

BUDGET SESSION 2026: QUESTION HOUR

Key road development projects undertaken to decongest traffic in Srinagar: Dy CM

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 18

Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary today said that the government has undertaken various key road projects and corridor developments to decongest traffic flow across down-town and arterial roads in Srinagar district.

The Deputy Chief Minister was replying to a question raised by Legislator Tanvir Sadiq in the Legislative Assembly.

He informed the House that projects currently under various stages for execution included Nowshera to Soura (KZP Road), Saida kadal to Ashaibagh (SMS Road), Devi Angan-Hawal road besides Alamgiri Bazar Chowk and Mirza Kamil Sahib (MK Sahib) Chowk corridors.

"The road stretches in downtown Srinagar, being old alignments, are struggling to cope with increased traffic, urbanization, and commercial activity, leading to congestion during peak hours," stated the Deputy CM.

He said that routine maintenance and necessary repairs are being carried out periodically to ensure traffic ability and road safety.

The Deputy Chief Minister



ter said that with preliminary assessments for improvement and widening of identified stretches have been undertaken. "Comprehensive widening in most cases entails substantial land acquisition, shifting of utilities and removal of encroachments, requiring inter-departmental coordination," he said.

He added that the land acquisition process has also been affected in certain stretches due to court litigations, thereby impacting the progress.

Sharing details, the Deputy Chief Minister informed that the structures near Nalbal Bridge part of Nowshera to Soura (KZP Road) have been acquired while acquisition of remaining structures would be taken up after settlement/negotiation in the High Level Committee

(HLC) and finalization of pending court cases.

He said survey for widening of Saida Kadal to Ashaibagh (SMS Road) is presently underway for a length of approximately 1.75 km. Besides, the proposal envisages widening of the carriageway from 7.50 meter to 21.00 meter and Detailed Project Report (DPR) is being submitted after completion of survey and feasibility formalities.

He informed that the preliminary project report for widening/upgradation of Devi Angan-Hawal Road has been prepared under CRIF for an estimated cost of Rs. 31.25 crore (including land acquisition and utility shifting cost of Rs. 30.00 crore and development cost of Rs. 1.25 crore) for a length of 1.40 km. "The project shall be taken up upon approval under the scheme

and subject to the availability of funds," he said.

He said that the project of Alamgiri Bazar Chowk stands approved under UT Sector 2025-26 for an amount of Rs. 335.00 Lakh which includes acquisition of 05 structures and junction redesigning.

Further, the Deputy Chief Minister said that the project of Mirza Kamil Sahib (MK Sahib) Chowk Junction redesigning has been approved under UT Sector 2025-26 for an amount of Rs. 135.00 lakh.

He said that the government is cognisant of the traffic congestion issues in downtown Srinagar and the necessity of ensuring smooth movement of ambulances, fire services and other emergency vehicles. He said that the road upgradation and improvement works are being undertaken in a phased manner.

"Improvement works such as resurfacing, strengthening, drainage correction and junction remodelling are being executed under regular R&B grants and other infrastructure development schemes," he added.

The supplementaries were raised by Legislators Mubarik Gul and Shamim Firdous.

GMC Anantnag becomes first newly established of J&K to receive nod for Superspeciality course Cardiology

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 18

In a landmark development for the healthcare sector of Jammu and Kashmir, Government Medical College (GMC) Anantnag has achieved a significant milestone by becoming the first newly established GMC in J&K to receive approval to start a Superspeciality course in Cardiology.

The National Board of Examinations has accredited "Three Dr NB Cardiology seats" to the Department of Cardiology GMC Anantnag.

The approval marks a major step forward in the transformation of GMC Anantnag into a centre of advanced medical education and tertiary care, and reflects the sustained efforts of Omar Abdullah led Government to expand access to specialised healthcare services in the region.

Congratulating the administration, faculty, and staff of GMC Anantnag, Minister for Health and



Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo lauded the dedication and teamwork of GMC Anantnag in achieving this prestigious feat. She said that the sanctioning of a Superspeciality Cardiology course is a testament to the Government's unwavering resolve to upgrade healthcare infrastructure and medical education across Jammu and Kashmir.

