

## !! Continuations from Page 1 !! CM lays foundation...

reviewed major road and bridge projects being executed by different agencies including BEACON, SAMPARK, NHAI, NHIDCL and PWD (R&B) across Jammu and Kashmir. A detailed presentation was made on rapid restoration of road connectivity, permanent restoration works, and revival of long-pending bridges, particularly in vulnerable and strategically important areas.

Expressing concern over delays, Omar Abdullah sought clear timelines for each project and took stock of the status of Right of Way (RoW) issues and forest clearances.

He instructed the concerned departments to expedite forest clearances in a coordinated manner, stressing that procedural delays should not become an excuse for missing deadlines.

The Chief Minister expressed displeasure over missing of timelines in several projects, directing the executing agencies to identify bottlenecks and address them immediately.

He emphasized that slow pace of work defeats the purpose of infrastructure development and causes avoidable inconvenience to the public.

Emphasizing that special attention be paid to public interest, Omar Abdullah directed agencies, particularly NHAI and NHIDCL, to ensure proper maintenance of existing roads where tunnel and major highway works are underway.

He further directed all executing agencies to take up the issue of forest clearances with the concerned Forest Department on a regular basis wherever new projects or works are proposed to be started, strictly in accordance with the provisions of the Forest Conservation Act (FCA). The Chief Minister stressed that early and continuous engagement with the Forest Department is essential to avoid delays at later stages of project execution.

The meeting also reviewed major achievements under Capital Expenditure (Capex) and the performance of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) for the year 2025-26. The Chief Minister stressed optimal utilization of funds and urged departments to ensure outcome-based planning and execution.

Expressing concern over the growing traffic congestion in urban centres, the Chief Minister instructed the department to prepare well-thought-out and technically sound Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for flyovers and road projects in the twin cities of Srinagar and Jammu.

Highlighting the importance of durability and climate resilience, the Chief Minister directed that all road projects must mandatorily include proper drainage systems.

"Without adequate drainage, rainwater damages roads and shortens their life. Drainage must be an integral part of every road project, not an afterthought," he instructed.

The Chief Minister concluded by reiterating that infrastructure development remains a key priority of the government, and directed all executing agencies to work in close coordination, maintain high quality standards, and ensure that projects translate into real and visible improvement in connectivity and public convenience.

Earlier, the Chief Minister inaugurated the renovated Conference Hall and allied facilities at the PWD Guest House, Gandhi Nagar. On the occasion, he also distributed appreciation letters among the engineers.

## MoRD approves revised...

meet the growing demand.

In view of this enhanced requirement, the Labour Budget has been revised to ensure continuity of wage payments and uninterrupted execution of development works. Accordingly, the agreed Labour Budget has been enhanced from 250 lakh persondays to 445 lakh persondays, against the current achievement of 287 lakh persondays.

The revised Labour Budget for FY 2025-26 aims to generate 4.45 crore persondays of employment. Labour budgets and shelves of projects for each Gram Panchayat were approved and uploaded on NREGAsoft prior to the commencement of the financial year, in alignment with the respective Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDs).

Secretary, RDD, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, stated that 2.24 lakh works have been identified under the Annual Action Plan, including special plans approved from September onwards for the restoration of assets damaged during recent floods. He added that over 60 per cent of the projects, in terms of cost, pertain to agriculture and allied sectors, aimed at strengthening rural livelihoods and creating durable community assets.

He further informed that 8,239 projects have been identified under the UT Convergence Plan, involving coordination with 19 departments and allied rural development schemes, to ensure optimal utilisation of resources.

Expressing gratitude to the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, on behalf of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, Aijaz Asad said that the revised Labour Budget is critical for ensuring adequate fund flow under the wage component and for enabling smooth, transparent and effective implementation of MGN-REGA (VB-G RAM G) across Jammu and Kashmir.

## Drug peddler booked...

Sharma and Adil Hussain – were travelling in a car when they were intercepted by police at a check point, leading to the recovery of the narcotic substance from their possession, he said, adding a case under relevant sections of NDPS was registered against them and further investigation is going on.

## NMC withdraws permission...

granted a letter of permission on September 8, 2025, to start the MBBS course. The letter of permission was subject to several conditions, including maintaining essential standards, allowing surprise inspections, providing accurate information and rectifying deficiencies before renewal, the order said.

The MARB had reserved the right to withdraw or cancel the permission in case of misrepresentation, non-compliance or failure to meet regulatory norms.

After the issuance of the letter of permission, the commission received multiple complaints alleging inadequate infrastructure, clinical material and qualified full-time teaching faculty and resident doctors at the college.

