

BUDGET SESSION 2026: QUESTION HOUR

CM reaffirms commitment to time-bound recruitment; 30,000 vacancies to be filled this year

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 20

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today reiterated that his government is committed to filling vacancies in a time-bound manner, announcing that over 30,000 vacancies will be filled during current year.

The Chief Minister made these remarks while replying to a question raised by member Prof. Gharu Ram Bhagat during the Question Hour of the ongoing Budget Session of the Legislative Assembly.

Informing the House, the Chief Minister stated that vacancies arise from time to time in various Government Departments, including field-level posts, due to, retirements, promotions, res-



ignations and other administrative reasons. "There are institutional mechanisms in place for periodic assessment of vacancies and

timely referral to the concerned recruiting agencies in accordance with the statutory provisions," he said.

He further noted that to ensure essential services and field-level functions are not adversely affected, adequate staff strength is maintained across departments. Wherever necessary, interim administrative arrangements are adopted in accordance with established rules.

The Government, he said, has taken several measures to expedite the filling up of vacancies.

These include advance identification and consolidation of vacancies, time-bound referral of requisitions to recruiting agencies, streamlining of procedural requirements, regular monitoring at the administrative level, and ensuring efficiency and transparency in recruitment process.

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JAMMU, FEB 20

Minister for Health and Medical Education Sakeena Itoo today emphasized the crucial and collective role of legislators, senior citizens, intellectuals, community members and religious leaders in combating the menace of drug abuse across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Minister said this while replying in the House today to a clubbed question of Legislators Pirzada Farooq Ahmad Shah, Surjeet Singh Slathia, Ali Mohammad Sagar (raised by Legislator Mubarak Gul on his behalf) and Ghulam Mohi Ud Din Mir on the issues relating to drug Abuse.

She added that the department has taken various steps like mandatory CCTV installation and computerized billing of medical shops training counselors at village level as well as CCTV installation in and around schools and colleges. She also said that teachers are being trained in schools to counsel students showing some early signs of drug addiction. The Minister informed the House that Drug De-addiction services are being strengthened across the Union Territory under the Health and Medical Education Department and the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan. She added that Addiction Treatment Facilities (ATFs) are functional in all the districts of Kashmir Division and nine districts of



Jammu Division, with dedicated IPD beds and OPD services available to ensure comprehensive treatment and rehabilitation.

The Health Minister said that in Kashmir Division ATFs are functional in SKIMS, GMC Bemina Srinagar, GMC Anantnag, GMC Baramulla, GMC Handwara, District Hospital Kulgam, District Hospital Shopian, District Hospital Pulwama, District Hospital Budgam, District Hospital Ganderbal and District Hospital Bandipora. In Jammu division, ATFs are functional in GMC Doda, GMC Jammu, GMC Kathua, GMC AH Rajouri,

GMC AH Udhampur, District Hospital Kishtwar, District Hospital Poonch, District Hospital Ramban, District Hospital Reasi and DH Samba (functional on OPD Basis), she added.

The Minister said that OPD services are being ensured in all the districts. IPD services in all the GMCs besides the psychiatrists are also available. Efforts are underway to bolster de-addiction counselling and treatment services, particularly in rural and vulnerable areas, by strengthening OPD-based counselling, improving access to essential medicines, and enhancing follow-up and outreach programmes, she added.

"Health and Medical Education Department is regularly organizing awareness campaigns through field functionaries as well as via print media, encouraging the drug abuse victims to seek treatment and counselling to get rid of this evil addiction", she said.

The Minister said that 32517 patients have been registered in ATFs in J&K, with 16759 in Kashmir division and 15758 in Jammu division. She added that there is no proposal to establish Drug De-addiction and Rehabilitation Centre in Pulwama district of Kashmir division and Samba district of Jammu division, saying that a Drug De-Addiction and Rehabilitation Centre at Village Bajwani, Tral district Pulwama is functional and catering to patients from across the district.

The Health Minister said that an addiction treatment facility has been established at District Hospital Samba since February 2024 sponsored by NDDTC (AIMS New Delhi) under MoSJE. "The centre is staffed with a psychiatrist and other trained staff to provide treatment and rehabilitation services", she said. She added that the centre is presently working on OPD basis and providing services like OPD by Psychiatric, counseling, Addiction Treatment Facility and de-addiction medicines are also provided free of cost to the patients.

Tourism projects worth Rs 307.12 lakh completed, another underway in Ramgarh: CM

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 20

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today informed the Legislative Assembly that three tourism projects have been completed and one project is currently in progress in Ramgarh Constituency at a total cost of ₹307.12 lakh under the Capex Budget.

