



Pir Panjal Winter Festival

Why in News?

[The Indian Army](#) inaugurated the [Pir Panjal Winter Festival](#) in Poonch, marking the beginning of a **two-month-long celebration** featuring a **diverse range of sports and cultural events**.

Key Points

- **Commitment to Youth and Social Reform:**
 - It was highlighted that the festival reflects the Army's strong commitment to **youth empowerment, cultural preservation, and social reform**, with a particular focus on raising awareness **against drug abuse**.
- **Diverse Sports and Cultural Events:**
 - **Sports:** Under-25 boys cricket tournament, Under-25 boys and Under-21 girls volleyball tournament, and an open Kho-Kho tournament for girls.
 - **Cultural Performances:** **Gujari and Pahari folk** dance performances, music and dance talent hunts, solo and group singing competitions.
 - **Academic and Creative Competitions:** Science and arts exhibitions, painting contests, essay writing, and elocution competitions.
- **Impact on Youth and Marginalized Communities:**
 - The initiative aims to **foster sportsmanship, cultural revival, and holistic development**, particularly among youth from remote and **marginalized communities** in Poonch.

Indian Army

- The Indian army **originated from the forces of the East India Company**, which later became the '**British Indian Army**', and eventually, after Independence, the **Indian Army**.
- The Indian Army was founded almost **126 years ago by the British on 1st April, 1895**.

Pir Panjal

- **About:**
 - The Pir Panjal Range is a **mountain range in the northern Indian subcontinent**.
 - It **begins in Ramban** and **extends westward**, lying south of **Jammu and Kashmir's Vale of Kashmir**, reaching Muzaffarabad District.
 - The range rises sharply to an **average elevation of over 13,000 feet (4,000 meters)**.
 - It **separates the Jammu Hills** in the south from the Vale of Kashmir, beyond which lie **the Great Himalayas**.
 - The range separates from the Himalayas near the banks of **the Sutlej River**.
 - It forms a natural divide between **the Beas** and **Ravi rivers** on one side and the **Chenab River** on the other.
- **Major Passes:**
 - The range has **six historical passes**, Hajipir Pass, Gulabgarh Pass, Ratanpir Pass, Pir Panjal Pass, Banihal Pass, Bairam Gala Pass.
- **Important Peaks:**
 - **Deo Tibba (6,001 m)** and **Indrasan (6,221 m)** are two significant peaks at the eastern

end of the range.

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