

!! Continuations from Page 1 !! J&K economy expected...

revenue realised in 2023-24. The contribution of non-tax revenue to total revenue increased to 32 per cent in FY25, the report said and pointed out that the share of power tariffs in non-tax revenue grew from 56 per cent to 67 per cent since FY22. "Tax revenue of Rs 10,624.09 crore was realised in the first nine months of FY25, which is 76 per cent of the Rs 13,903.22 crore revenue realised in FY24, whereas non-tax revenue of Rs 5,113.71 crore was realised in the first nine months of FY25, which is 80 per cent of the Rs 6,430.33 crore revenue realised in FY24," it added.

Among the major revenue contributors, the highest increase of 96 per cent in revenue realisation was witnessed in taxes on vehicles, followed by a 67 per cent increase in power; 36 per cent in GST, 33 per cent in water user charges, and 14 per cent in excise collection, among others, it said.

The revenue expenditure in the first nine months of FY25 stood at Rs 49,828 crore, which is 75 per cent of the Rs 66,621 crore revenue expenditure incurred in FY24.

Meanwhile, capital expenditure in the first nine months of FY25 stood at Rs 11,538 crore, which is 51 per cent of the Rs 22,531 crore capital expenditure incurred in FY24.

The report revealed that J&K has shown significant progress, with the unemployment rate on usual status declining to 6.1 per cent in 2023-24 from 6.7 per cent in 2019-20.

"This improvement is also reflected in the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) and Worker Population Ratio (WPR), which have risen to 64.3 per cent and 60.4 per cent, respectively, in 2023-24, showcasing enhanced employment opportunities and economic activities in J&K," it said.

As many as 40,778 units have been established under various self-employment schemes (SESS), employing about 1.16 lakh young boys and girls, it said.

It stated that 35.28 lakh unorganised workers have been registered on the e-SHRAM portal as of November 2024.

It added that gross non-performing asset has reduced from 5.71 per cent in December 2022 to 4.13 per cent as of March 2024.

The report revealed that total food crop production increased by 7.12 per cent (from 19,515 thousand quintals to 20,904 thousand quintals) over the past year. The region has also progressed towards self-reliance in vegetable production, reaching 520 thousand quintals in 2023-24.

The agriculture sector in J&K is shifting towards high-value crops, organic vegetables, and exotic varieties. Under initiatives like the Holistic Agriculture Development Plan, the government will invest Rs 5,013 crore in 29 projects over five years. This is expected to add Rs 28,000 crore to GSDP, creating 2.88 lakh sustainable jobs, it said.

It added that the plan will also benefit 13 lakh families and provide skills to 2.5 lakh youth through 19,000 new enterprises.

Nobody will be...

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha's address to the House, Malik, who was seated behind the treasury benches, criticised the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and claimed that except drug addiction going up, nothing has changed in Jammu and Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution. He accused the BJP of promoting a culture of drugs, leading to spontaneous protests by the opposition members, with Sharma demanding action against him. However, the Speaker intervened and assured the members that nobody will be allowed to play with their sentiments in the House.

SC Collegium recommends...

Justice Mohammad Yousuf Wani began his legal career in 1990 and was appointed as Munsiff in December 1997. He was promoted to Sub Judge in 2000 and to District & Sessions Judge in 2008. Throughout his tenure, Justice Wani has held various significant positions, including Member (Judicial) of the J&K Special Tribunal in Srinagar. His elevation to Additional Judge of the High Court was notified on March 21, 2024.

LG inaugurates pilgrims...

held comprehensive review of its past decisions, ratified the actions taken after its last meeting and took several new decisions against 20 key Agenda Items having far reaching implications for functioning of the Board and augmenting pilgrim services.

Important decisions were taken in respect of new and underway projects of the Board such as construction of Exit Track & Remodelling of Manokamama area at Bhawan (a part of the Master Plan for Bhawan area), development of helipad in collaboration with Shiv Khori Shrine Board in village Hutt at Katra, New Vaishnavi Bhawan at Bhawan, Cottages (near Sports Stadium), Katra, Widening of Yatra track from Sanjehhat to Bhawan and operationalization of Medical College of the Board at Kakryal.

