

!! Continuations from Page 1 !! Pampore gas turbine...

in a phased manner, with 5 MW to be developed in the first phase on approximately 200 kanal (25 acres) of vacant land at GT-Pampore.

The JKSPDC has appointed the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) as the project-implementing agency for the turnkey implementation of the project, which, when completed, will be the largest utility-scale solar power plant in Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

Abdullah said the tendering process initiated by the SECI is at an advanced stage and the construction of the project is likely to start by the year-end.

He said the plant being developed is a grid-tied power plant, meaning it is designed to connect to the main electric grid and cannot operate in isolation.

"As such, there is no specific provision to allocate a percentage of the power generated to the inhabitants of Pampore town. However, the power generated by this plant will contribute to enhancing the overall generation capacity of Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

Responding to a separate starred question from NC legislator Mubarak Gul, Abdullah said Jammu and Kashmir had an estimated solar potential of 111 GW, most of which was in the Ladakh region that was carved out as a separate Union Territory after the bifurcation of the erstwhile state in August 2019.

"Mega-size solar power projects being land intensive in nature have not been developed in Jammu and Kashmir till date as identification of feasible land banks (500 acres for a 100-MW solar park) at single locations for their development is difficult because of the topography of the Union Territory," he said.

However, he said a cumulative capacity of 75 MW of rooftop solar power plants has been installed across all sectors in Jammu and Kashmir under various schemes and projects, mostly sponsored by the Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.

The individual capacities of these rooftop plants range from 2 kWp to 200 kWp, he said, adding that presently, these plants are being installed on residential households by DISCOMs of the Union Territory under the Pradhan Mantri Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana.

Speaker announces House...

several Legislators regarding constitution of a House Committee since start of the Budget session. "House is supreme and there is no harm in formation of a House Committee to Probe the alleged irregularities in JJM," maintained the Speaker:

Maurya Empire in...

Literature, Enterprises to Spirituality, there is hardly any area of life where the people of Bihar have not left their mark with their innovative ideas and hard work," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Addressing the gathering, the Lieutenant Governor highlighted the cultural, educational and spiritual legacy of Bihar, and paid homage to the great personalities of the state.

The Lieutenant Governor said, "The presence of many holy places like Baba Bajjnath Dham, Gaya, Vishnupad Temple, Janaki Temple, Bodhgaya, Takht Shri Harimandir Sahib Ji, Kundagram, Papawuri in one state is no less than a divine blessing in itself.

In ancient times, Bihar had become a major centre of higher education. Students from all over the world came to study at Nalanda University and Vikramshila University. The library of Nalanda University was considered as the largest library in the world.

There is a long list of Buddhism pilgrimage sites, including Bodhgaya, Rajgir and Griddhakuta, where Mahatma Buddha gave most of his sermons.

Bihar is also considered one of the most prosperous states in the field of literature. From Chanakya, Banbhhatta, Aryabhhatta, Vidyapati to Phanishwarnath Renu, Ramdhari Singh Dinkar and Baba Nagarjun in modern times, Bihar has been the karmbhoomi of great writers".

The Lieutenant Governor also spoke on the development journey of Bihar, and its contribution to India's growth.

"If we look at the history of Bihar after independence, it was one of the most developed states of the country. The draft of the first five-year plan was prepared in July 1951. The report mentions that during that period, only three regions in the country were the best in providing the necessary training for small industries, financial support and better management of the industry and workers and they were - Bihar, Mumbai and Chennai.

For many decades, Bihar had maintained the glorious tradition of producing a large number of IAS, IPS and other administrative service officers, who have made immense contribution in the nation-building and inspired many generations", the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor hoped that the people of Bihar continue to work dedicatedly for a developed Bihar and a developed India.

"Bihar has once again become vibrant in the 21st century. Today, Bihar has not only emerged as a major power in developed India but is also competing with developed states in terms of industrial development. I pray for good health, well-being and prosperity of the people of this blessed land," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Senior officials, Heads of various Educational Institutions, Students and the residents of Bihar living in J&K UT were the special invitees on the occasion.