The Chief Minister was replying to a question raised by Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal, which was asked on his behalf by member Surjeet Singh Slathia during the Question Hour.

The House was informed that the Tourism Development Plan for the year 2026-27 has not yet been formulated. However, new projects for Ramgarh Constituency will be considered for 2026-27, subject to feasibility as per established tourism norms, availability of funds and necessary approvals.

Replying to another question, the Chief Minister, who also holds the Tourism portfolio, stated that ₹123.41 lakh was sanctioned under the Capex Budget for the development and beautification of Sidh Gorla

Temple. The works included beautification of the surrounding area, construction of parking facilities and toilet blocks, development of a pond, installation and commissioning of high mast lights and allied works. He informed that the project stands physically completed.

He further said that ₹100.00 lakh was sanctioned under the Capex Budget for the development of Baba Chamlyal Shrine. The sanctioned works comprised construction of flooring and pathways, installation of lights and allied

works, which have also been physically completed.

The Chief Minister added that the department undertakes publicity of the annual mela at Sidh Gorla Temple and Baba Chamlyal Shrine through flex hoardings, newspaper advertisements and booklets to promote religious tourism.

Regarding other religious sites including Ganga Mata Temple, Banu Temple and Ram Temple, he stated that their development will be considered in future, subject to feasibility, availability of funds and necessary approvals.

'6.3 MVA Receiving Station at Qamar to boost power supply in Upper Kapran'

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 20

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today informed the Legislative Assembly that, keeping in view the projected load growth, work on a 6.3 MVA Receiving Station at Qamar, located at Dudwagan, is currently under progress. The project is aimed at ensuring reliable power supply to the Upper Kapran belt which would also depend on consumers maintaining usage within

the agreed collective load limits.

"The receiving station is expected to be commissioned by June 2026, subject to saturation of smart metering," the Chief Minister told the House during the Question Hour of the ongoing Budget Session.

Replying to a query raised by member Nizamuddin Bhat on behalf of MLA Dooru G.A. Mir, the Chief Minister stated that power supply to the Upper Kapran belt is presently being main-

tained as per the approved Load Curtailment Programme (LCP) from the 2x6.3 MVA Receiving Station at Nowgam Chowgund through the 11 kV Kapran feeder.

He further informed that major works on the Qamar Receiving Station have already been executed. Against the approved revised cost of ₹427.63 lakh, a cumulative expenditure of ₹293.44 lakh has been incurred so far. "The commissioning of the receiving sta-

tion has been delayed mainly due to Right of Way (RoW) issues encountered during the installation of the 33 kV line from the Receiving Station at Nowgam Chowgund, as well as during the laying of 11 kV feeders," he said.

The Chief Minister added that during the current financial year 2025-26, an amount of ₹785.00 lakh was earmarked for the project, out of which ₹72.25 lakh has been released and fully utilised.

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 20

The compensation for land acquired under the Ring Road projects in Jammu and Kashmir is being disbursed as per the prescribed norms, with a sharing ratio of 90:10 between the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH) and the UT government.

Replying to a question, raised by MLA Devyani Rana, Minister for Jal Shakti Javed Ahmed Rana stated that the Ring Road in Jammu passes through the districts of Jammu and Samba the project covers six districts namely Srinagar, Baramulla, Pulwama, Budgam, Ganderbal and Bandipora in Kashmir Division. He was replying on behalf of Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah in the House.

Providing details of compensation, the Minister in-



formed that in Jammu Division, out of total released amount of ₹270.11 crore for compensation, ₹244.43 crore have been disbursed. In Kashmir Division, of ₹1514.34 crore released, ₹1,450.94 crore have already been disbursed.

Regarding the pending

cases, the House was informed that in Jammu Division, 38 cases in Samba and 112 cases in Jammu district are yet to be disposed of. In Kashmir Division, pending cases included 57 in Srinagar, 7 in Baramulla, 247 in Budgam, 905 in Ganderbal and 32 in Bandipora.

The Minister clarified that compensation in certain cases is pending due to reasons including non-deposit of balance funds by the indenting department, court litigations, title disputes between land owners and custodians besides other land-related issues.

It was further informed that ₹3.73 crore in respect of district Jammu has been uploaded on the Bhoomi Rashi portal. He added that ₹28.20 crore have been deposited before the High Court of J&K due to title disputes involving 57 landowners.

The Minister assured that compensation in dispute-free cases is being regularly disbursed through the Bhoomi Rashi Portal and the government is committed to clear the pending liabilities in a time-bound manner.

