

CM inaugurates new residential block at Muthi, reviews ongoing housing projects in Jammu

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday inaugurated a newly constructed block of residential flats at Muthi, marking a major step towards strengthening the Government's housing infrastructure for its employees.

The Chief Minister formally opened the facility by cutting the ceremonial ribbon.

Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Additional Chief Secretary to the CM Dheeraj Gupta, Director General Estates Tariq Hussain Ganai, Deputy Director Estates Jammu Dr. Vikas Sharma, and other senior officers were present on the occasion.

The new block at Muthi comprises 28 one-room residential flats built as a Ground + 6 floors structure. Each compact unit includes a bedroom, lobby/living area, kitchen, and washroom—designed to efficiently meet the residential needs of employees while ensuring cost-effectiveness and optimal space utilization.

The Chief Minister inspected various flats, appreciated their aesthetics, and expressed satisfaction over the space



CM Omar Abdullah inaugurating new residential block at Muthi on Friday.

management evident in the construction. He hoped that the project would help in addressing the accommodation requirements of government employees.

During the briefing, DG Estates Tariq Hussain Ganai informed the Chief Minister that the project has been executed with a strong focus on functional design, structural safety, and affordability. He added that the department is undertaking a comprehensive plan to modernize old residential colonies in a phased manner.

DD Estates Jammu Dr. Vikas Sharma briefed the Chief Minister on the layout, amenities, and ongoing super-

vision mechanisms put in place to ensure quality control and timely completion of upcoming housing units.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister reaffirmed the Government's commitment to strengthening residential infrastructure and ensuring access to safe, secure, and well-planned housing for employees.

"Our aim is to bridge the gap in government accommodation by creating modern, sleek and employee-friendly residential spaces across Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

The Chief Minister later inspected the ongoing construction of 56 two-room residential flats—28 each at Ahata

Amar Singh and Sarwal. These Ground + 6 floor structures include two bedrooms, a lobby/living area, kitchen, and two washrooms, designed to meet the needs of employees with families. The projects are scheduled for completion in December 2025.

He directed the officers to ensure optimal use of available land, maintain high aesthetic standards quality in construction and phase out old and unsafe quarters to make way for new and improved residential facilities.

The Chief Minister observed that the combined 84 residential units coming up at Muthi, Ahata Amar Singh, and Sarwal will substantially

reduce the shortage of government accommodation. He emphasized that these initiatives aim to close the existing housing gap, provide employees with modern and better living environment, and promote fair and equitable allocation of residential facilities across different employee categories.

He appreciated the Estates Department for expediting construction across multiple locations and underscored the need to continue upgrading public infrastructure for the welfare of government employees.

3-day Conference-cum-Workshop concludes at BIRAC-BioNEST Incubator, Kathua Dr Jitendra lauds CSIR-IIIM for organising AI-Driven Innovations in Drug Discovery and Agriculture

STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHUA: The three-day Conference-cum-Workshop on "AI-Driven Innovations in Drug Discovery and Agriculture (AI-D2A 2025)" successfully concluded today at the BIRAC-BioNEST Incubator, Industrial Biotech Park, Ghatia, Kathua.

The event was organized under the aegis of CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (CSIR-IIIM), Jammu, BIRAC-BioNEST Incubator and CSIR-Jigyasaa.

Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology and Vice President CSIR, in a special video message, commended the Director, CSIR-IIIM Jammu, and the entire team for thoughtfully organising an event aligned with a futuristic theme—artificial intelligence-driven innovation in drug discovery and agriculture.

He noted that holding such a forward-looking event at the BIRAC-BioNEST Incubator Centre in Kathua adds special significance, as the border district serves not only Jammu & Kashmir but also Himachal Pradesh and Punjab.

Dr. Singh further said, "I must also compliment the organizers for bringing together 75 experts and participants from 14 institutions across the country. I am told that at least 20 local participants have returned home far more informed, motivated and inspired than before."

He added that the participation of 11 distinguished experts added tremendous value to the three-day proceedings, and emphasized the importance of organising such events outside major metros.

"Statistics show that out of 1.7 lakh start-ups in India today, nearly 49-50% emerge from tier-2 and tier-3 cities. Kathua, being a smaller town, holds immense unexplored potential. The new BIRAC-BioNEST Incubator Centre will serve as a major boost and a strong motivator for youth in the region. I am



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh virtually addressing workshop at Kathua.



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh virtually addressing workshop at Kathua.

confident CSIR-IIIM will continue to organize similar workshops and educational events," he said.

Dr. Zabeer Ahmed, Director, CSIR-IIIM, said that CSIR-IIIM, a premier research institution with strong capabilities in drug discovery, pre-clinical development, genetic improvement of medicinal and aromatic plants, and entrepreneurship promotion, is committed to integrating AI across these domains to nurture innovation.