To cater to the substantial increase in footfall at Bhairon Ji Temple following the installation of the Passenger Ropeway in the year-2019, the Board concurred with the re-development of the Bhairon Ji Temple Complex to address key concerns, including the implementation of an efficient queue management system, provision of locker facilities and additional washrooms.

The project seeks to facilitate simultaneous darshans, reduce turnaround times and enhance the overall pilgrim experience, ensuring seamless crowd management. The project is slated for completion within 12 months. The Board approved an amnesty scheme to settle long-standing litigation matters with shop licensees, providing a one-time opportunity for resolution.

The meeting also reviewed the implementation of the Annual Green Plan of the Board for the current year and approved the Annual Green Plan for the year 2025-26.

The Lieutenant Governor directed the CEO SMVDSB to conduct a thorough evaluation of the existing Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) across the Shrine Board's premises to assess their adequacy in handling the generated sewage and necessary measures be taken to augment STP capacities.

He further directed to explore targeted initiatives to increase reliance on renewable sources of energy especially solar power to the extent feasible in the area of the Shrine.

The Lieutenant Governor also emphasised on implementation of robust feedback mechanism for fostering continuous improvement in the services provided by the Shrine Board.

He lauded the important contribution of Board Members in the last three years since the Board was reconstituted. He said, the pro-active association and continuous guidance by the Members were instrumental in taking the Board's reputation to newer horizons.

The Board took appraisal of peripheral institutions under the SMVD Charitable Society including Gurukul, Hospital, Sports Complex, College of Nursing, Medical College and approved grants-in-aid and financial assistance to support their functioning. The Board also discussed several measures for expeditious completion of the Shankaracharya Temple project in collaboration with local stakeholders.

The Board observed that Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine has seen a consistent surge in devotees with the annual pilgrimage exceeding 90 lakh for the third consecutive year, reaching an impressive 95 lakh last year. The significant growth attributed to the dedication of major projects in the Bhawan area including Durga Bhawan with Tripti Bhojanalya, Skywalk, Remodelled Parvati Bhawan and Atka Area. Furthermore, the expansion of facilities and amenities in Katra and other sectors such as the Quene Complex at Darshani Deodi, YRC at Railway Station, holding area at Adhkarwari, pilgrims cum employees' accommodation and the establishment of Prasad Kendras have also contributed to this growth. The provision of free Langars, medical facilities, facilitating senior citizens and divyang and Arti & Poojan facilities, coupled with eco-friendly and digital initiatives has significantly enhanced the pilgrimage experience.

On the occasion, 50gm and 100gm Silver Coins were also launched, adding to the diverse facilities available to pilgrims. Notably, the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board had previously developed gold and silver coins in various denominations featuring an inscription of Goddess Mata Vaishno Devi Ji, ensuring guaranteed purity.

Earlier, Anshul Garg, CEO, SMVDSB gave a detailed presentation on varied activities of the Shrine Board and the action taken with regard to the implementation of various decisions of the previous meetings of the Board.

CM reaffirms commitment...

the motion of thanks on the Lieutenant Governor's Address in the J&K Legislative Assembly.

Starting his speech, the Chief Minister, who is also Leader of the House, emphasised that the LG's address sought to highlight the Government's intentions and priorities.

"Many of the members have come to a conclusion about what was missing in LG's address. The Government does not work only from one address to another. The Government continues for five years. Four months ago, in front of this very House, LG presented his address. It is not necessary to repeat what was said four months ago. This address is in continuation to that and in addition to that. This address does not replace the one from four months ago but it adds to it. So, the members who are

trying to create the impression that we are suddenly silent about some things, or that we did not mention some things are trying to find faults, he said.

He further added, "The intention was to start from there. In this, we added more. Next year, I hope, we will be with the Governor at that time. When the Governor will be with us, we will add more. And we will continue to do this for five years. We made the address concise this time and kept the rest for the later. So, there is no such thing that we are pulling out of our agenda or want to remain silent on something."

The Chief Minister also responded to questions raised by various members in the House, saying, "Many people from this side (treasury benches) and from the opposition benches, have raised some questions. Some things have been responded and the discussion would continue with the budget speech tomorrow. "After that, we will start the discussion on the budget. And in the coming days, we will give our answers to all the issues that the honourable members have touched upon."