The complaints also pointed to an inadequate inpatient and outpatient load and poor bed-occupancy statistics, among other issues.

Acting under section 28(7) of the National Medical Commission Act, 2019, which empowers the MARB to conduct surprise evaluations of medical institutions without a prior notice, a team of assessors carried out an inspection at the college on January 2, 2026.

This inspection formed the basis of the subsequent adverse findings.

The assessment report highlighted extensive deficiencies in faculty strength, clinical material and infrastructure at the institute.

These included a 39-per cent deficiency in teaching faculty and a 65-per cent deficiency in tutors, demonstrators and senior residents against the prescribed requirement.

The patient load and clinical services were also found to be far below norms, with OPD attendance of 182 at 1 pm against the required 400 and bed occupancy at 45 per cent against the required 80 per cent.

Intensive care units reportedly had only about 50 per cent average bed occupancy, while the average number of deliveries was approximately 25 per month, which the MARB termed "grossly deficient".

Further, student practical laboratories in some departments and the research laboratory were not available.

Lecture theatres did not conform to the minimum standard requirements, the library had only 744 books against a requirement of 1,500 and just two journals against the 15 required.

The report also recorded the absence of an ART centre and facilities for the management of MDR-TB, as well as gross infrastructure deficiencies in some departments, including the lack of separate male and female wards.

Only two operation theatres were functional against the requirement of five, there was no minor OT in the OPD area and the equipment for para-clinical subjects was deemed inadequate.

The MARB cited Chapter V (Sanction and Penalty), Regulation 29 of the "Establishment of Medical Institutions, Assessment and Rating Regulations, 2023", which treats non-compliance by a medical college as an offence liable to be penalised.

The deficiencies enumerated in the inspection report were categorised as non-compliance under these regulations.

After considering the assessment, the commission concluded that the institute had failed to meet the minimum standard requirements specified in the UGMSR-2023 for establishing and running a medical college.

Consequently, with the approval of the NMC chairman, the MARB decided to withdraw the letter of permission with immediate effect.

In addition to withdrawing the letter of permission, the MARB has decided to invoke the performance bank guarantee furnished by the college, in accordance with the terms of the original permission. This step underscores the financial and regulatory consequences of non-compliance for the institution.

## Patwari caught red...

taken-up, the ACB said. During the investigation, an ACB team laid a trap and caught the accused red-handed while demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 5,000 from the complainant in the presence of independent witnesses, they said.

The accused was arrested on the spot after following due procedure and the bribe

money was recovered from his possession, the official said.

Searches were also conducted at the rented accommodation of the accused patwari at Sailan Talab, Udhampur, and at Basnote in Moungrri tehsil, in the presence of a magistrate, ACB said, adding that further investigation is underway.

## Controversial slogans at...

mark the anniversary of the January 5, 2020, violence in which a group of masked persons had entered the campus and unleashed mayhem by attacking students and teachers.

A purported video of the Monday protest showed students allegedly raising slogans against the prime minister and Union home minister after the Supreme Court refused to grant bail to Khalid, a former JNU student leader, and Imam in the 2020 Delhi riots conspiracy case.

The University has named several students, including current Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU) president Aditi Mishra, and said they were identified during the programme. It claimed that the slogans were "deliberate", "repeated" and had the "potential to seriously disrupt public order, campus harmony and security".

Mishra told PTI that every year, students hold a protest to condemn the violence that occurred on the campus on January 5, 2020.

"All of the slogans raised in the protest were ideological and do not attack anyone personally. They were not directed towards anyone," she claimed.

A letter written by the JNU administration to the SHO of Vasant Kunj (North) claimed that certain students raised "highly objectionable, provocative and inflammatory" slogans at an event on Monday that were in direct contempt of the Supreme Court and reflected a "wilful disrespect for constitutional institutions and established norms of civil and democratic discourse".

A senior police officer said that a probe has been launched following the complaint, adding that they will examine CCTV footage and videos of the event.

According to the letter, the University's Security Department said the programme was organised around 10 pm by students linked to the JNUSU. The gathering initially appeared limited to commemorating the January 5, 2020, incident, with around 30 to 35 students present.

The letter said that the nature of the event changed following a judicial verdict on the bail pleas of Khalid and Imam, after which some participants allegedly raised slogans, which the University termed "inflammatory and objectionable".

The administration claimed the slogans amounted to contempt of the Supreme Court and violated the JNU Code of Conduct.

"All stakeholders must understand the clear distinction between dissent and abuse and hate speech which lead to public disorder," a statement issued by the University registrar said.