"The Government is determined to ensure that people of Jammu and Kashmir have access to high-quality specialised healthcare. The approval of a Superspeciality Cardiology course at

GMC Anantnag is a major stride in that direction. It will not only strengthen tertiary care services in South Kashmir but also reduce the need for patients to seek advanced cardiac treatment outside the region," the Minister stated.

She further emphasised that the Government has adopted a comprehensive approach to strengthen medical institutions through infrastructure development, recruitment of specialist faculty, procurement of advanced equipment, and expansion of academic programmes.

"With the introduction of the Superspeciality Cardiology course, GMC Anantnag is poised to emerge as a key hub for advanced cardiac care, research, and training. The development is expected to greatly benefit cardiac patients by providing timely and specialised treatment closer to home, while also creating new opportunities for postgraduate medical aspirants", Minister Sakeena said.

She added that this unique achievement stands as a reflection of the Government's broader vision to build a robust, accessible, and patient-centric healthcare system across Jammu and Kashmir.

Pertinently, the accreditation from the National Board of Examinations (NBEMS) for Superspeciality course in Cardiology solidifies the stature of GMC Anantnag as a premier hub for both advanced cardiac treatment and specialist medical training and sets a benchmark for the peripheral medical colleges in the rest of the country.

Construction of 50 bedded Additional Block at SDH Sunderbani in progress: Itoo

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 18

Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, today said that the ongoing works on the vital projects like construction of 50 bedded additional Block and setting up of Dialysis Unit at SDH Sunderbani are being regularly monitored to ensure their completion within prescribed timelines.

The Minister stated this while replying to a question of Legislator Randhir Singh in the House.

The Minister informed the House that an amount of Rs. 424 lakh has been earmarked for utilization against three projects like construction of 50 bedded additional Block at SDH Sunderbani, setting up of Dialysis Unit at SDH Sunderbani and Design, Supply, Installation, Commis-

sioning and Trial-run (DSICT) of Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) of 05 KLD capacity at Government CHC Kalakote Rajouri during the current Financial Year. She added that Rs. 361.90 lakh have been released by the Finance Department, against which an expenditure of ₹300.00 lakh has been incurred, so far. The Minister stated that the ongoing projects are being closely monitored, with

delays reported to executing agencies for swift action, ensuring timely completion and fund utilization. She also informed that the Tile/Electrical work is in progress on the second floor while Mechanical work at SDH Sunderbani is also being done on war footing. She added that allotment of DSICT of ETP of 05 KLD capacity at Government CHC Kalakote Rajouri is under process.

Govt to establish two Industrial Estates in Pattan: Dy CM

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 18

Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today said that two industrial estates are being established in Pattan Constituency of Baramulla district.

The Deputy Chief Minister was replying to a question raised by MLA Pirzada

Farooq Ahmad Shah on behalf of Legislator Jayavid Riyaz (Bedar) in the Legislative Assembly.

The Deputy Chief Minister informed that the two patches of land, measuring 240 Kanal have been transferred in favor of Industries & Commerce Department, during 2024-25 for establishment of Industrial Es-

tates at Wussan Khoie on 150 kanal of land and at Pattan on 90 kanal of land.

He said that a total of 42 applications for allotment of land in the above two Industrial Estates have been received on the J&K Single Window Portal up to January 18, 2026. These applications have been appraised by the Divisional Level Ap-

praisal Committee for further placement before the High Level Land Allotment Committee, for accord of consideration and allotment of land as per the Merit-Cum-Preference, he added. The Deputy Chief Minister said that various steps are being taken to ensure robust operations of the Industrial Estates.

6,999 Solar Street Lights being procured during 2025-26: Satish Sharma

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 18

Minister for Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, today said that 6,999 Solar Street Lights (SSLs) are being procured during the year 2025-26 with a minimum of 50 being provided in each constituency of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Minister stated this while replying to a question raised by Legislator Ajaz Ahmad Jan in the Legislative Assembly.

He added that few lights are also being installed in migrant camps and some



border areas of the Union Territory of J&K.

The Minister informed the House that in Poonch

district, the material has recently been delivered for further installation, including the Poonch-Haveli Con-

stituency. He said that a proposal for 70 Solar Street Lights (SSLs) to be installed in the Poonch-Haveli Constituency has been received from the office of the MLA. "Against a quantity of proposed 70 SSLs, 50 have already been delivered and the installation shall start shortly with expected completion by February", he added.