Speaking on the Public Safety Act (PSA), Abdullah emphasized that preventive detention should not be used as a substitute to legal prosecution. "Now, I would like to talk about the PSA. I do not want to get into politics here. Otherwise, a lot can be said about the PSA. In 2016, PSA was slapped, and then amnesty was announced for such cases but not carried forward. We all know how the termination process started in the previous regime. But it should stop and we will rectify it. We have promised to do it," he said.

"If PSA is your weapon, then your case is weak. If you keep these people in jail for years and do not prosecute them, it means you do not have a case against them. You just want to keep them in jail. If you say that they are stone throwers, they are OGWs, then why do you need preventive detention? Preventive detention is needed where you cannot make any other case. You filed a PSA against me because you did not have anything else to detain me."

Speaking on his own detention during the revocation of Article 370 in 2019, the Chief Minister said, "You kept me in confinement for six months on preventive detention. When that time passed, you did not have anything else, so you filed a PSA and detained me for more months. If what you say is true, then instead of PSA, you should file a case and prosecute them."

On the revocation of Article 370 and its consequences and developmental claims of opposition during the discussion, he remarked, "I will not talk much about Article 370, as much was said about it in this august house. I said that we spent time discussing Article 370, but maybe more than that, the opposition side discussed it more."

CM said that opposition was in awe about what has been done by the Central government in terms of development as if they are speaking on the President's Address and not the LG Administration He said, "I am only asking you one question-tell me, which of these projects were not possible without removing Article 370?"

The Chief Minister challenged the BJP led opposition's position further, asking, "Tell me, which of these development projects were not possible before 2019 and were not possible without removing Article 370?"

On the opposition's remarks, CM said "Where have we disrespected Maharaja ?" On the renaming of places, Omar Abdullah questioned, "Pratap Singh Park, is it still Pratap Singh Park? SMGS Hospital, is it still SMGS Hospital? SMHS Hospital, is it still SMHS Hospital? Is there any name changed in the streets when we were in power? Not at all. I don't know not in our tenure. Not in other tenures of PDP and Congress.

But tell me, when we talk about the legacy of Maharaja Hari Singh, what is the biggest thing? One was Jammu and Kashmir State. That State is gone now. Where is the State? What have you done to that State? Tell me. This is something to be said."

Referring to state subject laws, Abdullah highlighted their importance in protecting the rights of the people. "What did the Maharaja leave for us apart from the geography of this region? State subject laws-our law was ours, our jobs were ours. Where are those laws now? What right do you have over your land today? Anyone can take it from you at any time. What right do we have over our jobs?"

Drawing a comparison with Himachal Pradesh, he said, "In Himachal, if there is a factory, legally 70% of the employees are from Himachal. If there is a hotel, then 70% of the employees are from Himachal. What kind of law is now prevailing here?"

Commenting about the Foreign Minister's remarks on taking back Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, the chief minister asked, "One portion is with Pakistan, but another portion is with China-why doesn't anyone talk about that? Who has stopped you from taking it back?"

Further addressing the issue of Ladakh's separation, he said, "Why did you separate Ladakh? And you are saying that the people of Ladakh wanted this. Did you ever ask them? Did you ever consult them? From the first day, the people there were not with this decision."

Responding to criticism and usage of derogatory comments against the 1931 martyrs, he said, "Those 22 people who sacrificed their lives on July 13, 1931-what for? To get a voice, to get some rights. If it was wrong for them to do that, why did Maharaja Saheb take that step after their sacrifice? Why was Glancy Commission formed why was the Justice Dalal Commission set up? Why were elections held afterwards, Prajya Sabha was formed which later became Constituent Assembly, leading to the formation of this Assembly? CM regretted that opposition didn't have a word of acknowledgement for the sacrifices of martyrs of 13th July. Their only fault was that they were Muslims. Accept this fact."

Regarding the removal of December 5 as a state holiday, he said, "Whether you keep the 13th of July holiday or not, whether you keep the 5th of December holiday or not, the sacrifices of those people cannot be erased from the hearts of the people of Jammu and Kashmir."

Business rules for...

meeting and finalised the business rules. They were approved by our cabinet," Abdullah said in reply to the motion of thanks to the Lieutenant Governor's address to the Assembly.

He further said the rules have been submitted to the Lieutenant Governor for approval. "We hope they will be approved," he added.

