

CM Omar rolls out Rs 84.41 crore multi-sector development works to transform Ganderbal

GANDERBAL, FEBRUARY 24: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today inaugurated and laid the foundation stones of major development projects worth ₹84.41 crore in Ganderbal Constituency, marking a significant stride towards strengthening infrastructure, healthcare, water supply, sanitation, education and road connectivity across the district.

The projects, spanning multiple departments, were inaugurated and e-launched at different locations, underscoring the Government's commitment to balanced and inclusive development.

At Beehama, the Chief Minister laid the foundation stone for the 2770 lakh Beautification & Development Project of Ganderbal Town under the Housing & Urban Development Department (H&UD-ULB). The project envisages construction of a grand entry gate and a municipal guest house, upgradation of the MC Terminal building into a Smart Library, development of playing areas and club facilities, and comprehensive improvement of streets and pathways through cobble stone and tiling works. It also includes installation of street lights and garbage bins, along with façade improvements, murals and colour-coding of the market to enhance the town's aesthetic appeal.

He laid the foundation stone for the ₹750.78 lakh road project connecting Bus Adda to District Hospital, including widening of Mirani Chowk, aimed at easing traffic congestion and improving connectivity.

Similarly, at District Hospital Ganderbal, the Chief Minister inaugurated a CT Scan Machine installed at a cost of ₹840 lakh under the Health & Medical Education Department through DHSE, significantly augmenting diagnostic facilities for patients.

Likewise, at Rakhi Har-



ran, he laid the foundation stone for a 4.5 MLD capacity Sewage Treatment Plant under the Used Water Management Project of Municipal Council Ganderbal (SBM 2.0), costing ₹1,999.20 lakh under H&UD (UEED). The plant is expected to substantially improve sanitation standards and environmental sustainability in the town.

From Dak Bungalow, Ganderbal, the Chief Minister, who represents Ganderbal Constituency, e-inaugurated several key projects. These included the Water Supply Scheme (WSS) at Urpash Naderbagh, constructed at a cost of ₹769.14 lakh, WSS Buderkund at ₹399 lakh, and WSS Manasbal at ₹130 lakh, all executed by the Rural Water Supply Division, Ganderbal under the Jal Shakti Department and Jal Jeevan Mission.

He also laid e-foundation of works of various roads in the Ganderbal constituency costing ₹1,288.40 lakh under PWD, and improvement of various infrastructure in schools in the district at a cost of ₹902.69 lakh under the School Education Department. The Chief Minister further laid e-foundation stones for upgradation

of inner link roads of Treesa Safapora, including link roads at Check Yangaroo in Lar, Ganderbal, at a cost of ₹302.11 lakh, as well as improvement and upgradation of Kohistan Colony Canal Roads along with allied works amounting to ₹379.62 lakh, both under PWD.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister reiterated that development must translate into tangible improvements in the daily lives of people.

"From healthcare and sanitation to roads, schools and drinking water, these projects reflect our resolve to ensure comprehensive development of Ganderbal. Our focus is not merely on announcements but on timely execution and quality outcomes," he said.

He emphasized that investments in urban beautification, clean water supply, modern healthcare infrastructure and road connectivity would not only strengthen public services but also create economic opportunities and raise the overall quality of life.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister also distributed Mission Yuva disbursement letters worth ₹55 lakh among beneficiaries.

Later, the Chief Minister held a public interaction at the Dak Bungalow Ganderbal, where he listened to the demands and grievances of people from various areas of the district. Delegations from Phekh, Safapora, Manigam, Batwina, Nunar, Wakura, Lar, Sherpathri, Yangoor, the Traders Federation Ganderbal, the Health Employees Confederation Ganderbal and other groups apprised him of issues relating to drinking water supply, lift irrigation, upgradation of sports infrastructure, establishment of a fire service station, and improvement of schools, among other demands.

Minister for Health & Medical Education Sakina Itoo, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal Jatin Kishore, Director Urban Local Bodies Kashmir Qazi Sarwar, Senior Superintendent of Police Ganderbal Khalil Poswal and other concerned officers accompanied the Chief Minister during the tour. Minister for Jal Shakti Javed Ahmed Rana participated in the foundation laying ceremony through virtual mode.

LG Kavinder chairs preparatory meeting for 1st Sindhu Mahakumbh 2026

LEH, FEB 24: The upcoming Sindhu Mahakumbh 2026 in Leh is not merely an event, but a symbol of Ladakh's capability, discipline, and cultural pride. It represents the collective spirit, organisational strength, and hospitality of the region while providing a platform to showcase Ladakh's rich cultural heritage to the nation and the world. This landmark event will bring together thousands of devotees, dignitaries, and cultural troupes, reinforcing Ladakh's status as a unique destination for spiritual, cultural, and tourism experiences.

