas and identification of gaps in the implementation of decisions taken in previous meetings.

Addressing the meeting, the DGP stressed on the importance of smooth sharing of information. He further emphasized on the use of technology for better surveillance as well as for strengthening of the anti-infiltration grid.

Referring to the recommendations of the DGP/IGP conference, the DGP reiterated the earlier instructions on the conduct of detailed household survey of the border areas. He also underlined the importance of Civic Action Programmes and other community engagement activities in these areas.

Top officers representing different security forces and Civil Administration also suggested



DGP Dilbag Singh chairing a meeting of the Border Management Task Force on Friday.

different measures for effective Border Management.

The meeting was attended by ADGP Jammu Zone Mukesh Singh, ADGP (Coordination) PHQ Danesh Rana, Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar, GOC 28 Infantry Division 15 Corps, Major General Girish Kalia, 26 Infantry Division, 9 Corps, Maj Gen Gaurav Gautam, IGP Nitish Kumar, IGP Headquarters BS Tuti, DIG Headquarter BSF Jammu Frontier, Vikrant Nayar, BGS 16 Corps, Brig Kartik C Seshdri, DC Jammu Avny Lavasa, DC Kathua Rahul Panday, DC Samba Anuradha Gupta, SSP Jammu Chandan Kohli, SSP Samba Benam Tosh, SSP Kathua Shiv Deep Singh Jamwal, AIG Training and Policy PHQ JS Johar, Col (GS) S Vanhishtha, Chief Engineer, PW(R&B) Jammu, Chief Engineer Irrigation & FC Jammu, Vijay Kumar Pandita, Chief Engineer, JPDCL (Distribution) Jammu and Deputy SP IT PHQ Junaid Hakeem.

Meanwhile, Jammu & Kashmir Police Headquarters issued promotion orders in respect of 07 Sub Inspectors, 21 Assistant Sub-Inspectors and 30 HCs of J&K Police Telecom Cadre to the next rank under different orders.

Sub-Inspectors who have been promoted to the rank of Inspector are Umar Mukhtar Mir, Himanshu Dutta, Satyender Pal Singh, Anjali Sharma, Khan Uzair, Tejinder Singh and Obaid Ul Haq while 21 Assistant Sub-Inspectors who have been promoted to the rank of Sub-Inspector are Ab Salam, Azad Ahmad, Farooq Ahmad, Mohammad Ashraf, Ashok Kumar, Rajinder Singh, Joginder Lal, Mehraj ud din, Balvinder Kumar, Jagdish Raj, Tarseem Lal, Ab Aziz, Raj Kumar, Shabir Ahmad, Mohammad Ashraf, Mohammad Shabanm, Mohammad Maqbool, Tajinder Singh, Ab Majid, Kuldeep Kumar and Ab Rashid.

Head Constables who have been promoted to the rank of ASIs are Mohd Amin, Javid Ahmad, Ali Mohammad, Pura Chand, Mushtaq Ahmad, Riyaz Ahmad, Tanveer Ahmad, chander Prakash, Preetam Singh, Ashwani Kumar, Gh Nabi, Gh Hassan, Ab Gani, Nilal Ahmad, Raveel Singh, Anil Kumar, Gh Mohammad, Suresh Kumar, Ishiyaq Ahmad, Anjana Pandita, Jankar Singh, Suresh Kumar, Imtiyaz Ahmad, Parmella Devi, shamim Ahmad, Amrik Singh, Bashir Ahmad, Mushtaq Ahmad and Farooq Ahmad.

Justice Koul inspects District Court Complex Kathua

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 24: Justice Vinod Chatterji Koul, Administrative Judge for district Kathua today visited District Court Complex Kathua.

On the occasion, Koul was welcomed with a guard of honor from a squad of Jammu and Kashmir Police. He was welcomed by Jaffer Hussain Beg, Principal District & Sessions Judge, Kathua along with M S Manhas, Additional District Judge, Swati Gupta, Chief Judicial Magistrate, Surinder Thapa, Special Mobile Magistrate, Atul Gupta, ADM, Suresh Chib, SP Headquarter, Rekh Kapoor, Secretary, DLSA, Cheena Sumbria, Munsiff and Shilpa Dogra DMM, (Traffic), Kathua.

Justice Koul inspected

under-construction court building and had an extensive meeting with the Judicial Officers posted at district headquarter and representatives of the civil and police administration.