Asserting that this step will reduce confusion, he said, "As long as this system is in place, it should operate smoothly without any confusion. Although I view it as temporary, implementing business rules is preferable to reduce confusion."

Chief Minister Abdullah last month openly criticised the dual governance model in the Union Territory (UT) - where he shares power with the Lieutenant Governor - as a "recipe for disaster".

He had said the hybrid model of governance in the UT was not to anyone's advantage and the systems worked better when there was a single centre of command.

Chugh defends Maharaja...

"tourism capital." He credited the Modi government for ensuring peace, security, and reservations for SC and ST communities while nearly eliminating stone-pelting incidents.

He further took a swipe at the Abdullah and Mufti families, accusing them of undermining the unity of Jammu & Kashmir for decades.

Addressing the ongoing controversy over Mughal ruler Aurangzeb, Chugh labeled him a "villain" while praising historical figures like Guru Tegh Bahadur and Shivaji Maharaj for resisting his rule.

On international matters, Chugh declared Pakistan as the "center of terrorism," urging global powers, including the United States, to impose sanctions and restrict Pakistani nationals' entry into the country.

Concluding his address, Chugh reiterated that BJP and the people of Jammu & Kashmir will not tolerate any attempts to distort history and will take all necessary steps to uphold the honor of Maharaja Hari Singh and the region's rich legacy.

Fight against drug...

"We are fighting it, but society has to come forward," he said and suggested monitoring the activities of children at the family level.

He lamented lack of parental oversight and noted that even schoolchildren, in uniform, are found selling small bags of drugs and other contraband substances. "There needs to be a focus on this," he said.

"There is a lack of supervision and control from parents and society at large," he said. Responding to another question about public liquor consumption in vehicles in various areas, he emphasised that this will be dealt with severely.

He mentioned that drugs confiscated by the police are destroyed, as part of an annual exercise. Replying to another question about alleged "misuse" of security personnel, DGP maintained that "charity begins at home".

"I have reduced my security cover by over two-thirds to address manpower shortages in the force," he said.

The DGP spelt out that additional deployment has been made in Jammu to strengthen law and order. Regarding concerns about deployment within the police force, Prabhat said that those who perform well will be rewarded with appropriate postings. "Systemic changes take time. Rome wasn't built in a day," he said, signalling a long-term approach to improving the force's functioning in Jammu and Kashmir.

Responding to another question about women's safety issues, Prabhat warned that strict action will be taken if any Investigating Officer fails to file a chargesheet in a case within the stipulated time.

Appointment of Shazia...

District Judge as Chairman, J&K Sales Tax Appellate Tribunal, the order issued by Achal Sethi, Secretary to Government states.

Dr Jitendra flags off e-Tractor roadshow from Jammu to Kanyakumari

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology; Earth Sciences and Minister of State for PMO, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space, Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr. Jitendra Singh today flagged off indigenously developed CSIR-developed e-Tractor roadshow from Jammu, which will head to



Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh flagging off the CSIR-developed e-tractor roadshow from Jammu on Thursday.

Kanyakumari, covering the entire country. This marks a significant milestone in India's journey towards sustainable and technology-driven agriculture. The e-tractor, which was initially launched in Delhi, has been put on a nationwide roadshow to raise awareness about eco-friendly and cost-effective solutions in farming. After its stop in Jammu, the e-tractor will travel across various regions before reaching its final destination in Kanyakumari. The Minister has also inaugurated and E-Filler developed by CSIR-Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (CMERI), Durgapur, a constituent lab.

Speaking at the flag-off ceremony, Dr. Jitendra Singh underscored the importance of innovation in agriculture and how CSIR's technology will contribute to the ease of farming, reducing operational costs and promoting sustainability. "This e-tractor is not just an advanced technological intervention but a step towards ensuring affordable and environment-friendly farming solutions. It reflects our commitment to integrating innovation with agriculture, benefiting both farmers and agri-start-ups," he stated.

The Minister further emphasized that CSIR's initiatives are aimed at bridging the technological divide in Indian farming by bringing scientific innovations directly to the grassroots. "CSIR has been actively working on technologies that enhance efficiency and productivity in the agricultural sector. The e-tractor is an example of how research-driven innovations can be commercialized for widespread adoption," he said.