This was stated by the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Ladakh, Shri Kavinder Gupta, while chairing a high-level preparatory meeting at Lok Niwas today to review and finalise arrangements for the First Sindhu Mahakumbh 2026, scheduled to be held on June 23-24 at the revered Sindhu Ghat.

The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary Shri Ashish Kundra; Secretary, Housing and Urban Development Department, Shri Sanjit Rodrigues; Wildlife Warden Shri Mandeep Mittal; Director Tourism Shri Tsering Paldan; ADC Leh Shri Chulam Mohd; SE PWD Shri Dorjay Gyatso; Assistant Director Tourism Leh Smt Padma Angmo; and members of the Sindhu Darshan Yatra Samiti including Shri Bhupinder Kansil (General Secretary), Shri Manoj Kumar Gogia (Vice President), and Shri Vikram Randhawa (MLA) from Jammu.

Shri Bhupinder Kansil informed the meeting that the Sindhu Darshan Festival has been organised by the Samiti since 1987. This year



marks its 30th edition, which will be celebrated as the grand First Sindhu Mahakumbh. The event is expected to attract pilgrims from over 25 States and Union Territories across India, along with foreign ambassadors and dignitaries. The Samiti requested full support from the UT Administration for logistical coordination, arrangements for the North Zone Cultural Centre cultural troupe from Patiala, and other essential services to ensure the event is conducted smoothly.

Emphasising the timeless principle of "Atithi Devo Bhava", Shri Kavinder Gupta urged the Administration to ensure that every pilgrim is welcomed with care, respect, and hospitality. He called for meticulous planning and coordinated efforts across departments to provide a safe, comfortable, and memorable experience for all visitors, reflecting Ladakh's tradition of warmth and excellence in service. He also assured that the UT Administration will provide full support to ensure that the event is seamless, comfortable, and memorable for all devotees and visitors. He stressed

that all departments must prepare detailed, time-bound action plans covering logistics, security, medical services, and all aspects of visitor management, with regular progress review.

The Lt Governor directed that effective crowd management, traffic control, parking, and smooth movement of pilgrims be ensured. He emphasized that robust security arrangements must be in place, with police, administration, and other agencies working in close coordination, supported by a fully operational emergency response system. He instructed that the Health Department deploy adequate medical camps, ambulances, doctors, and disaster management resources to safeguard participants' health. He stressed that sanitation, potable water, toilet facilities, lighting, and waste management be maintained at the highest standards, and that the event be organized in an environmentally sustainable and responsible manner.

Shri Kavinder Gupta further instructed that the Sindhu Welfare Committee and the Administration coordinate cultural pro-

grammes, volunteer deployment, and devotee reception to ensure a positive and memorable experience. A Joint Control Room will facilitate real-time coordination among all departments, and strict accountability mechanisms will be enforced to address any lapses. The Lieutenant Governor said "Our collective efforts should ensure that the Sindhu Mahakumbh is not only a grand spiritual gathering but also a showcase of Ladakh's organisational capability, cultural pride, and commitment to excellence. It is our responsibility to make this event a safe, memorable, and exemplary occasion at the national level."

Shri Kavinder Gupta reaffirmed that the Administration is committed to make the 1st Sindhu Mahakumbh 2026 a spiritually enriching, secure, and meticulously organised event that reflects Ladakh's cultural heritage, tourism potential, and capacity for excellence in public administration.

The Chief Secretary Shri Ashish Kundra announced the constitution of a committee under the Deputy Commissioner Leh for the successful conduct of the 1st Sindhu Mahakumbh 2026.

Sakeena leads plantation drive at Ganderbal Hospital, promotes eco-friendly healthcare practices under Kayakalp

GANDERBAL, FEBRUARY 24: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo today led a plantation drive at District Hospital Ganderbal to promote eco-friendly practices and reinforce quality healthcare standards under the Kayakalp and National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS) programmes.

The Minister planted saplings within the hospital premises and emphasized on the importance of creating green, clean and patient-friendly environment in the healthcare institutions. "Environmental protection is not only a social responsibility but an essential component of quality healthcare delivery", the Minister stated.

She highlighted that the plantation drives in healthcare facilities serve a dual purpose of enhancing the aesthetic appeal of hospitals and contributing to environmental conservation. "These kind initiatives help in improving air quality, reducing pollution and fostering a healing atmosphere for patients, attendants, and healthcare



workers", she said.