Bids invited for...

Parvatmala initiative. "...a list of 52 ropeway projects to be taken up for development in J&K was shared by the government and out of these projects as reported by NHLML, bids have been invited for development of a 1.05 km ropeway project for Shankaracharya temple (in Srinagar). The project is currently under bidding and clearances are under process," he said.

The chief minister said a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed on April 4, 2022 between the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and the Jammu and Kashmir government of for execution of ropeway projects under Parvatnala scheme.

Bids have been annulled by the NHLML for the development of 2.12 km ropeway from Darshan Deepdi to Shivkhori temple in Reasi district due to an ongoing court case, he added.

Abdullah said bids have been invited through NIT on January 25, 2025 by the NHLML for preparing DPRs for the development of Baltal-Amarnath cave, 8.80 kms Bhaderwah to Seojhdar ropeway in Doda and 1.60 km Sonamarg-Thajiwas glacier ropeway.

While lakhs of pilgrims visit Amarnath cave shrine during the annual pilgrimage, Seojhdar and Sonamarg are tourist resorts attracting a good number of holiday makers round-the-year.

The chief minister said bids for preparation of DPRs for Parihas to Diskhal ropeway project in Doodhpathri resort and Sutharan to Tosamaidan meadow in Budgam and Nashri Tunnel to Sanasar lake in Ramban are also being invited by the NHLML. In case of Karchiall to Wasamarg ropeway project in Ramban, pre-feasibility study is underway through the NHLML, he said.

LA passes grants...

Reflecting on the achievements, he informed that major strides have been made in implementation of the Mission during the past 02 ½ years and more than 1400 (43%) Water Supply Schemes have been completed till date and out of remaining 1853 schemes, about 1500 schemes have recorded a progress of more than 50 percent.

Regarding the expenditure incurred, he said that it has picked up from Rs 441 crore on ongoing works in initial 03 years to 6560 on new works, in the past 03 years.

"J&K which languished at the bottom is now figuring at 5th in the overall functionality assessment conducted by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, GoI, through a third-party agency. The overall functionality of J&K has improved from 53 percent in the year 2022 to 74 percent in 2024," he said. He added that J&K is ranking first in the Water Quality Monitoring and Surveillance at the National level.

"All the 22 water testing laboratories at the UT and State Level have been NABL accredited for a robust water quality monitoring mechanism," he added.

Field Testing Kits (FTKs) have been distributed among the local communities for conducting tests of water samples on their own, for which more than 37000 women have been trained for use of FTKs.

Rana said that every measure has been taken to ensure that the quality of pipes is appropriate and the quality check through reputed agencies is being done at the manufacturing site and by the Departmental Committee on receiving the material at the central stores.

The Minister said that transparency, accountability and quality control mechanism in implementation of the Mission has been given top priority and a slew of measures have been taken to ensure the same.

Rana also gave details about the funds allocated for Water Supply Schemes under other sources like NABARD Schemes (PHE Sector), Water Supply Scheme AIIMS Awantipora and AIIMS Vijaypur:

"The department is purchasing 10 fresh tankers to augment the existing fleet to ensure the department is better equipped to tackle water shortages and meet the

needs of our citizens" he maintained.

Talking about the Irrigation and Flood Control Sector (I&FC), he said the department is committed towards expanding the irrigation coverage, supporting the farmers who cultivate Kharif and Rabi crops through existing infrastructure upkeep, enhancing irrigation potential, and implementing new projects.

He said that to increase the area under assured irrigation, we're collaborating on strategic initiatives, with Major irrigation projects funded under PMKSY-AIBP and Minor Irrigation Projects covered under PMKSY HKKP.