He took stock of the working of the courts and emphasized upon the Judicial Officers to ensure fair delivery of justice and speedy disposal of cases with priority to old cases and also encouraged them to work with dedication and commitment. Justice Koul also instructed the district administration to speed up all development projects related to the infrastructure of courts within district Kathua.

On the occasion, he also interacted with members of the Bar and assured them that their genuine demands shall be addressed without any delay.



Secretary, Deptt of Culture, addressing inaugural function of Dogri Literary & Cultural Festival on Friday.

4-day Dogri Literary & Cultural Festival begins at JKAACL

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 24: The Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages (JKAACL) is organizing a 4-day Dogri Literary and Cultural Festival from today at JKAACL premises in Jammu.

The festival was inaugurated by Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, Secretary, Deptt of Culture, J&K Government, in the presence of Dr. Jitender Udhamपुरi, Prof. Lalit Magotra (President Dogri Sanstha, Jammu), Prof. Veena Gupta, Bharat Singh (Secretary, JKAACL) and others.

At the outset, Secretary JKAACL said that poets are the face of society and they represent the inner thoughts of the social fabric through their ink.

Prof. Veena Gupta presented keynote address on the challenges in Dogri Language and their solutions. She was followed by Prof. Lalit Mangotra who stressed upon translation of the Dogri Literature in other Languages and vice versa.

Dr. Abid, in his speech, gave stress on involving students and young generation towards the literary activities. Talking to the eminent writers and poets on the occasion, he said that being the pillars of the Dogri Literature, we have a responsibility to pass on this treasure to our younger generations.

He also invited suggestions regarding how we can provide the rich literary collections of the JKAACL to the students.

Udhampur gave his precedential address and appreciated the efforts of JKAACL in promoting Dogri literature and culture along with other languages.

Dr. Arvinder Singh Amn, Additional Secretary, JKAACL presented vote of thanks. The inaugural session was conducted by Dr. Ratan Basotra, Editor Dogri, JKAACL.

After the inaugural session, paper reading session was organised in which Dhan Singh presented paper on "Ikki Sadi De Dogri Bal Sahitya De Parmukh Rujhaan"; Dr. Om Goswami presented paper on "Contribution of JKAACL towards Dogri Language and Literature"; Rajinder Kumar Ranjha presented his paper on the topic "Ikki Sadi Di Dogri Kavita De Kish Rujhaan"; and Surinder Sagar presented his paper on "Dogri Patarkarita Ik Jaiza".

In the Poetry Session, the poets who presented their work, included Parkash Premi, Abhishap, Vijay Sharma, Tara Chand, T R Magotra Sagar, N D Jamwal, Jitender udhamपुरi, Surjeet Hosh, Babu Bhatti, Mohinder Pancheri, Dharam Pal Sharma, O P Bhajwalia, Balak Ram Bral, Amarjeet Sharma, Mohan Singh, Promila Manhas, Sunil Sharma, Subhash Farnalia and Vijaya Thakur

During the session, cultural folk Getru were presented by renowned artist Khajoor Singh and his Party and Ram Ditta & Party.

Padamshree Jitender



RTI activist Balvinder Singh addressing a press conference at Jammu.

J&K Admn don't mind opening of wine shops near religious places: Balvinder

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 24: RTI/Social activist Balvinder Singh today said that in Delhi where BJP is in opposition lodged their protest on 03-01-2022 against the Delhi Government's excise policy for allowing wine shops to be opened near religious places but in J&K which is indirectly ruled by the BJP, the Saffron party don't mind opening of wine shop near religious places and educational institutions.

Addressing a press conference here today, Singh stated that J&K excise policy vide SRO 128 dated 25-02-2019 for the year 2019-20 reduced the distance from 300 meters to 100 meters from the religious places but the condition of opening of wine shops has totally been removed in the excise policy for 2022-23.

Singh said that he had filed Writ Petition WP © 612/2022 in the High Court J&K for quashing the SO 71 i.e. excise policy of 2022-23 which no where mentioned the requirement of distance of 300 meters for religious places for opening of New vend (JKEL-2) wine shops, as was provided under excise policy 2018-19.

"In the reply filed in the High Court through Deputy Advocate General, the Excise Department stated that one of the objectives of the excise policy 2022-23 is to check smuggling of liquor and narcotics drugs in J&K from neighbouring states/union territories. The Department further mentioned that though it has not mentioned the distance for opening of new wine shops but if the local people of the area raises objection for opening of wine shops in their area before District Magistrate concerned, then DM will not issue NOC certificate for opening of such shop," he added.

