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**Omar reiterates commitment...**

Ministers Sakina Itoo, Javaid Ahmad Dar and Satish Sharma, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary Finance Santosh D. Vaidya, Deputy Commissioners of the concerned districts, senior officers of the Finance Department and other concerned officials.

During the meeting, legislators from South Kashmir districts-Anantnag, Pulwama, Kulgam and Shopian-submitted various proposals focusing on infrastructure development and citizen-centric welfare initiatives in their respective constituencies. Similarly, MLAs from North Kashmir districts including Kupwara, Baramulla and Bandipora presented their demands and suggestions before the Chief Minister, seeking adequate budgetary allocations in the Budget 2026-27 for developmental works and public welfare initiatives.

The MLAs from South Kashmir districts who participated, both in person and virtually, included Peerzada Mohammad Syed, Ghulam Ahmad Mir, Bashir Ahmad Shah Veeri, Abdul Majeed Bhat, Altaf Ahmad Wani, Riyaz Ahmad Khan, Waheed-ur-Rehman Para, Hasnain Masoodi, Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Mir, Rafiq Ahmad Naik, Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami, Peerzada Feroze Ahmad, Shabir Ahmad Kullay, Zaffar Ali Khattana and Showkat Ahmad Ganai.

Similarly, MLAs who participated from North Kashmir districts included Saifullah Mir, Javed Ahmed Mirchal, Sheikh Khurshed Ahmed, Javaid Hassan Beigh, Farooq Ahmad Shah, Dr Sajad Shafi, Reyaz Javid Bedar, Irshad Rasool Kar, Irfan Hafiz Lone, Hilal Akbar Lone, Nizam-ud-Din Bhat and Nazir Ahmad Khan Gurezi.

The legislators sought enhanced budgetary allocations, particularly in the sectors of health, education, agriculture, horticulture, irrigation, road widening, community halls, youth-centric initiatives, sports infrastructure, employment generation and the establishment of fire stations in far-flung areas.

They also emphasized the need for dedicated allocations towards climate change mitigation measures to prevent loss of life and property during natural calamities, establishment of public libraries and skill development centres, and time-bound utilization of funds for the execution of developmental projects.

Additionally, the legislators stressed strengthening irrigation infrastructure and exploring the tourism potential of the region to create sustainable employment opportunities for local youth.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister assured the legislators that the suggestions and proposals put forth regarding developmental priorities would be given due consideration in the forthcoming budget. He reiterated the Government's commitment to balanced, inclusive and regionally equitable development across Jammu and Kashmir.

**Trade agreements opening...**

These trade agreements are bringing new opportunities for the youth of the nation," Modi said, addressing the job fair at 45 locations across the country via video conferencing.

Modi said India has the maximum number of youngsters in the world and his government was making efforts to create new opportunities for the youth within the country and abroad.

The prime minister urged the new appointees to consider the appointment letters as an invitation to join nation building and a pledge to work for creating a developed India.

He asked the youth to recall their experiences at government offices in previous years and urged them to resolve to not let such hardships affect citizens during their tenure.

Modi also urged the youth to work with the motto 'Nagrik Devo Bhava' (citizen is akin to God) while discharging their duties. The prime minister said in recent times, the government has made unprecedented investments in modern infrastructure, leading to increased employment across construction-related sectors.

He said that India's startup ecosystem was expanding rapidly, with nearly two lakh registered startups employing over 21 lakh youth.

Modi said 'Digital India' has expanded a new economy, with India emerging as a global hub in animation, digital media, and several other sectors.

"Today, the nation has embarked on the reform express, aimed at making both life and business easier," he said.

The prime minister said that next-generation reforms in GST have benefited youth entrepreneurs and MSMEs, while historic labour reforms have strengthened social security for workers and employees, benefiting businesses as well.

Modi stressed that the new labour codes have expanded and empowered the scope of social security.

A PMO statement said the Rozgar Mela is a key initiative aimed at translating this vision into action in line with the prime minister's commitment to accord the highest priority to employment generation.