Rana further said that under NABARD loan assistance, 12 projects amounting Rs 177 crore have been cleared under RIDF 30. These projects comprised 8 irrigation sector projects and 4 flood sector projects, all set to commence in 2025-26. He called for a collaborative approach to work together to create a water-secure future, for the present times and for generations to come.

While talking about the Forest, Ecology & Environment, Javed Rana said that the department is set to achieve the target of planting 150 lakh plants during the year 2024-25 under the programme "Ek Ped Ma Kae Naam", launched by Prime Minister. He said that the department's continuous efforts have led to positive results, as J & K recorded a net increase of 91.25 sq. km in forest and tree cover as per the Indian State of Forest Report 2023.

"During the current financial year, 16,251 lakh cft Timber was extracted and 13.67 lakh cft supplied by the J&K Forest Development Corporation. Further, 1.09 lakh cft timber has been supplied from Concessional Timber Sale depots and Fair Price Supply Divisions in 2024-25," he said.

The Minister also said that the department is updating the State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC) to address regional climate projections. This included assessing the sector and community vulnerabilities and integrating adaptation and mitigation strategies for resilience. The plan outlines 55 mitigation and 98 adaptation measures to be implemented by various departments by 2030, he said.

Regarding implementation of Forest Rights Act, 2006, Rana said that 6,058 claims have been settled in J&K, comprising 348 individual and 5,710 community forest rights claims.

To ensure systematic forest land diversion for development activities, cases are processed online through the PARIVESH portal. "So far, 2,775 forest clearance cases have been received, with 1,159 Stage-I approvals and 507 final approvals granted, leading to the diversion of 629.95 hectare," he said.

The Minister said that the J & K Pollution Control Committee (JKPCC) has taken key steps to improve the Ease of Doing Business by extending the Consent validity period for industries and adopting a revised industry classification.

"The validity of Consent to Operate has been increased from 8 to 10 years for Orange category industries and from 12 to 15 years for Green category industries, while Consent to Establish is now valid for 5 years, extendable by 2 years. The revised classification, adopted in January 2025, promotes cleaner industries by reclassifying less polluting units to the Green category and placing pesticide formulation units under the stricter Red category," he said.

Talking about Wular Lake, the largest freshwater wetland in Asia and a Ramsar site, Rana said that it is undergoing major restoration with a focus on ecotourism and local livelihoods.

Given the growing challenges of soil erosion and water scarcity, the Minister said that soil and water conservation has become crucial. "Check dams, slope stabilization, and water harvesting structures are planned in coordination with Agriculture, Rural Development, and Irrigation & Flood Control Departments to recharge groundwater and prevent erosion," he asserted.

The Minister also highlighted the need for conservation of Wildlife saying that the Wildlife protected areas are being managed scientifically with approved plans, regular patrolling and strict enforcement of the Wildlife Protection Act.

"The Department of Wildlife Protection has set up 42 control rooms across J&K to prevent poaching and human-wildlife conflicts. To strengthen manpower across all wings, the Forest Department is ensuring timely recruitment through selection agencies and fast-tracking promotions," he added.

The Minister said that the Kashmir Forest Training School is being upgraded to improve infrastructure and increase training capacity. A proposal for financial assistance will be submitted to the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India, he added.

Regarding the Tribal Affairs Department, Javed Rana said that the government pursues integrated Social, Economic, Educational, Cultural Development of tribal communities through several schemes. He said that the department is mandated to conduct research studies and document tribal-related matters. He said that the department envisages welfare of tribal population through key schemes and programs.

Rana said that the tentative budget provision for Dharti Abha Janjatiya Gramin Utkarsh Yojana (DA-JGUA) for the financial year 2025-26 is Rs 30.44 crore. "The Scheme included 25 interventions from 17 departments and will initially cover 393 villages in 20 districts with at least 50 percent ST population or 500 ST individuals," he said.

The Minister said that J&K Tribal Research complex has been established at Khimber Srinagar with a cost of Rs 11.50 crore which aims to serve as a think tank for tribal development with a focus on research, cultural preservation, capacity building, and awareness programs.

