AUTUMN SESSION 2026: QUESTION HOUR

75% Work Completed on 50-Bedded Pahalgam Hospital: Sakeena Itoo

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
SRINAGAR, SEP 25

Minister for Health & Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo today informed the Legislative Assembly that around 75 per cent physical progress has been achieved on the construction of the 50-bedded hospital block at Pahalgam, with the remaining works being pursued on priority.

The Minister was replying to a question raised by MLA Pahalgam Altaf Ahmad Wani.

Sakeena Itoo informed the House that the Health & Medical Education Department had accorded Administrative Approval under Government Order No. 244-JK(HME) of 2020 dated March 12, 2020, for construction of the 50-bedded hospital at Pahalgam at a sanctioned cost of ?19.90 crore. The project includes construction of the hospital building along with associated civil, electrical, mechanical and allied works.

The Minister said that ?16.75 crore has been released against the project, while ?10.53 crore had been expended up to March 31, 2026. An expenditure of ?33.31 lakh has further been incurred during the current financial year, as reflected in the departmental statement.

The Minister informed the House that the project is progressing satisfactorily and has achieved approximately 75 per cent physical progress.

She said the DG Set has been successfully commissioned and handed over, while the Laundry System, Central Sterile Supply Department (CSSD) and Sterile Tunnel Project (STP) have been supplied/installed and are presently at the commissioning stage.

The installation of the hospital lift is also under progress, while the remaining mechanical and electrical components are being pursued for completion.

Giving details about the delay, Sakeena Itoo said that during execution, an additional basement became necessary due to site topography and level differences.

This resulted in an increase in the built-up area and consequently required additional structural, architectural, allied, mechanical and electrical works, leading to revision of the project cost. She further stated that post-COVID escalation in equipment and installation costs also contributed to the increase in the project cost, for which additional funding is being explored.

The Minister informed the House that the progress of the project is being personally monitored and that a review meeting has also been held with all stakeholders to address the issues affecting its completion.

She said the process for revised Administrative Approval has already been initiated and the same will be accorded after receipt and scrutiny of the revised DPR from the Directorate of Health Services, Kashmir.

Responding to a supplementary regarding upgradation of PHCs at Pahalgam, Sallar and Aishmuqam to Sub-District Hospitals, the Minister clarified that there is no such proposal at present, as the Department is currently focusing on consolidation and strengthening of existing healthcare facilities.

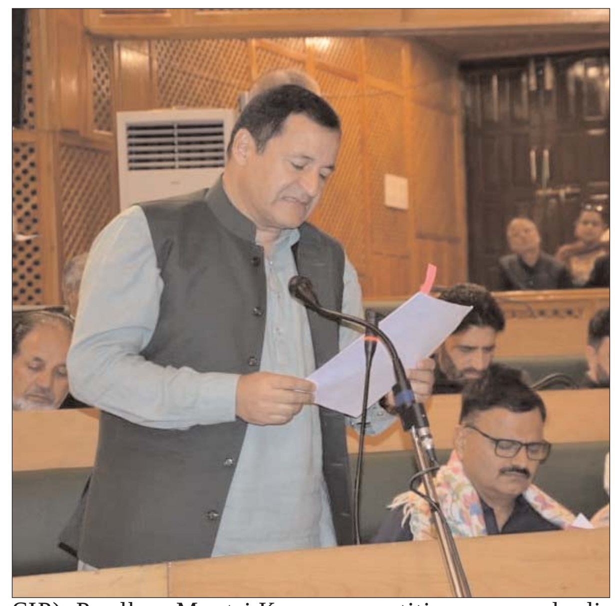
She further explained the provisions of IPHS-2022 norms, stating that districts with less than five lakh population and having a functional District Hospital do not require a Sub-District Hospital.

Districts having a population between five and ten lakh can have one SDH, while one additional SDH can be considered for every further ten lakh population for providing comprehensive secondary healthcare services. The Minister stated that, accordingly, a district having a population of up to 20 lakh can have one District Hospital and two SDHs, while Jammu and Kashmir already has more SDHs than the admissibility envisaged under IPHS-2022.

Govt intensifies Agriculture, Irrigation, Market-linkage interventions in Lolab: Javid

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
SRINAGAR, SEP 25

Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election departments, Javid Ahmad Dar, today informed the Legislative Assembly that the Government is implementing a comprehensive package of schemes and interventions to strengthen agriculture and allied activities, irrigation, mechanization, post-harvest management and market linkages in Lolab Constituency of Kupwara district.



The Minister was replying to a question raised by MLA Qaysar Jamshaid Lone in the House today .