On the occasion, Dr. Jitendra Singh also inaugurated the Agro-Soil Research Laboratory at CSIR-IIIM Chatha Farm in which a group of Scientists and researchers would work on Soil testing, agrotechnology development and plant testing. As the e-tractor makes its journey across the country, the roadshow will serve as an opportunity for direct farmer engagement, demonstrating the tangible benefits of adopting sustainable farming practices. "The roadshow is not just a demonstration—it is an invitation for farmers to be part of India's agricultural revolution. By embracing new technologies, they can enhance productivity while also protecting the environment," Dr. Jitendra Singh concluded.

Director CSIR-IIIM Dr Zabeer Ahmed and Director CSIR Durgapur Dr Murmu were present on the occasion.

Property worth Rs 2.81 cr of 6 accused in UAPA case attached in Bandipora

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Police in Bandipora district have attached immovable property worth Rs 2.81 crore belonging to six people allegedly involved in a Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) case, officials said here on Thursday. "Police in Bandipora attached immovable properties measuring 18 kanals and 1 marla land (2.26 acres), valued about Rs 2.81 crore belonging to six accused persons involved in Case FIR No 33/2022 U/S 121 IPC, 18,20,39 UAPA Act, 2/3 E&IMCO Act of Police Station Bandipora," a police spokesman said.

The accused have been identified as Mohammad Anwar Mir (2.55 kanal), Abdul Rashid Doie (3.75 kanal), Sarfaraz Ahmad (3.45 kanals), Mohammad Yousuf (1.05 kanal), Mohammad Abdullah (6.50 kanals) and Farooq Ahmad Ganaie (6.30 kanals).

"The attachment proceedings were carried out by a police team led by DySP Headquarters Bandipora and concerned Naib-Tehsildar," the spokesman said.

First e-FIR registered at Ramban, Kishtwar

STATE TIMES NEWS

RAMBAN/KISHTWAR: In a significant development, the first e-FIR of the district has been registered at Police Station Batote under the new legal provisions, marking a major step towards digital policing and enhanced accessibility for citizens.

The e-FIR No. 16/2025 has been lodged based on a complaint received on WhatsApp from Manik Sharma, S/o Ashutosh Sharma, a resident of Karan Nagar Extension, Jammu City. The complaint alleges misappropriation of funds and cheating by contractor Farooq Ahmed Mir in relation to a construction agreement executed on 07.04.2024.

According to the complainant, the contractor failed to complete the construction as per the agreed terms despite receiving payments beyond the stipulated amount. It is further alleged that he misused the funds for other purposes and fraudulently procured building materials in the complainant's name. When confronted, the complainant was allegedly threatened with physical harm and property damage.

On the basis of these allegations, an e-FIR has been registered under sections 316(2)/318(4)/351(2)(3) BNS, and the investigation set into motion.

In a significant step towards digital policing, J&K Police District Kishtwar has registered its first e-FIR at Police Station Atholi.

Police Station Atholi received telephonic information from one (NameWithHeld), stating that his 17-year-old minor daughter had gone missing from Gulabgarh. The complainant, who is currently in Jammu for his wife's medical treatment, was unable to report the matter in person.

Taking immediate cognizance of the complaint, an E-FIR No. 05/2025 U/S 137(2) BNS was promptly registered at Police Station Atholi.

ANTF Jammu conducts search operation

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: ANTF Jammu conducts search operation in various areas of Jammu.

As per details, a team of ANTF Jammu led by DySP ANTF Jammu Tanveer Ahmed and Insp Pankaj Singh along with sniffer Dog from Crime Branch Jammu launched speculative search operation in Rajiv Nagar, Qasim Nagar to search narcotics and psychotropic substance. Search have been conducted in presence of respectables of the area. However nothing has been found. Respectable of the area have been briefed to share information to ANTF Jammu regarding any suspicious movement of notorious drug peddlers .



Swami Vishvatmanand Saraswati reaches Sunderbani after Kumbh Mela

STATE TIMES NEWS

SUNDERBANI: Hundreds of devotees welcomed Maha Mandleshwer Rajguru S w a m i Vishvatmanand ji Maharaj with a shower of flowers who reached Shiv S a s h i Sunderbani after participating 45 days Kumbha Mela Parayagraj Utter Pradesh. Swami addressed to media persons said first time we saw a large crowd more than 70 crore devotees came in Kumbh Mela adn good arrangement were conducted by UP government.