Since its inception, more than 11 lakh recruitment letters have been issued through Rozgar Melas organised across the country, it said. The 18th Rozgar Mela was organised at 45 locations across the country, and newly recruited candidates, selected from all parts of India, joined various ministries and departments of the government. The new appointees will be serving in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Department of Financial Services, Department of Higher Education, among others.

**Over 944 MW load restored post rain, snow: JPDCL**

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: In the aftermath of incessant rainfall and heavy snowfall across various parts of the Jammu Division, Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited (JPDCL) has undertaken power restoration works on a war-footing to normalise electricity supply at the earliest.

As a result of restoration efforts, the power load of JPDCL has been progressively enhanced and has presently reached 944 MW, as against the normal average running load of approximately 1056 MW, reflecting significant improvement in supply conditions. At the Sub-Transmission level, 165 out of 181 numbers of 66/33 kV lines have been restored. Further, 440 out of a total of 483 Receiving Stations, accounting for 91% stand restored. Similarly, at the Distribution level, 987 out of 1373 numbers of 11 kV feeders have been restored. Further, 36,491 Distribution Transformers out of a total of 49,858, accounting for 73.19%, have been energised, while restoration of the remaining accessible feeders and Distribution Transformers is being taken up on priority basis.

Power supply in urban areas has been restored to a large extent, including essential and dedicated feeders catering to critical services. With improving weather and continuous ground-level monitoring, power supply in higher reaches and interior locations is expected to be restored progressively in the shortest possible time. JPDCL has mobilized manpower, machinery and material across the Division to assess damages and ensure early restoration of power supply in all affected areas. JPDCL is also maintaining close coordination with the district administrations to expedite restoration works, with special focus on remote and difficult terrains. The public is requested to bear with the temporary inconvenience, as all efforts are being made to restore normal power supply in a time-bound manner.

**IT Dept encadres 44 officials under J&K IT Services**

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir Information Technology department, has successfully encadred 44 officials of the department who were earlier appointed on substantive IT-related posts in various government departments across the Union Territory.

This encadrement marks the first major step in a phased process, wherein the remaining IT personnel shall also be brought under the ambit of the J&K IT Services, ensuring a comprehensive and structured cadre for IT professionals. In parallel, the Department is in the process of establishing dedicated IT Directorates at Jammu and Kashmir, which will further strengthen administrative control, technical oversight

and coordinated implementation of digital initiatives.

The present encadrement has resulted in the creation of clear promotion avenues for the officials, addressing long-pending issues related to career progression and service structure. It brings uniformity in service conditions and provides a defined professional hierarchy, thereby boosting morale and motivation among IT personnel.

This initiative represents a significant milestone in strengthening the institutional framework of IT governance in Jammu & Kashmir. A unified IT cadre will facilitate better human resource planning, optimal utilization of technical expertise, and improved delivery of e-Governance services, cyber security operations, data centre management, and adoption of emerging technologies.

The encadred officials have expressed their appreciation to the Secretary, Information Technology, Piyush Singla for his proactive leadership and sustained efforts in resolving long-standing cadre-related issues and steering institutional reforms within the IT ecosystem.

The Information Technology department reaffirms its commitment towards capacity building, cadre reforms, and institutional strengthening, emphasizing that a robust IT services structure and dedicated directorates are essential for ensuring secure, efficient, and citizen-centric digital governance across the Union Territory.

**CB files 17 FIRs in cases of fraud, official position misuse**

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: The Economic Offences Wing of Crime Branch Jammu has registered 17 FIRs in multiple cases of fraud, cheating, impersonation, forgery and misuse of official positions by government officials, the agency said on Saturday.

The FIRs were registered after preliminary verification by officials following written complaints, the Crime Branch of Jammu and Kashmir Police said in a statement here.

The complaints pertain to a wide range of fraudulent activities including irregular issuance of Permanent Resident Certificates (PRCs), bank loans using forged KYC documents, cheating by

promising to provide government jobs and issuance of fake appointment letters.

The allegations also include misuse of official position by public servants, tampering with public records, revenue matters, illegal financial gains, threats to complainants and causing wrongful losses to the government exchequer and financial institutions, the crime branch said.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Crime Branch, Economic Offences Wing, Jammu, Mohd Fiesal Qureshi advised citizens to remain vigilant and promptly report economic offences to the department, reaffirming his commitment to safeguard public trust.