Javid Dar said that Lolab constitutes an important Agricultural belt of Kupwara district, with agriculture and horticulture plantations spread over approximately 9,134 hectares. Of this, 4,320.44 hectares (47 per cent) are irrigated, while 4,813.6 hectares (53 per cent) are unirrigated, besides around 1,213 hectares classified as uncultivable.

He said the Government has established a dedicated field-level departmental structure in the area, including the Sub-Divisional Agriculture Office at Sogam, to ensure effective implementation of agricultural schemes and delivery of extension services to farmers.

The Minister stated that the Agriculture Department is implementing various Central Sector, Centrally Sponsored and UT Government schemes in Lolab, with particular emphasis on the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), J&K Comprehensive Investment Plan (JKCIP), Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY), Kisan Credit Card (KCC), Seed Village Programme, farm mechanization, protected cultivation, natural farming and allied-sector activities.

Highlighting the impact of HADP, Javid Dar said that the programme represents a collaborative approach involving farmers, scientists, academicians, policymakers and administrators, aimed at bringing transformative changes in the agriculture sector through technology, innovation, diversification and value addition.

He informed the House that, as of August 2026, approximately 4,226 units under HADP/CAPEX had been approved and established in Lolab, with financial assistance of around ?269.88 lakh. The subdivision also has 28 functional Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) and 28 Krishi Udyamis (KUs), providing localized support and services to farmers.

On JKCIP, the Minister said that the project is focused on improving the competitiveness and climate resilience of farming operations through a value-chain approach encompassing production, value addition and marketing of high-value commodities. During 2025–26, 127 JKCIP units were established in Sogam block, with financial assistance of around ?15.75 lakh.

He further informed the Assembly that ?33.62 lakh had been provided to 1,867 beneficiaries under PM-KISAN, while ?37.44 lakh had been extended to 422 beneficiaries under Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS).

The Minister said that the Government is providing support to farmers through a wide range of interventions, including quality seed production and replacement, demonstrations, farmer training, subsidized farm machinery, Custom Hiring Centres and Farm Machinery Banks, soil testing and Soil Health Cards, natural farming, protected cultivation, irrigation development, water conservation and efficient water-use practices.

He added that interventions under MIDH and horticulture schemes are also being utilized for orchard development, quality planting material, protected cultivation and post-harvest management, while allied-sector schemes are promoting dairy, sheep and goat rearing, poultry, apiculture, mushroom cultivation and fisheries as additional sources of rural income.

On irrigation and infrastructure, Javid Dar said that the Government intends to strengthen irrigation, water harvesting, storage, grading, sorting, packaging, processing and other post-harvest facilities in Lolab through convergence of ongoing schemes and programmes, including CAPEX, NABARD, SACS, PMC, HADP, MIDH and JKCIP, subject to scheme guidelines and availability of funds.

He said that priority is being accorded to the improvement and restoration of irrigation infrastructure, promotion of drip and sprinkler irrigation, water conservation and efficient utilization of available water resources.

The Minister further stated that efforts are being made to strengthen FPOs and market linkages to facilitate aggregation, value addition, post-harvest management and better marketing of farm and horticultural produce.

Emphasizing the Government's focus on improving farmers' livelihoods, Javid Dar said that convergence of agriculture, horticulture and allied-sector schemes is being pursued to increase productivity, reduce cultivation and post-harvest losses, improve market access and enhance farm incomes.

14 developmental projects worth Rs 24.62 cr under execution across Baramulla Town: Govt

SRINAGAR, SEP 25: Minister for School Education, Health & Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, replying on behalf of the Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah today informed the Legislative Assembly that 14 developmental works involving a total project cost of ?24.62 crore are under execution in Baramulla Town, with several projects completed and others progressing at different stages.

The Minister was replying to a question raised by MLA Javid Hassan Baig.

Sakeena Itoo informed the House that against the total project cost of ?2,462.67 lakh, an expenditure of ?445.24 lakh had been incurred up to March 2026. During the current financial year, ?25 lakh has been utilised against the released amount of ?130.60 lakh. Of the 14 works, three have been completed, while the remaining works are at various stages of execution.

Regarding the proposed multi-level car parking facility near the R&B Office, Baramulla, the Minister informed the House that Administrative Approval for the project was accorded on October 10, 2025.

She said that commencement of the project was delayed as the land, being under the ownership of PWD (R&B), had not yet been transferred in favour of Municipal Council Baramulla.

The proposed site also contains existing poplar trees requiring valuation by the Forest Department followed by their auction/removal, she added. In addition, an old building at the site requires assessment and completion of the prescribed procedure for its disposal/removal, she added.