In the upcoming financial year, the Tribal Research Institute (TRI) Jammu and Kashmir will expand its efforts in Research, Cultural Preservation, and Socio-economic Development of tribal communities. "Key initiatives included comprehensive ethnographic studies, a digital tribal archive, and a National-level tribal festival to showcase heritage and foster economic opportunities," maintained the Minister.

He said TRI will also promote Tribal entrepreneurship, integrate tourism with heritage conservation, and strengthen the implementation of the Forest Rights Act through advisory roles.

To promote education among the tribal students, the Minister informed that the department operates 28 hostels housing 2,885 students. "Five new hostels are ready to be functional with 25 more hostels under construction at an estimated cost of Rs 89.21 crore, of which, five shall be completed during 2025-26," he added.

The Minister said that six Eklayaya Model Residential Schools (ERMS) have been made operational in Poonch, Rajouri, Kulgam, Anantnag and Bandipora and 11 more have been proposed for establishment during 2025-26 for providing quality education to ST children in remote areas.

He also said that a scholarship amounting Rs 12 crore shall be provided to around 16000 ST students under Post- Matric Scholarship and Rs 2.43 crore to 8100 ST students under pre-matric scholarship (8th& 9th classes) and Rs 12 crore to 1.5 lakh students under pre-matric category.

Javed Rana said that three Transit accommodations for the transhuman tribal population at Thanamandi (Rajouri), Dalwas (Ramban) and Dubjan (Shopian) shall be completed during 2025-26 with a cost of Rs 7.95 crore.

For effective implementation of Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) through JKRLM, the Minister said that an amount of Rs 14.57 crore shall be transferred to JKRLM. In order to strengthen medical facilities in Tribal Units, six Mobile Medical Units are being procured at a cost of Rs 4.52 crore.

The Minister informed that 10 Milk Villages are targeted for completion during 2025-26 with an allocation of Rs 800 lakh covering 410 ST beneficiaries.

For providing quality education to the Tribal children on modern lines, the Minister said that 50 schools in tribal areas shall be upgraded as Smart Schools with the facilities of Interactive Whiteboards & LED Panels, Digital Podiums, Smart Libraries, RO Drinking Water & Sports equipment with an estimated cost of Rs 3.0 crore.

The department will work to augment the manpower at all levels and will undertake steps for completion of the Tribal Bhawan and Museum in Jammu during the year 2025-26. He said that the Tribal Affairs Department will also coordinate formulation of Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) by various government departments in terms of guidelines of NITI Aayog.

The cut motions on Demands for Grants were withdrawn by the MLAs.

Legislators, Shamima Firdous, Mian Mehar Ali, Chander Prakash Ganga, Mir Saifullah, Ghulam Ahmad Mir, Choudhry Vikram Randhawa, Abdul Majeed Bhat, Altaf Ahmed Wani, Mohan Lal Bhagat, Engineer Khurshed Ahmed, Vijay Kumar Sharma, Basheer Ahmad Shah Veeri, Dr. Mohammad Sajjad Shafi, Muzaffar Iqbal Khan, Iftikhar Ahmed, Yudhvir Sethi, Javaid Iqbal Choudhary, Mehraj Malik, Choudhary Mohammad Akram, Mohd Shaif Uri, Reyaz Ahmad Khan, Shagun Parihar, Ajaz Ahmed Jan, Thakur Randhir Singh, Dr Rameshwar Singh, Salman Sagar, Arvind Gupta, Peerzada Muhammad Syed, Mir Muhammad Fayaz, Ali Mohammad Dar, Sunil Bhardwaj, Saifuddin Bhat, Sheikh Khurshed, Baldev Raj Sharma, Mohammad Yusuf Tarigami, Zafar Ali Khatana, Dilip Singh Parihar, Irfan Hafiz Lone, Balwant Singh Mankotia spoke on the Demand for Grants and put forth their views and suggestions. Later, the House passed the Demand for Grants moved by Javed Rana by voice-vote.