Noting that the raising of such slogans is "wholly inconsistent with democratic dissent and violates the JNU Code of Conduct", the statement said such slogans have the "potential to seriously disturb public order, campus harmony and the safety and security environment of the university and the nation".

"JNU administration is setting up an internal inquiry on the matter. If students are found guilty of violating any rules or regulations, we will take disciplinary action against them," an official said.

Delhi ministers Kapil Mishra, Manjinder Singh Sirsa and Ashish Sood criticised the raising of controversial slogans at the JNU and accused the opposition parties of providing patronage to those involved in such activities.

In a post on X, Union Minister Kiren Rijju said. "Modi-Shah Ki Kabar Khrudegi ?? In a safe and free India, these people keep abusing the prime minister but seek freedom. INDIA will be free from such sick people !

"We live in a country where the prime minister is openly abused... yet these mentally ill people demand freedom."

## Four-tier integrated...

including national-level institutions such as IITs, IIMs, AIIMS, NITs, Universities, SKIMS and other professional institutions.

Emphasising employability, the Chief Secretary called for strengthening industry-academia linkages to ensure greater applicability and job orientation of skilling programmes, making them market-aligned and future-ready.

He further directed that the roadmap be circulated among various stakeholders including Universities, academic institutions and relevant government departments for comments and suggestions so that the final document becomes more effective and impactful in terms of outcomes.

Presenting the roadmap, Secretary, Skill Development Department, Kumar Rajeev Ranjan, informed that the plan will be implemented over the next five years, with the objective of empowering individuals across Jammu & Kashmir through industry-aligned skilling, ensuring inclusive growth, enhanced employability and long-term economic resilience.

Elaborating on the vision, the Secretary stated that the overarching goal of the roadmap is to empower every individual in Jammu & Kashmir to secure a gainful livelihood through market-aligned skilling, thereby unlocking opportunities in both the present and future economy.

The Secretary further divulged that the proposed outcomes include exposure to skilling for 6-7 lakh school students, structured skill courses for 2-2.5 lakh college students, and technical or short-term skilling for 5-6 lakh youth and working-age individuals, promoting lifelong learning across relevant trades. He added that the roadmap is structured around four integrated tracks, each addressing a specific stage of the skilling and employment lifecycle.

Detailing the implementation strategy, Director, Skill Development Department, Shahzad Alam, stated that the first track, 'Foundational Skilling in Schools', focuses on compulsory exposure to vocational and 21st-century skills for students from Classes 6 to 12th. He elaborated that the students will be introduced to trades, services, digital economy, local entrepreneurship and workplace readiness through structured modules, exposure visits, school-level skill hackathons and psychometric career assessments to help them identify their interests and capabilities in addition to academic performance. Dedicated coordinators, mobile skilling vans, teacher training led by SCERT, and school-level skilling committees will support effective implementation.

The second track, 'Career Launchpad in Colleges', targets college students, senior secondary pass-outs and fresh graduates. It proposes the introduction of minor skilling courses, summer internships, finishing school modules and accessible coaching for competitive examinations such as JEE and NEET.

Under this track, stackable and high-demand courses will be delivered in blended mode. Academic credits for skilling, stipends for internships and structured placement support will help bridge the gap between education and employment. Governance will be ensured through college skilling committees and apex-level administrative monitoring.

The third track, 'Industry-Ready Technical Skilling', focuses on strengthening ITIs, polytechnics and technical institutions through a hub-and-spoke model, diversified course offerings, introduction of dual systems of training and flexible entry-exit pathways aligned with NSQF levels. Under this track Polytechnics are proposed to evolve into a J&K Skills University framework, supported by centres of excellence, faculty development programmes, infrastructure upgrades and strengthened apprenticeship linkages with MSMEs.

The fourth track, 'Upskilling and Lifelong Learning', addresses the needs of the existing workforce and the informal sector. It promotes short-term skilling convergence, mid-career skill upgradation and competitive examination preparation under the Lakshya Scheme, with special focus on the 30-45 age group.

## EC has power...

the EC's authority in the field of revision of electoral rolls.

"The field is not totally foreclosed," Dwivedi submitted, asserting that the EC retains constitutional competence to ensure the purity of the electoral rolls.

Tracing the evolution of the franchise, the lawyer took the bench through colonial-era electoral practices, beginning with the introduction of separate communal electorates in 1909 and the limited franchise under the Government of India Acts, where only about 15 per cent of the population had voting rights.

He submitted that the expansion of the franchise was a core element of India's freedom struggle. "Not only Article 326, but the entire Constitution, when it speaks of a democratic republic, reflects an intention to create a citizen-centric polity," Dwivedi argued.