Sakeena Itoo said that these essential pre-construction and statutory formalities had affected commencement of the project.

"The requisite formalities are now under process, and the concerned agencies have been directed to complete them on priority so that work can commence at the earliest", she said.

On the construction/development of three entry gates at Baramulla, the Minister informed the House that Administrative Approval was accorded vide Order No. DULBK/Plg/746 of 2025 dated September 20, 2025",She informed.

She said that execution of the entry gate at Janbazpora and Khowjabagh was affected by objections raised by local residents, necessitating shifting of the sites.

"At Khowjabagh, work is presently under progress at the newly identified site. At Khanpora, objections were raised by BRO authorities, necessitating modification of the approved drawing and change of location. Joint site visits by BRO and R&B authorities were subsequently conducted on June 13 and June 21, 2026, following which revised locations were proposed", the Minister informed.

The Minister informed the House that work at the new Khanpora site had progressed up to the column level, but was subsequently stopped after BRO authorities conveyed that the location was inadvertent and could not be permitted for continuation.

She said immediate steps have been initiated in coordination with the concerned authorities to identify and finalise suitable alternative locations at Janbazpora and Khanpora, enabling the works to be taken up and completed without further avoidable delay.

Regarding the double-storey office building of Municipal Council Baramulla, Sakeena Itoo informed the House that Administrative Approval was accorded vide No. MC/BLA/2021/215-18 dated December 22, 2021.

"The G+2 skeletal structure of the project was completed in November 2024. Thereafter, execution was interrupted pursuant to orders of the High Court in connection with the land dispute between Municipal Council Baramulla, the adjoining private property holder and on account of security-related restrictions", she maintained.

"The work remained halted until March 2026. Subsequently, Municipal Council Baramulla submitted an affidavit undertaking compliance with the security conditions prescribed by the Military Authority, following which execution of the work was resumed.", She added.

The Minister informed the House that truss work has now been completed and brickwork has reached approximately 80 per cent completion. The concerned executing agency has been directed to maintain the pace of execution and complete the balance work at the earliest.

Manpower position across healthcare institutions being monitored on regular basis: Sakeena

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
SRINAGAR, SEP 25

Minister for Health & Medical Education Sakeena Itoo today informed the Legislative Assembly that there is a shortage of medical and paramedical staff in certain healthcare institutions across Jammu and Kashmir, with the extent varying from institution to institution depending upon sanctioned strength, existing vacancies, functional requirements and service delivery needs.

The Minister was replying to a question raised by MLA Hazratbal Salman Ali Sagar.

Sakeena Itoo informed the House that the Health & Medical Education Department is continuously monitoring the manpower position across healthcare institutions with the objective of ensuring optimum utilisation of available human resources and uninterrupted delivery of healthcare services.

She said that wherever required, available medical and paramedical manpower is being rationally deployed and adjusted among healthcare institutions, keeping in view patient load, functional requirements, institutional needs, availability of specialised services and overall public health requirements.

The Minister stated that the Government is taking necessary measures to ensure that manpower constraints do not adversely affect the delivery of essential healthcare services.

Responding to the specific query regarding the impact of staff shortages on healthcare delivery in District Srinagar, the Minister informed the House that health services across Jammu and Kashmir are presently functioning smoothly.

She said that wherever shortages exist, these are being supplemented through the deployment/engagement of staff under the National Health Mission (NHM), as permissible.

"Consequently, there is no adverse impact on the delivery of healthcare services in District Srinagar," the Minister informed the House.

On the issue of shortage of doctors, nurses and allied staff at SKIMS, Sakeena Itoo stated that the health services there are running smoothly at present.

The Minister said the available manpower is being utilised optimally, while vacancies are being addressed through recruitment and permissible alternative arrangements to ensure continuity of patient-care services.

The Minister reiterated that the Government remains focused on ensuring the availability of adequate healthcare manpower and strengthening service delivery across Jammu and Kashmir.

She said that the Department is adopting a combination of rational deployment, recruitment, NHM engagement and other permissible arrangements to address manpower gaps and ensure that healthcare institutions continue to provide uninterrupted patient-care services.