**Sain Samaj Sabha Jammu observes 102nd Birth Anniversary of Bharat Ratna Karpoori Thakur**



**STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: Akhil J&K Sain Samaj Sabha, today observed the 102nd birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Jan Nayak Karpoori Thakur with great enthusiasm at Sain Samaj Bhawan, Rani Park, Jammu here.

Karpoori Thakur was born on January 24, 1924, in a poor Nai family in a village near Samastipur district of Bihar. His father was Gokul Sain and mother Ramdulari Devi.

Karpoori Thakur served twice as the Chief Minister of Bihar and once as Deputy Chief Minister, and

remained active in politics for a long time. During his political career, he introduced several landmark reforms, including the famous "Karpoori Formula" for providing reservation in government jobs to backward and weaker sections. He was widely regarded as a true leader of the poor and marginalized, which earned him the title Jan Nayak (People's Leader). He was posthumously conferred the Bharat Ratna by the Government of India on January 26, 2024.

Karpoori Thakur passed away on February 17, 1988, at the age of 64 in

**Home for the Aged & Infirm strengthens collaborative efforts for welfare of senior citizens**

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: The Home for the Aged & Infirm (Vridh Ashram), Ambphalla, Jammu had the privilege of hosting members of the Managing Committees of Asha Kiran Society, Jammu, and Hari Prabhu Sanstha, Nagrota, Gujroo, Jammu, who paid a meaningful visit to the institution with the shared objective of enhancing collective efforts for the care, protection, and dignity of senior citizens.

During the visit, members of both organizations engaged in constructive discussions with the Managing Committee of the Home for the Aged & Infirm, expressing deep concern for elderly persons who are neglected, abandoned, or left vulnerable due to lack of family support and social care.

The Managing Committees of Asha Kiran Society and Hari Prabhu Sanstha assured their full cooperation



and commitment to work more closely with the Home for the Aged & Infirm (Vridh Ashram), Ambphalla, Jammu. They pledged to actively identify senior citizens who are in need of care, shelter, and protection, and to recommend and facilitate their admission to the Old Age Home so that they may receive proper residential care, medical attention, emotional support, and a dignified living environment.

The Home Management emphasized that no senior citizen who requires care and protection should be left at the mercy of circumstances or dependent

on uncertain support, and reaffirmed their resolve to ensure that such elders are brought under organized institutional care with compassion and responsibility.

The Home Management expressed gratitude to both organizations for their empathetic approach and proactive assurance. Such collaborative efforts are a significant step toward strengthening the social safety net for vulnerable elderly persons and reaffirm the shared moral responsibility of society to honour, protect, and care for its senior citizens.

**CUJ organises Panel Discussion on "Drug Discovery: From Bench to Market"**



**STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: The Department of Chemistry and Chemical Sciences, Central University of Jammu, organized a panel discussion on "Drug Discovery: From Bench to Market", with the objective of strengthening scientific understanding, research orientation, and skill development among students.

The programme was graced by Dr. Ravi Shankar, Principal Scientist, CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (IIIM), Jammu, as the distinguished guest speaker. The event was held under the guidance of Dr. Sujata Kundan, Head, Department

of Chemistry and Chemical Sciences, Central University of Jammu, and was convened by Dr. Princy Gupta, Assistant Professor, Department of Chemistry and Chemical Sciences.

Dr. Ravi Shankar shared his inspiring academic and professional journey, from his MSc studies to his present role at CSIR-IIIM Jammu. He motivated students to pursue research with dedication and curiosity while elaborating on scientific and natural approaches to drug discovery. Emphasizing the importance of traditional knowledge systems, Dr. Shankar urged students to document medicinal knowl-

edge passed down through generations, particularly the use of medicinal plants. He stressed that such traditional knowledge must be scientifically validated and preserved to prevent its loss.