CB books several...

"Their actions prima facie constituted offenses under sections 420 and 120-B of the Indian Penal Code. A formal case has been registered at the Police Station SCW, Crime Branch Jammu, against the named accused, and the investigation has been entrusted by SSP SCW Sanjay Parihar to Inspector Tariq Hussain, IO SCW Jammu," the official said.

In a separate incident, the official said, another complaint was received regarding

GRS Shafket Ali, who allegedly credited wages for skilled workers under the MNREGA scheme illegally.

"It was reported that Ali misrepresented the names of material suppliers, including transferring funds to deceased individuals. The complainant further alleged that although Rs. 2 lakhs was sanctioned for work in a specific ward, no work was carried out," the official said.

"The preliminary investigation further indicated that Shafket Ali mismanaged official funds for personal gain, resulting in wrongful loss to the state exchequer. His actions have been classified as offenses under sections 420 and 406 of the Indian Penal Code," the official said.

As a result, the official added, a formal case has been registered at Police Station SCW, Crime Branch Jammu, against GRS Shafket Ali, with the investigation led by Inspector Nissar Ahmed.

Both the cases shall be investigated under the close supervision of SSP SCW Jammu, Sanjay Parihar.

The SCW Jammu is committed to conducting rigorous, fair, and timely investigations in both cases to ensure accountability and justice.

Kala Kendra to...

region. The event witnessed an esteemed panel comprising Sanjeev Verma, Commissioner Secretary, Culture and Social Welfare; Dr. Javaid Rahi, Secretary, Kala Kendra; K.K. Siddha, Director, Archives, Archaeology and Museums; Dr. Lalit Gupta, eminent art historian and Colonel (Retd.) Mitra, Joint Director, Amar Mahal Museum and Library.

Speaking on the occasion, Sanjeev Verma highlighted that the Department of Culture is focusing on preserving and promoting the rich heritage of Jammu and Kashmir. He assured that the government will launch various initiatives and schemes to support and enhance the cultural activities in the Union Territory.

Dr. Javaid Rahi, in his address, stated that the main objective of the art exhibition was to bring together paintings, sculptures and other artistic expressions from 100 artists from across Jammu and Kashmir. He also noted that a large collection from the academy's repository was put on display for public appreciation.

The exhibition was graced by renowned artists including Gokal Dombi, Suman Gupta, Vinod Chopra, Sarishti Sneh, K.K. Gandhi, Bhesambar Mehta, Milan Sharma, Rakesh Sharma, O.P. Sharma, Sanjeev Rana, Sangeeta, among others.

The program was conducted by Rachita Gupta, an art educator from IMFA while Vote of Thanks was presented by Colonel (Retd.) Mitra.

14956 Kanal land...

have been designated as Sector Specific Industrial Estates in sectors like Education and Skill Development, Health and Medical education in Jammu division and H&ME, Technical Education and Information Technology and Information Technology in Service (IT/ITeS) sectors comprising more than 3628 kanal of land in both the divisions.

Cops alert as..

noticed the drone falling on Friday night, a team from Vijaypur police station seized it from the roof of a residential building in the campus, they said.

An FIR has been registered under the relevant sections of law and an investigation is on, they said.

PoK authorities hand over bodies of 2 missing persons from J&K to Indian officials

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) authorities handed over the bodies of two persons, who had drowned in the Jhelum river, to their Indian counterparts at the Kaman post along the Line of Control on Saturday, officials said.

Yasir Hussain Shah, from the Busgran area of Uri in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district, and Asiya Bano, from the Kundi Barjala area of Uri, had reportedly jumped into the river on March 5.

After a long search to trace the two, Shah's body was spotted floating near the Kaman post along the LoC in north Kashmir's Baramulla district on March 20.