He also said that at present no proposal for establishment of solar power plants in border villages has been formulated by JAKEDA, Science and Technology Department.

Govt focuses on faculty, infra augmentation in operational offsite campuses of JU: Sakeena

JAMMU, FEB 18: Minister for Education, Sakeena Itoo today said that the government is focusing on augmentation of infrastructure and faculty in operational off-site campuses of Jammu University (JU) at Bhaderwah, Kishtwar, Udhampur, Reasi, Rannagar, Kathua and Poonch.

The Minister said this while replying to a question of Legislator Dr. Sunil Bhardwaj in the Legislative Assembly.

The Education Minister said that the Higher Education Department is committed to adopt innovative pedagogical practices and strengthening of culture of research and innovation within the universities, while placing emphasis on strict adherence

by the University of Jammu to the approved Academic Calendar. She added that measures like periodic monitoring of teaching-learning process; promotion of faculty development and student-centric academic activities; phased adoption of Smart Classrooms and effective and timely utilization of e-resources; streamlining of office procedures through digitization of records; prudent financial planning in conformity with prescribed financial norms along with time-bound maintenance and upgradation of classrooms, laboratories, libraries and other facilities are being implemented for the benefit of students.

The Minister further said

that the University of Jammu presently has eleven off-site campuses approved by the University Council, of which, currently seven campuses are operational at Bhaderwah, Kishtwar, Udhampur, Reasi, Rannagar, Kathua, and Poonch. She informed that for the Financial Year 2025-2026, the Higher Education Department has allocated consolidated Grant-in-Aid amounting Rs. 260 crore to the University of Jammu for meeting its duly approved expenditure requirements. She added that the Grant-in-Aid is released in lump sum and is not earmarked campus-wise or academic programmes-wise at the level of Higher Education Department.

She said that the internal

apportionment and utilization of funds, including allocation towards academic programmes at functional off-site campuses, is undertaken by the University of Jammu. The Education Minister further said that measures are being undertaken in coordination with the University of Jammu to strengthen and consolidate the academic, administrative and infrastructural functioning of the functional off-site campuses including Rannagar Campus. The objective behind the initiatives is to ensure a balanced academic growth, optimal utilization of resources and equitable expansion of higher education infrastructure across Jammu & Kashmir.

1200 posts referred to recruitment agencies; no proposal for new Veterinary Centres in Gulabgarh: Javid Dar



JAMMU, FEB 18: Minister for Agriculture Production department, Javid Ahmad Dar, today informed the House that around 1200 gazetted and non-gazetted posts in the department have been referred to Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC) and Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB) for timely filling up of vacancies.

Replying to a question raised by MLA Gulabgarh

Khurshied Ahmed, the Minister stated that 17 Veterinary Centres and 21 Sheep Extension Centres are presently functional in the Gulabgarh Constituency. He added that among these, two centres are being managed through internal arrangements to ensure uninterrupted veterinary services to the livestock breeders. He said that these centres collectively cater to the healthcare needs of the livestock population in the constituency.

The Minister further informed the House that there is presently no proposal to establish new Veterinary or Sheep Extension Centres in Gulabgarh Constituency or

elsewhere in the Union Territory. He explained that establishment of new centres is considered based on several parameters like livestock population, geographical conditions (hilly, plain, or isolated areas), distance from existing centres and techno-feasibility reports submitted. He added that the proposals are processed further only if they meet feasibility criteria and availability of resources.

Highlighting measures to support migratory livestock breeders, the Minister said that the department regularly organizes Summer Camps at highland pastures including Dudhwan (Warwan), Kousarnag (Kulgam), That-

bal (Gulabgarh), Chandrani (Ramban) and Nikan (Mangnagar, Gulabgarh). He added that these camps provide essential veterinary healthcare services to the sheep and goat breeders during the grazing season.

Responding to the supplementary questions regarding vacant posts, establishment of additional centres and deployment of veterinary doctors and staff during migration periods, the Minister assured the House that adequate staff arrangements are made during the migration season and all genuine demands and issues raised by the Member will be addressed in a timely manner.