## Cold conditions return...

Kashmir's tourist resort of Pahalgam, the mercury settled at a low of minus 6.8 degrees Celsius. Qazigund, the gateway town of the valley, recorded a minimum temperature of minus 3 degrees Celsius. Kokernag recorded a low of minus 2 degrees Celsius and Kupwara minus 3.1 degrees Celsius.

## Special Judge NDPS bereaved

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A condolence meeting was held on Tuesday in the office chambers of the Principal District and Sessions Judge Jammu to pay homage to the mother of Parvaiz Iqbal, Special Judge, NDPS Cases, Jammu, who recently passed away.

All Judicial Officers attended the meeting and observed a two-minute silence to pray for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

## Teen detained in Punjab for sharing information with Pakistani handlers

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

CHANDIGARH: A 15-year-old boy from Pathankot has been detained for allegedly sharing sensitive information with handlers in Pakistan, police said on Tuesday. The teen belongs to Bari Brahmna area in Jammu and Kashmir close to Pathankot.

Police received intelligence inputs that the boy was in contact with and providing information concerning the country's security to Pakistan military officers, ISI and frontal organisations running terror modules in that country, said Pathankot Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Daljinder Singh Dhillon.

Punjab Police detained him on Monday and his questioning is underway, the SSP told reporters in Pathankot.

His mobile phone contains contact numbers of anti-national elements and terrorists based in Pakistan with the intent to spread unrest in India, officials said.

Sensitive information, photos, videos, and espionage-related material concerning Indian Army locations were stored in his phone and he was reportedly roaming in Punjab's Madhopur area after coming from Jammu and Kashmir.

Accordingly, a case under various sections of the Official Secrets Act was registered. The SSP said the boy visited many social media platforms and fell into the trap of Pakistani agencies. He had been in touch with them for the past one year.

Pakistani agents created a clone of the boy's mobile phone, Dhillon said, adding that the teen savvy juvenile had videographed important locations and taken information. The SSP said there was a possibility that Pakistani agencies and handlers took the information live while the teen was recording videos of strategic places as his phone had been compromised. He is also alleged to have been in touch with gangsters running a terror module, Dhillon said. "Had we not apprehended him, in future he could have carried out any kind of activity," he said.

## 2 theft cases worked out; 5 accused arrested, gold items worth rupees 7.4 lakh recovered

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SAMBA: Samba Police has successfully worked out two theft cases of gold ornaments registered at Police Station Samba, arrested five accused including two receivers of stolen items and recovered approximately 59.31 grams stolen gold items valuing worth Rs 7,47,306.00 approximately from their possession along with cash of Rs. 1,04,500.00.

In December 2025, a written complaint was lodged at Police Station Samba by one lady Parmilla Sharma W/o Late Vipin Khajuria R/o Samba regarding theft of gold ornaments from her residence. Acting upon the complaint, a case FIR No. 312/2025 u/s 305 BNS was registered at Police Station Samba and investigation started.

During the course of investigation, a Police team of PS Samba after relentless efforts has apprehended one suspect who upon sustained questioning confessed his involvement in the instant case. The arrested accused has been identified as Shubham Kumar S/o Sanjeev Kumar R/o Vaishali (Bihar) presently residing at Chowhata Samba.

Upon further interrogation, the said accused confessed his involvement in another theft case registered at PS Samba under FIR No. 286/2025 u/s 305 BNS related to the theft of gold ornaments from the residence of Shakuntla Devi W/o Late Avinash Chander R/o Main Bazar Samba.

The accused also disclosed the involvement of two more persons in the sale and disposal of the stolen gold ornaments in case FIR No. 312/2025. Acting swiftly on the disclosure, accused namely Sahil Kumar S/o Subhash Chander R/o Bantalab Samba and Deepak Kumar S/o Tarlok Nath R/o Har Singh Chowk Samba, a goldsmith who acted as the receiver of stolen items have been arrested.

Further investigation revealed the involvement of two accused persons in connection with FIR No. 286/2025. The accused persons identified as Pawan Kumar @ Sourav R/o Vaishali, Bihar A/P New Bus Stand Samba and a goldsmith namely Aman Verma S/o Manohar Lal Verma R/o Billawar district Kathua who was the receiver of stolen items have been arrested.

During the investigation, an amount of Rs 1,04,500.00 was recovered from the accused persons. In addition, the stolen gold ornaments weighing approximately 59.31 grams valuing worth Rs 747306.00 approximately was also recovered and seized by the Police. The recovered gold items include One gold chain weighing approximately 17.81 gm; Two gold Jhumke with stone weighing approximately 4.13 gm; Two gold rings weighing approximately 3.08 gm; One gold ring with stone weighing approximately 4.54 gm; One pair of gold tops weighing approximately 1.5 gm; Two gold bangles weighing approximately 16 gm; One gold kada with two ear rings weighing approximately 12.25gm.