He said as the excise policy 2022-23 is expiring on 31-03-2023, therefore he has withdrawn his petition but as and when new excise policy is issued and if it lacks distance requirement in respect of religious places, educational institutions, industrial establishments, etc, he will challenge that (new excise policy) also.

Singh urged the Excise Department to prescribe at least 300 meters of distance from religious places and educational institutions for opening of new wine shops in the new excise policy which the Department is going to formulate soon.

JU inks MoU with Indian Adult Education Association

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 24: University of Jammu signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Indian Adult Education Association (IAEA), New Delhi.

In the signing ceremony, held in the Vice Chancellor's secretariat, Kailash Choudhary (Chief Advisor-IAEA), Prof L Raja President, Dean- Gandhigram Rural Institute, Gandhigram), Suresh Khandelwal (General Secretary-IAEA) and Kalpana Kaushik (Director-IAEA) were present on behalf of the IAEA whereas the university of Jammu was represented by Professor Umesh Rai (Vice Chancellor, University of Jammu); Prof Naresh Padha (Dean of

ing for a field-based Masters Programme in Rural studies.

It was also emphasized upon to explore the possibilities of engaging faculties from various streams for community-based university interventions in a meaningful manner. The dignitaries present also elaborated upon the common mandate (extension and field outreach) and the possibility of engagement for various academic ventures of mutual interest.

Dr. Jeevan Jyoti (Director-DLL) further underlines the utilisation of formal ties for strengthening the professional competence of students of field-dominant Master of Rural Studies.

Proceeding of the MoU was conducted by Dr. Priyanka Sharma, Faculty of the Department of Lifelong



JU VC displaying copy of MoU signed with Adult Education Association on Friday.

Academic Affairs JU), Professor Arvind Jasrotia, (Registrar JU) and Dr. Jeevan Jyoti (Director-DLL).

Detailed deliberations were held among the stakeholders for possible future endeavours and also reinstate the immense scope being offered under NEP-2020.

While speaking on the occasion, Prof Umesh Rai appreciated the Department of Lifelong Learning for taking the initiative for strengthening institutional ties for a meaningful University-community interface. He also thanked the IAEA for joining hands with the University of Jammu and committing to do hand-held-

Learning. The others present in the MOU signing ceremony were Dr. Vivek Sharma, Dr. Pallavi Sachdeva and Dr. Sandeep Singh. After formal signing of the MoU, the experts made a visit to the department and interacted with the students of the Department of Lifelong Learning and oriented the students about various ways and methods of engaging with rural communities in a professional manner. Further, the members also discussed the shared evolution of extension outreach and the possible domains of employment opportunities coming up for rural development professionals.

Seminar on 'Tourism as a Career' held

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 24: Department of Commerce, Govt SPMR College of Commerce here today under the guidance of Principal, Dr. Surinder Kumar and HoD Commerce, Prof. Barbara Kaul organized a seminar on the topic 'Tourism as a Career'.

The programme began with the felicitation function of the guests Dr. Suvidha Khanna, Associate Professor; Dr. Poonam Sharma, Lecturer and Shubham, Lecturer from School of Hospitality and Tourism Management (SHTM), University of Jammu.

An elaborated, well-explained lively interactive session was delivered by the resource person, Dr. Suvidha Khanna.



Students and faculty members at Govt SPMR College of Commerce posing for a photograph during seminar on Friday.

She shared immensely useful information and motivated the students for various prospects in Tourism and allied industries. The students were also made aware about various programmes offered by SHTM, University of Jammu.

The motive of the activity was to inspire the students to become skilful and independent entrepreneurs contributing

JCCI, trade bodies oppose property tax, warn to go for Jammu bandh

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 24: Strongly opposing imposition of property tax in J&K, the Jammu Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) and various other Trade bodies have warned the Government to withdraw the said order, otherwise, Jammu Chamber after consultation with Bar Association, transporters and civil society will go for indefinite Jammu bandh.

While addressing media persons here today, Gupta said that Government had last year decided to take this initiative, but JCCI played its role and took up this issue with the Government and successfully got it stalled. Now again, the government decided to implement the property tax w.e.f 1st April 2023 and issued a statutory order SO-87 in this regard.

Gupta further said that at present there is no land policy and we are of the firm opinion that Government should come up with a land policy so that the

people of Jammu and Kashmir can get the ownership rights / lease rights. At present, the people of Jammu are much disturbed by non-cooperative attitude of the government instead of giving relief to the general public, Government is imposing property tax.