92 restoration works worth Rs 9.84 cr taken up post floods in Marh Constituency: Dy Chief Minister

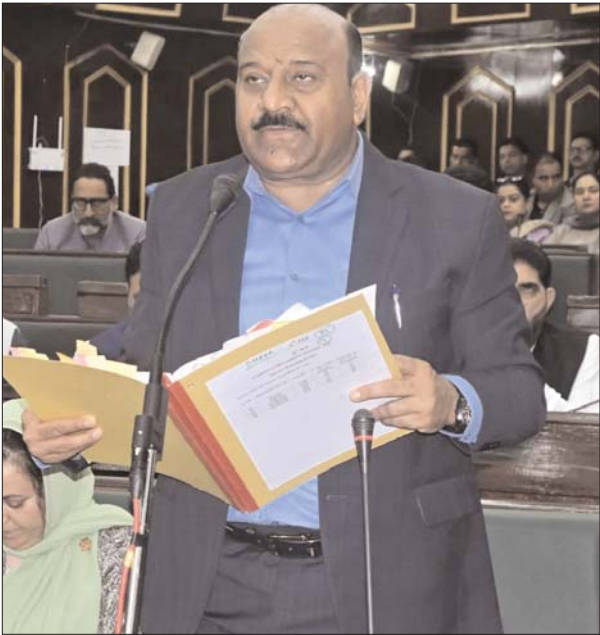
HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 20

Nearly, 92 restoration works worth Rs. 9.84 crore were taken up post 2025 floods across Marh Constituency in Jammu.

This was informed by the Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, while replying to a question raised by Surinder Kumar in the Legislative Assembly.

The Deputy Chief Minister apprised the House that an amount of Rs. 8,87,000 under SDRF norms was also disbursed among 90 affected families in the Constituency.

He acknowledged the significant losses incurred by Marh Constituency's inhabitants due to last year's floods. He commended the district administration's swift response, undertaking prompt assessment and relief measures as per State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF). He said that relief under the SDRF norms was provided to the affected families on priority.



The Deputy Chief Minister said besides SDRF assistance, the affected families were also provided with ration and other essential items during the flood period under Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS).

He informed the House that about 92 works including roads, bridges, WSSs, power and other vital public infrastructure damaged during floods were taken up

for restoration under PWD, PMGSY, JPDCL, PHE, JMC, BDO offices Mandal Phillian and Marh in the Constituency.

The Deputy Chief Minister said that most of the works taken up for temporary restoration have been completed and various works are under different stages of completion, while few are set to be completed by July and August, 2026.

Around 3000 CPWs regularized across J&K: Education Minister

Minister for Education, Sakeena Itoo today informed the House that the government has taken a historic decision to regularize around 3000 CPWs across Jammu and Kashmir, fulfilling their long pending demand.

The Minister stated this while replying to a question raised by Legislator Shabir Ahmad Kullay.

She informed that the department has complied with the February 12, 2018 judgment, following the Supreme Court's dismissal of the SLP, and considered the petitioners' claims as a one-time measure, pending review petition and contempt proceedings in the High Court.

Regarding the pensionary benefits to the petitioners, the Minister said that the matter has been referred to the General Administration Department for placing the same before the competent authority for approval which is awaited.

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, FEB 20

Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today called for simplifying rules to ensure timely and hassle-free disbursement of benefits under various welfare schemes for workers in Jammu and Kashmir.

He made these remarks while chairing a meeting with representatives of different workers' unions under the banner of Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), at Civil Secretariat here today.

MLA Kulgam, Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami; CEO/Secretary, Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board, Munir Ul Islam; Labour Commissioner, Charandeep Singh and other officers also attended the meet-



ing.

During the meeting, Deputy Chief Minister emphasized on the need to enhance outreach, ensure effective implementation of government welfare schemes for workers and their families. He directed the concerned officers to expedite cases related to death compensation claims, marriage assistance, resolution of wage disputes and other welfare assistance to safeguard the interests of workers. "Need is to simplify some rules and norms for

easy disbursement and outreach of benefits to workers," he said.

Deputy Chief Minister further stressed on the seamless functioning of all Assistant Labour Commissioners (ALCs) and called for prompt and amicable redressal of grievances of registered workers.

He underscored need to ensure transparent functioning of trade unions and work as a bridge between workers and the administration to ensure maximum coverage of workers under

welfare schemes and pro-workers initiatives.

"Transparency is imperative for the Government and Unions shall be entertained on their merit," he said.

During the meeting, among other issues the representatives highlighted issues pertaining to amendments in the constitution of the Kashmir Constructional Workers Union, representation of CITU in the Welfare Board and the introduction of pension and housing loan schemes for registered workers.