The investigation of the case has been conducted by the police under the supervision of SHO PS Samba, DySP DAR Samba and under the overall supervision of SSP Samba.

## Drug peddler held with 211 grams of Charas

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

KISHTWAR: Continuing its sustained and intensified drive against drug trafficking, District Police Kishtwar achieved another significant success by arresting a drug peddler and recovering 211 grams of charas-like narcotic substance during routine patrolling in the Malipeth-Bus Stand area of Kishtwar.

While sharing the details, SSP Kishtwar, Sh. Naresh Singh-JKPS, stated that a police party from Police Station Kishtwar, headed by SHO PS Kishtwar, Insp. Firdous Ahmed, and assisted by PSI Arush Sharma, was conducting routine patrolling in the areas of Malipeth, Bus Stand area under the supervision of Addl. SP Kishtwar, Sh. Pardeep Singh Gorla-JKPS, and Dy. SP Hqrs Kishtwar, Dr. Ishan Gupta-JKPS. During the patrolling, upon reaching near Bus Stand Kishtwar, the police party noticed one individual moving suspiciously. Acting promptly, the police party apprehended the suspect. Upon conducting his personal search, 211 grams of charas-like substance was recovered from his possession and the accused has been arrested on the spot. During preliminary questioning, the accused disclosed his identity as Mohd Rajab S/o Mohd Anwar Naik R/o Sarawan, Keshwan.

Accordingly, FIR No. 05/2026 U/S 8/20 NDPS Act has been registered at Police Station Kishtwar. Further investigation is underway to trace the source of the contraband and to identify other persons involved in the illegal drug trade.

## Vehicles seized under various MVD violations

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SURANKOTE: In order to strengthen road safety and ensure strict compliance with traffic laws, Police Station Surankote today launched a special enforcement drive against vehicles operating with outside-state registration, without registration numbers, and without valid documents. During the course of the ongoing drive, police teams conducted thorough checking at multiple locations within the jurisdiction of PS Surankote. As a result of this focused action, a total of 23 vehicles were seized for various violations of the Motor Vehicles Act. The seized vehicles include 12 Motorcycles; 05 Tractor Trolleys; 06 LMVs, including cars and minibuses. Out of the total seized vehicles, 06 were outside-state registered vehicles found operating without proper authorization and requisite documentation.

## 4 vehicles loaded with khair wood & illicit firewood seized

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHUA: J&K Police Kathua under the overall supervision of SSP Kathua Ms. Mohita Sharma IPS seized a total of 04 vehicles i.e 03 vehicles loaded with illicit firewood and 01 loaded with 18 logs of Khairwood from Rajbagh, Hamirpur, Jakhole, and Marheen area of PS Rajbagh during late night naka checking in last 10 days.

In the first Instance, on 27/12/2025 police team of PS Rajbagh during naka checking in Hamirpur intercepted one Tractor Trolley loaded illicit Firewood.

In the second instance, on 30/12/2025 Police team led by PSI Arvinder Singh IC PP Jakhole during naka checking in its jurisdictional area noticed one suspicious Vehicle(Truck) bearing Reg. No. JK02AH-0195 driven by Jagdev Singh S/o Karnail Singh R/o Prehta Tth Basohli Kathua carrying firewood illegally without any permission got seized.

In the third instance, on 06/01/26 police team of PP Marheen led by IC PP Marheen PSI Gulshan Partap Singh also intercepted one safari Car bearing Reg. No. PB35M-2122 loaded with 18 Logs Of Khair Wood at Marheen area.

In the fourth instance, on 06/01/26 police team of PS Rajbagh during naka checking intercepted one Truck bearing Reg. No. JK02AF-6145 loaded with Firewood seized at Hamirpur area.

During their checking by police teams, one Safari car loaded with 18 Logs of Khair Wood and remaining 03 Vehicles(02 Trucks & 01 Tractor Trolley ) were found loaded with illicit Firewood.

On questioning the drivers of these vehicles failed to produce any valid documents regarding the ownership as well as the transportation permission of the forest produce loaded in these vehicles.

Consequently, all these 04 vehicles along with forest produce were seized on the spot and handed over to the Forest Department Officials for further course of action.

The whole operation was carried out by SHO PS Rajbagh Insp. Ajay Singh Chib under the close supervision of SP Ops Kathua Mukund Tibrewal IPS and SDPO Border Dheeraj Katoch.