Dr. Ahmed reiterated that under the guidance of mentorship of Dr. Jitendra CSIR-IIIM will continue organizing skill development programs and advanced vocational trainings at the BIRAC-BioNEST Incubator to empower youth and make the centre fully functional.

The final day of conference began with an insightful talk by Dr. Karan Nathwani from IIT Jammu on "AI is Ubiquitous," where he emphasized that future technology will belong to those who can harmonize AI with human creativity.

This was followed by live demonstrations on drone detection using acoustic and vision sensors, and weed detection through deep learning models, which greatly engaged participants due to their practical relevance in agriculture and environmental monitoring.

Dr. Amit Nargotra,

Convener of the Conference-cum-Workshop, expressed gratitude to all speakers, mentors and participants during the vote of thanks.

The 3-day conference hosted 11 distinguished domain experts, including Dr. P. C. Panchariya, Prof. Shandar Ahmad, Dr. M. Karthikeyan, Prof. Prabha Garg, Prof. Andrew Lynn, Prof. Nitin Upadhyay, Dr. Gitanjali Yadav, Dr. Richi Mahajan, Dr. Anju Sharma, Dr. Karan Nathwani and Dr. Saurabh Saran.

They delivered talks on AI models for genomics and transcriptomics, AI-driven cheminformatics for anticancer drug discovery, multidimensional AI strategies for therapeutics, and machine learning frameworks for predicting molecular interactions.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from 75 young researchers and students from 14 institutions, including SKUAST Jammu, University of Jammu, NIPER Mohali, Punjab Agricultural University, CSIR-CSMCI, CSIR-IGIB, ACBR (University of Delhi), Thapar Institute of Engineering & Technology Patiala, University of Horticulture and Forestry Solan, Savitha Dental College & Hospital Chennai and Govt College for Women Thiruvananthapuram.

In a significant step toward supporting local youth, 20 participants from Kathua—

including students from GDC Kathua and UIET (JU Kathua Campus)—were offered complimentary registration.

The conference was also live-streamed on CSIR-IIIM's social media channels, drawing strong virtual engagement.

AI-D2A 2025 was inaugurated on 13th November, with Dr. P. C. Panchariya, Director, CSIR-CEERI Pilani, as chief guest, and Dr. Surinder Kumar Atri, Principal, GMC Kathua, as guest of honour. The valedictory session and prize distribution marked the conclusion of AI-D2A 2025.

The event was organized under the patronage and supervision of Dr. Zabeer Ahmed, Director, CSIR-IIIM Jammu, with support from the scientific and administrative teams of CSIR-IIIM and the organizing committee including Er. Abdul Rahim, Dr. Asha Chaubey, Dr. Shashank Singh, Dr. Dhiraj Vyas, Dr. Sumit Gandhi, Dr. Qazi Naveed Ahmed, Dr. Rajkishor Rai, Dr. Prasoon Gupta, Dr. Amit Nargotra, Dr. Parvinder Pal Singh, Dr. Bhalwal Ali Shah, Dr. Saurabh Saran, Er. Shaghaf Ansari, Rajesh Gupta, Zahoor Wani, Ram Singh and Monika Gupta.

The valedictory session proceedings were conducted by Dr. Vidushi Abrol, followed by a formal vote of thanks by Dr. Amit Nargotra.

J&K Govt honoured with top achiever award in EoDB, BRAP at Udyog Samagam 2025 in New Delhi

STATE TIMES NEWS

DELHI: Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce Department, Jammu & Kashmir, Vikranjit Singh on Friday received an award on behalf of J&K Government for emerging as one of the top achievers under Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) and Business Reforms Action Plan (BRAP) 2024 at Udyog Samagam 2025, New Delhi.

The award was presented by Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal.

The Union Government, through Business Reforms Action Plan (BRAP) 2024, assessed States and Union



Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce Department, Jammu & Kashmir, Vikranjit Singh receiving award.

Territories across 25 reform areas driving ease of doing business. The BRAP 2024 assessment, covering 434 reform points, was supported by one of the largest national feedback exercises, involving

over 5.8 lakh businesses and more than 1.3 lakh detailed interviews.

Jammu and Kashmir ranked as a Top Achiever with 5th rank amongst all States and UTs with top score in 4/5

critical reform areas. This accolade reflects Jammu & Kashmir Government's commitment in creating a robust and enabling business ecosystem that accelerates industrial growth, facilitates investments, and ensures regulatory transparency and efficiency.

The recognition at Udyog Samagam 2025 reinforces J&K's position as a preferred destination for investors and industry stakeholders. Udyog Samagam 2025 brought together industry leaders, policymakers, and state officials to celebrate the spirit of cooperative federalism and collective progress in India's industrial landscape.

Omar vows to make Jammu Tawi Golf Course national golfing destination

Lays foundation stone of Indoor Swimming Pool, launches new tourism initiatives for Jammu

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday reiterated his government's resolve to position Jammu Tawi Golf Course (JTGC), Sidhra, as a premier national destination for golfers.