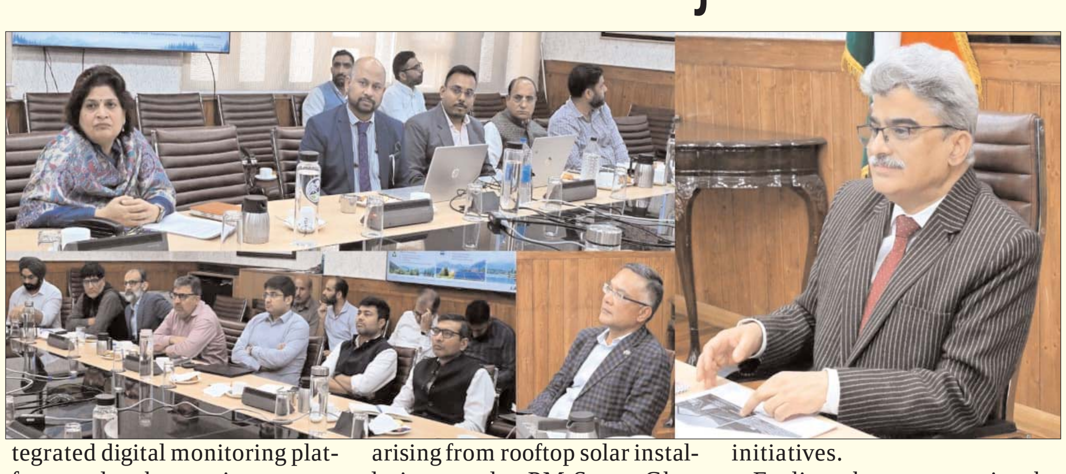
CS: J&K eyes revenue from Green Projects through Carbon Credits

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 25: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired ameeting to review the proposed Carbon CreditFramework for Jammu and Kashmir, aimed at unlocking the economic potential of the Union Territory's ecological assets and creating sustainable revenue streams through carbon markets and green financing.

The meeting besides ACS, Finance was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Science & Technology; MD, JKPDC; Commissioner, JMC/SMC; DG, Resources; DG, A&T; DG, Budget; CEO, CITaG concerned officers and technical experts from CITaG. The framework, presented by the Centre for Innovation and Transformation in Governance (CITaG) in collaboration with the Finance Department, envisages a comprehensive strategy built around four key pillarsconstitutingCarbon Markets, Green Cess, Convergence and a dedicated Green Fund. Appreciating the preliminary work undertaken by CITaG, the Chief Secretary called for developing a comprehensive policy document supported by a well-defined Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to ensure seamless implementation across the Union Territory.

He directed CITaG to organise a specialised capacity-building workshop for all concerned departments to familiarise officers with carbon accounting, data standards and their respective implementation responsibilities.

Emphasising technology-driven monitoring and transparency, the Chief Secretary suggested exploring collaboration with the Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics (BISAG-N) for developing an integrated digital monitoring platform and carbon registry.



During the deliberations, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance, Shailendra Kumar, highlighted the immense potential of J&K's agriculture, hydropower and forestry sectors in generating carbon credits and attracting green investments.

He asked CITaG to prioritise these sectors while also incorporating emerging opportunities arising from rooftop solar installations under PM Surya Ghar Yojana and the growing adoption of electric vehicles across the Union Territory.

The ACS Finance also advocated the early establishment of a dedicated Green Fund to pool carbon proceeds and green revenues, safeguard their utilisation and leverage these resources for financing future climate-resilient development initiatives.

Earlier, the presentation by CITaG highlighted the considerable untapped potential of J&K's ecological assets, observing that the Union Territory has yet to generate revenue from global carbon markets despite substantial investments in environmentally sustainable activities. Citing successful initiatives elsewhere, the meeting was informed that BMC has earned ?27 crore, Gujarat ?22 crore, Indore Municipal Corporation ?8.34 crore and Himachal Pradesh ?20 crore through carbon credit monetisation and similar initiatives.

The proposed framework envisages integrating carbon screening into existing development programmes, including CAMPA, MGNREGS and the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), to maximise environmental and financial returns while avoiding duplication of expenditure.

The meeting also deliberated on a proposed revenue-sharing mechanism under which 35 percent of net carbon proceeds would accrue directly to primary growers or community project owners, 30 percent to the J&K Green Fund, 15 percent to Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) and aggregators, and 10 percent each to district-level climate initiatives and sector-specific sustainability accounts.

Another key proposal discussed was the introduction of a Green Tourism Contribution to mobilise resources for climate resilience and environmental conservation at major tourist destinations.

The meeting also considered a 180-day implementation roadmap involving a comprehensive inventory of green assets, identification and execution of five to seven priority pilot projects across Jammu and Srinagar Municipal Corporations, agriculture and forestry sectors, and establishment of a secure digital repository for project-related data. The proposed initiatives are intended to establish a sustainable institutional and financial mechanism for translating J&K's environmental assets and climate-positive investments into measurable economic benefits for local communities and the Union Territory.