"Police and rescue teams attempted to retrieve it, but it drifted to the other side of the LoC due to strong currents," one of the officials said.

The authorities from the Indian side took the matter up with officials across the LoC, who eventually retrieved both the bodies from the river.

A meeting was held at the Kaman post in Uri on Saturday, where officials from the Uri administration, including the SDPO, SHO, naib and tehsildar, Indian Army and their counterparts from the other side as well as the parents of the deceased were present, the officials said, adding that a team of doctors was also there.

The officials from Uri received the bodies, they said.

The duo had been missing since March 5, after they reportedly jumped into the Jhelum in Dulanja village near the LoC.

3 vagrants detained from drug hotspot areas

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

DODA: In a proactive effort to maintain law and order, the Doda Police detained three vagrants from identified drug hotspot areas within Doda town. These individuals namely Abid Iqbal , Inuran Iqbal and Sahil Iqbal sons of Farooq Ahmed all resident of Thalsara Tehsil Bhalla District Doda were detained Under Section 126/170 BNSS and subsequently produced before the Executive Magistrate, Doda, for further proceedings.

The swift action by the Doda Police demonstrates their commitment to ensuring public safety and addressing concerns related to vagrancy in the region. By taking this prompt action, the Police aim to discourage drug menace in Doda and prevent potential disturbances and maintain a secure environment for residents.

The detention and production of these individuals before the Executive Magistrate underscore the effective collaboration between law enforcement agencies and the executive in addressing issues related to public order and safety.

Jammu Police Going Hard on Drugs: "Operation Clean" launched in Rajeev Nagar

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In a determined effort to combat the rising menace of drugs, Jammu Police has launched "Operation Clean" in the notorious Rajeev Nagar area under the jurisdiction of Police Station Bahu Fort. Known for being a hub of illegal activities, the area witnessed a decisive crack-down as part of the ongoing anti-drug campaign

Under the direct supervision of SSP Jammu, a police team led by SP South and SDPO City East, assisted by SHO Bahu Fort, SHO Bagh-e-Bahu, and ICPP Narwal, carried out extensive searches. The officers went house-to-house, particularly targeting the residences of notorious drug peddlers suspected of actively engaging in the drug trade.

During the operation, twelve individuals found in suspicious circumstances were picked up for further questioning and subsequently bound down by the EMIC. The operation aims to dismantle the local drug network and ensure a safer environment for the residents. Jammu Police has once again urged all citizens to remain vigilant and report any suspicious drug-related activities. The identity of the informants will be kept strictly confidential. With collective efforts, Jammu Police remains committed to eliminating the drug menace and ensuring the safety and well-being of the community.

Jammu South Police Challans 11 vehicles, takes preventive action

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Jammu Police continues its relentless crackdown on illegal mining and related activities in South Zone Jammu under Operation Ploughing. In a swift action, Police Post (PP) Chatha detained a dumper (JK02CT 9682) loaded with Crusher Bajri, found transporting the material in violation of Form A regulations.

Acting under the clear directives of SSP Jammu and the overall supervision of SP City South and SDPO South, the police intercepted the vehicle during routine checks. The DMO Jammu has been informed for further necessary action.

In another significant development, PP Narwal has taken two separate Preventive Measures against eight individuals involved in unlawful activities. The cases have been presented before the EMIC Bahu, Jammu for further legal proceedings.

Additionally, Police Station Gangyal tightens violators under the Motor Vehicles Act, challaning 11 vehicles and seizing 2 vehicles under Section 207 of the MV Act. Furthermore, PP Gadigarh has taken preventive action against one individual, while PP Nehru Market has challaned 3 vehicles for traffic violations under the same act.

Jammu Police stands tall and firm in its dedication to protecting natural resources besides ensuring law and order. Operation Ploughing will continue with intensified operations, leaving no room for violators to escape legal consequences.

The citizens and netizens have widely appreciated the result-oriented efforts of Jammu Police.