The business community has outrightly rejected imposition

* Watch video on www.excelsiornews.com

of property tax in the meeting held on Thursday in Chamber House and the participants/presidents of different Bazar and Trade Associations unanimously opposed the implementation of Property Tax and demanded immediate withdrawal of this SRO. They were of the firm opinion that if the Government refuses to withdraw this SRO the Chamber would go for Jammu Bandh.

By imposing property tax the Government is of the view that by way of imposing the property tax, the Municipal Bodies and Local Bodies will get central aid which otherwise they are losing due to non-implementation of property tax. "We are of the firm opinion that the states where this property tax is applicable they are already developed state/UTs and our comparison with the nearby State/UTs cannot be justified," he added.

"If we compare the tax rates applicable in Chandigarh UT, this way we are comparing highly developed UT with our under developed UT, even where the basic amenities which are required by common people are not available here," he regretted.

"Chamber is of the firm opinion that this SRO should be withdrawn by the government to give a sigh of relief to the people of Jammu and Kashmir UT. And if the government fails to understand our feeling that we shall have no other option but to go for a bandh call by consulting civil societies, Bar Association and others," Gupta cautioned.

The event was conducted under the aegis of G20 Awareness campaign.

Friday following Me'raj-e-Alam observed in Kashmir

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Feb 24: The Friday following Me'raj-e-Alam was observed today across the Valley with great enthusiasm and fervor as devotees from all over thronged to major shrines to offer congregational prayers with the biggest gathering at Hazratbal.

One of the highlights of the day was the display of the relic of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) at the Hazratbal Shrine in Srinagar. Thousands of devotees had gathered at the shrine to have a glimpse of the relic, which is believed to be a hair strand of the Prophet (SAW).

Emotional scenes were witnessed at the shrine as devotees prayed and recited verses from the Holy Quran. Many were seen shedding tears of joy and gratitude for the opportunity to see the relic.

Authorities had made elabo-

rate arrangements for the smooth conduct of the event, with heavy security deployed across the Valley. The police and paramilitary forces were seen patrolling the streets and manning the checkpoints to ensure the safety of the devotees.

Me'raj-e-Alam is considered one of the most important events in the Islamic calendar and is observed by Muslims worldwide. It marks the night when Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was taken on a journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and then to heaven, where he met with previous prophets and was bestowed with the commandments of Allah.

The congregational prayers were also witnessed at Khanyar & Sarai Bala Dastgeer Sahab shrine, Khanqah-e-Maula, and other major shrines and masjids. The religious clerics on the occasion shed light on the teachings and lifestyle of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

AAP opposes Property Tax in absence of elected Govt in J&K

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Feb 24: The Aam Aadmi Party has strongly opposed imposition of Property Tax in Jammu & Kashmir in absence of elected Government in the Union Territory.

Addressing a joint press conference, AAP leader alleged that people were being harassed by bureaucratic regime by series of orders on daily basis on one context or the other in an autocratic style.

The press conference was addressed by Major General (Retd) R S Jamwal, State Manifesto Drafting Committee

"In such a situation, the Jammu & Kashmir can't be equated with other UTs or States in the matter of taxations, especially when no facilities of the like are available here," they added.

AAP leader alleged that people were being harassed by

* Watch video on www.excelsiornews.com

bureaucratic regime by series of orders on daily basis on one context or the other in an autocratic style. They leaders appealed people to remain united at all costs to agitate peacefully against anti-poor, anti-people & undemocratic actions of BJP sponsored LG regime.

The AAP leaders further said that the vital issues concerning people should not be taken in haste. Referring to anti-encroachment drive, they said that it was not understood as to why punishment was being inflicted upon small & poor dwellers, who have purchased 5 to 10 Marlas of land dully processed by Revenue authorities & completed legal process. They further said that when the big sharks were caught in the net belonging to BJP who encroached water bodies & state land then the drive was put on halt by the LG administration. This is double tactics adopted by the Government to save the land of blue eyed persons, they added.



AAP leaders addressing press conference at Jammu on Friday.

Member J&K-UT, Nirmal Manha, Party Spokes person J&K-UT & Kuldeep Kumar Rao, State Organization Building & Manifesto Drafting Committee Member J&K-UT

They said that the people of J&K are already distressed both economically & politically, in view of the long spell of terrorism & the prevailing security situation, coupled with the Central Government's experiments to deal with the problem, as a result the normal business & other activities remain derailed to great extent.