The panel discussion featured active contributions from research scholars Sakshi and Samridhi, along with MSc students Kritika, Utkarshini, Vanshika and Sameer, who shared their perspectives and engaged in meaningful discussions on various aspects of drug discovery and development.

The event ended with a formal vote of thanks presented by Dr. Princy Gupta, departmental coordinator of the program.

**Efforts underway to restore traffic on Srinagar-Jammu NH, other key roads**

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: Massive road clearance operations were underway to restore traffic on the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway and other key roads which remained closed for the second day on Saturday due to slippery conditions at different stretches following snowfall, officials said.

At the Srinagar airport, flight operations, which were suspended due to heavy snowfall before, resumed after snow was removed from the runway.

Meanwhile, hundreds of commuters were evacuated to safety and provided food and shelter by the Army, police and civil administration after they were left stranded on the 270-km Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, the only all weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country, the officials said.

Deputy Superintendent of Police, traffic National highway (Banihal), S P Singh said snow clearance operations on NH44

**Flights resume at Srinagar airport**

are in the final stages and the stranded vehicles on both sides will be cleared on priority.

While over 900 vehicles are stranded in Ramban sector of the highway, over 2,000 others, including trucks carrying essential commodities, are waiting for a green signal to move towards their destinations in Jammu, Udhampur, Kulgam and Anantnag districts.

"Some stretches of the highway along Ramsoo-Banihal sector are slippery, and the road clearing agencies are sprinkling salt and urea on the road to improve conditions for safe driving," the DSP said, adding that normal traffic is likely to resume once the stranded vehicles are cleared.

Amid unprecedented snowfall and extreme weather conditions affecting the NH-44 axis, Army once again demonstrated its unwavering commitment to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations,

extending timely support to stranded people, including tourists.

Troops from Nachlana Army camp responded swiftly to multiple distress situations caused by heavy snowfall, road blockages and sub-zero temperatures, an army officer said.

He said several vehicles carrying civilians and tourists were stranded along NH-44, leaving elderly persons, women, children and men exposed to harsh weather without adequate food, water or medical support.

Army personnel immediately reached the affected people and provided food, drinking water, hot tea and essential medical first aid, ensuring safety and relief to all those in need, the official said.

In a parallel operation, 32 martial arts cadets of Warriors Taekwondo Academy, accompanied by their coaches and parents, were stranded near Nachlana due to sudden and

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intense snowfall. "With no access to food, water or shelter, the group faced severe hardship especially the young children. Demonstrating compassion and professionalism, Army troops evacuated them to Nachlana Camp, where they were provided warm meals, drinking water, first aid, warm clothing and safe accommodation until weather conditions improved and snowfall subsided," the official said.

On a distress call from stranded passengers and local railway officials at Sangaldan Railway Station, the official said Army troops from Sangaldan Army Camp braved snow to provide essentials to 65 stranded passengers on Friday.

A traffic department official said besides Jammu-Srinagar national highway, the traffic on Mughal road, Sinthan top road, Srinagar-Leh national highway and dozens of other roads in various districts also remained suspended in view of the snowfall.

**Two drug peddlers arrested with heroin**

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

JAMMU: Continuing its sustained campaign against drug smuggling and narcotics abuse, Jammu Police achieved a significant success by arresting two drug peddlers in the jurisdiction of Police Station Bishnah.

The arrests were made during the investigation of FIR No. 15/2026 under Sections 8, 21, 22, 25 and 29 of the NDPS Act registered at PS Bishnah.

Acting on specific inputs, a police team intensified surveillance in the area.

During the operation, the police team led by SHO Police Station Bishnah, Inspector Rakesh Janwal intercepted an Innova vehicle bearing registration number PBDT-8788. On conducting a thorough search of the occupants, approximately 15 grams of heroin (Chita) like substance along with 20 Pologestic capsules were recovered.

The arrested accused have been identified as Sunil Kumar S/o Chaman Lal and Ajay Kumar S/o Sat Pal, both residents of Deoli, Bishnah. The recovered contraband and the vehicle used in the commission of the crime have been seized as per law. Both accused have been taken into police custody, and further investigation is underway to establish their supply chain, including forward and backward linkages in the narcotics network.