The Minister reiterated the commitment of the Government to strengthen healthcare infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir in adherence to national quality standards. She noted that under the Kayakalp and NQAS initiatives, special emphasis is being laid on cleanliness, sanitation, waste management, infection control and environmental sustainability across all healthcare institutions of J&K.

The Minister appreciated the efforts of the hospital administration and staff for actively participating in the plantation drive and maintaining high standards of hygiene and patient care. She urged healthcare workers to adopt eco-friendly measures like proper biomedical waste management, energy conservation and maintaining green hospital campuses for effi-

cient and effective patient care.

On the occasion, Medical Superintendent, DH Ganderbal, Dr. Farah Shafi informed the Minister that the plantation drive will be followed by regular environmental awareness activities, cleanliness drives and implementation of green practices to further enhance the District Hospital's compliance with Kayakalp and NQAS benchmarks.

DDC Poonch reviews implementation of Capex Budget, Central Schemes

POONCH, FEBRUARY 24:

District Development Commissioner Poonch, Ashok Kumar Sharma today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the physical and financial progress under the District Capex Budget 2025-26, along with Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) and UT Sector Schemes in the district.

The DDC took a detailed sector-wise review of ongoing and upcoming developmental projects.

Superintending Engineer Hydraulic Circle, Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) and Executive Engineer I&FC presented detailed briefings on the physical and financial status of works approved under different heads, including PWD, DDC Grants, Health, Secondary Educa-



tion, NFB, Untied Funds, ULB, CDF, TSP Roads, YSS and other sectors.

The DDC also reviewed progress of NABARD funded Roads, Samagra projects, PMAAGY, BADP, NABARD-AH, among other developmental initiatives and stressed the need for early completion of all

works. The meeting also discussed major infrastructure projects including construction of Administrative Complexes at Mendhar and Poonch, motorable bridges and other key works.

While assessing the status of roads, bridges and other developmental works, the

DDC stressed adherence to timelines.

The meeting was attended by CPO Shama Un Ahmed, Superintending Engineer Hydraulic Circle Poonch, Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Poonch, Mendhar & Surankote, CEO Mukhtar Ahmed Manhas and other concerned officers.

DLSA Budgam organizes awareness programme on Lokpal

BUDGAM, FEBRUARY 24:

District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Budgam, under the aegis of the J&K Legal Services Authority, organized an awareness programme on the Lokpal at Almasa Educational Institute, Budgam.

The programme was held under the chairmanship of O.P. Baghat, Chairman, District Legal Services Au-

thority (Principal District & Sessions Judge), Budgam, and was supervised by Tabassum Qadir Parray, Secretary, DLSA Budgam.

The primary objective of the programme was to create awareness among the students and general public regarding the significance of the Lokpal institution in promoting transparency, accountability, and integrity in public administration.

Addressing the large

gathering, Nazir Ahmad Wagay, Deputy LADC, DLSA Budgam, gave a detailed overview of the programme and apprised the audience about the provisions of the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013, which mandates inquiry into allegations of corruption against specified public functionaries and related matters. He highlighted the role of the Lokpal in strengthening anti-corruption mechanisms and en-

suring good governance.

On the occasion, a short documentary film on anti-corruption measures and Lokpal awareness was screened to enhance understanding and awareness among the masses.

Zahoor Ahmad Malik, Assistant LADC, also spoke on the occasion and emphasized the importance of public participation in combating corruption and upholding ethical standards in society.

2-Day Trainee Products' Sale from Feb 25 at Numaish Gah Srinagar

SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 24: The Department of Handicrafts & Handloom is organizing a two-day Trainee Products' Sale at Kashmir Haat, popularly known as Numaish Gah, commencing from February 25, 2026.

Craft products made by trainees in 432 Training Centres across 10 districts of Kashmir Division will be showcased, including hand-knotted woollen carpets, GI-tagged Pashmina & Kani shawls and stoles, Crewel curtains, Sozni-embroidered

Zari & Aari embroidered suits, tweed cloth, Chainstitch rugs and cushion covers, Tapestry, Gabba and Namda products, Papier Mâché, and Willow Wicker souvenir and décor items.

A spokesman of the Department stated that the products are being offered at extremely affordable rates, with pricing calculated only on the material component used. "No labour cost is added, thereby ensuring cost-to-cost availability of authentic handmade products to buyers while simultaneously providing a platform for

trainees to exhibit their skills," he said. He further stated that in the last three trainee products' exhibitions, a cumulative revenue of ₹57 lakh has been generated, reflecting the overwhelming public response and demand for Kashmir's handmade products.

District stalls are expected to record encouraging sales during the current exhibition, with particular interest anticipated in Pashmina, Crewel, papier mache and willow wicker products.