He made these remarks while addressing a felicitation ceremony organized for paragliders upon the completion of their training course at JTGC.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that while tournaments are being held in Srinagar, Pahalgam and Gulmarg, Jammu's golfing potential has not been promoted to the extent it deserves.

"Jammu's golf course is exceptionally beautiful and of high quality. We will work harder to promote it, host more tournaments, and ensure that JTGC emerges as a national golfing destination," he said.

He assured the people of Jammu that the government is making concerted efforts to secure the region economically and elevate its standing



CM Omar Abdullah addressing gathering in Jammu.

on the national tourism map. "Our commitment to Jammu is unwavering. Whether it is Jammu city, its surrounding areas, or the remotest parts of Jammu province, our endeavour is to ensure not just security but prosperity. We have taken several steps already, and many more are in the pipeline," he said.

The Chief Minister emphasized that Jammu possesses immense tourism diversity—heritage tourism, pilgrimage tourism, border tourism and adventure tourism—all of which require sustained promotion. "There is a need to bring

more people here, develop facilities further and unlock the full tourism potential of this region," he added.

Referring to the development of the golf course, he said, "I don't know what first inspired us to establish a golf course here—but Jammu deserves it. People here love golf as much as anywhere else, and this facility must be strengthened and promoted."

He also appreciated the introduction of new initiatives such as the enhanced tourist bus services. "The bus inaugurated today, linked to border tourism, is a special addition. We have always maintained that

Jammu's tourism must be nurtured across all fronts," he noted.

Earlier, the Chief Minister laid the foundation stone for a state-of-the-art Indoor Swimming Pool at JTGC, Sidhra—marking a major addition to sports infrastructure in the region. He also flagged off the Jammu Gedi Bus Service, an innovative transport initiative aimed at improving connectivity to major tourist destinations such as Surinsar-Mansar and Suchetgarh.

Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary, Minister for Transport Satish Sharma, Advisor to CM Nasir Aslam Wani, MLA Jammu East Yudhvir Sethi, Additional Chief Secretary to the CM Dheeraj Gupta, Director Tourism Jammu Vikas Gupta, and other senior officials were present during the event. The Chief Minister congratulated the paragliders on completing their course and encouraged them to serve as ambassadors of Jammu's adventure tourism potential.

Pulwama house of Dr Umar Nabi involved in Delhi blast demolished

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The house of Dr Umar Nabi, who drove the explosive-laden car involved in the Delhi blast, has been demolished by security forces in Pulwama district, officials said on Friday.

The demolition was carried out during the intervening night of Thursday and Friday, they said.

The car blast near Red Fort on Monday night claimed 13 lives and injured several others.

Umar was behind the



wheels of the Hyundai i20 that was laden with explosives. His identity was confirmed after DNA samples collected from the blast site matched with those of Dr Umar's mother.

Umar, who was known as an academically accomplished professional in his circle, allegedly turned radical over the past two years. Investigators said he had joined several radical messaging groups on social media. Further details were awaited.

Special training on annual survey of industries -data handling concludes

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Directorate of Economics & Statistics (DES), Jammu & Kashmir in collaboration with the Enterprise Survey Division (EnSD) of the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI) Kolkata and the Regional Directorate of Evaluation & Statistics, Jammu, successfully conducted a three-day Special Training Programme on Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) - Data Handling from 12th to 14th November, 2025 here at Directorate of Economics and Statistics.

The primary objective of the training was to enhance the technical capability of officers and staff of the Planning, Development & Monitoring Department in effectively managing ASI data to ensure accuracy, consistency and analytical rigor in statistical outputs. The programme also



Officials during the training programme in Jammu.

sought to enhance participants' understanding of the critical role that ASI data plays in evidence-based decision-making and policy formulation.

The resource persons for the event were Director, Dr. A.K. Panigrahi; Deputy Director, Ankita Mondal and Senior Statistical Officer, Rajarshri Bhowmick—all from the Enterprise Survey Division (EnSD), IS Wing, MoSPI, Kolkata. They presented live

demonstrations on ASI data handling using detailed presentations and ASI Schedules, offering participants practical, hands-on exposure to the process.

Earlier, the programme was inaugurated by Director General, Economics & Statistics, J&K, Satvir Kour Sudan, who underscored the pivotal role of ASI data in estimating the contribution of the industrial sector to the State Gross Domestic Product (SGDP). She emphasized that robust and

reliable ASI data forms the backbone of evidence-based policy making and plays a vital role in steering sustainable economic development across the region.

Regional Director (E&S) Jammu, Ashu Gupta encouraged the participants to make the sessions interactive and engaging. She highlighted the importance of collaborative learning and the real-time application of tools and techniques demonstrated during the programme.