

FROM PAGE 1

Ahead of inaugurating Kashmir train, PM Modi terms June 6 as special day for J&K people

inaugurate the Chenab bridge (highest railway bridge in the world) and India's first cable-stayed Anji bridge, the symbol of India's engineering excellence before flagging off Vande Bharat trains to mark the completion of the 272-km Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla railway link (USBRL) that will provide direct train connectivity to Kashmir. Officials said that a high security alert has been sounded across Jammu and Kashmir in view of the Prime Minister's visit with senior police, paramilitary officers, army and intelligence officers personally monitoring the station. Heavy security deployments have been made in and around the venues with latest gadgets, including drones deployed to keep a close vigil, the officials said, adding the security grid on the borders and the hinterland has been further beefed up to check infiltration and movement of anti-national and subversive elements.

The area domination and raids on the houses of suspected persons including Over Ground Workers and relatives of terrorists operating from across the border have also been intensified as part of the security arrangements, the officials added.

PM MODI TO DEDICATE MULTIPLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Officials said that PM Modi will also lay the foundation stone, inaugurate and dedicate to the nation multiple development projects worth over Rs 46,000 crore at Katra.

The Prime Minister will lay the foundation stone and inaugurate various road projects. He will lay the foundation stone of road widening project from Radikul to Kupwara on National Highway-701 and the construction of Shoghan bypass road on NH-444 worth over Rs 1,952 crore. He will also inaugurate two flyover projects at Sangrama Junction on National Highway-1 in Srinagar and at Bemina junction on National Highway-44. These projects will ease traffic congestion and enhance traffic flow for the commuters.

Prime Minister will also lay the foundation stone of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Institute of Medical Excellence in Katra worth over Rs 350 crore. It will be the first medical college in Reasi district contributing substantially to the healthcare infrastructure in the region.

UDHAMPUR-SRINAGAR-BARAMULLA RAIL LINK (USBRL) PROJECT

The 272 Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project constructed worth around Rs 43,780 crore includes 36 tunnels (spanning 119 km) and 943 bridges. The project establishes all-weather, seamless rail connectivity between the Kashmir Valley and the rest of the country aiming to transform regional mobility and driving socio-economic integration.

The Prime Minister will also flag off two Vande Bharat Express trains from Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra to Srinagar and back. They will offer a swift, comfortable, and reliable travel option for residents, tourists, pilgrims among others. Out of the total 272 km USBRL project, 209 km was commissioned in phases with the first phase of the 118 km Qazigund-Baramulla section commissioned in October 2009 followed by 18 km Banihal-Qazigund in June 2013, 25 km Udhampur-Katra in July 2014 and 48.1 km long Banihal-Sangaldan stretch in February, last year. The work on the 46-km Sangaldan-Reasi section was also completed in June last year, leaving a total 17 km stretch between Reasi and Katra and this section was finally completed in December 2024.

CHENAB AND ANJI RAIL BRIDGES

The architectural marvel Chenab Rail Bridge, situated at a height of 359 meters above the river, is the world's highest railway arch bridge. It is a 1,315-metre-long arch bridge engineered to withstand seismic and wind conditions. A key impact of the bridge will be in enhancing connectivity between Jammu and Srinagar. Through Vande Bharat train moving on the bridge, it will take just about 3 hours to travel between Katra and Srinagar, reducing existing travel time by 2-3 hours.

The Anji Bridge is India's first cable-stayed rail bridge that will serve the nation in a challenging terrain. Historic day for Kashmir.

The June 6, 2025, is poised to be inscribed in golden letters in the history of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Katra-Srinagar rail section was the most critical component of the ambitious USBRL project, considered a transformative infrastructure initiative aimed at connecting the Kashmir Valley with the rest of the country through a robust, all-weather railway network. The vision to connect the Kashmir Valley with the rest of the country through a railway line is rooted in the late 19th century during the reign of Maharaja Pratap Singh.

In 1898, he first articulated the vision of a railway line connecting Jammu, the winter capital of the princely state, to Srinagar, the summer capital nestled in the Kashmir Valley. In 1905, he approved the construction of a narrow 762 mm gauge railway via Reasi, which would eventually evolve into the modern USBRL project. By 1905, after years of deliberation, surveys, and consultations with British engineers, Maharaja Pratap Singh approved the construction of a railway line from Jammu to Srinagar. However, the challenging topography, geological instability, and harsh weather conditions of the region delayed significant progress for decades.

EFFORTS RESTARTED IN 1983

In 1983, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi laid the foundation stone for the Jammu-Udhampur section of the railway line. Following this, in 1994, Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao

announced the modern-day USBRL with an extended railway line from Udhampur to Baramulla via Srinagar to connect the mainland to the Kashmir Valley. The project was formally sanctioned by the Railway Ministry in the 1994-95 budget, with an initial estimated cost of Rs 2,500 crore.

NATIONAL PROJECT
In 2021, USBRL was declared a "National Project" by the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led NDA government, underscoring its strategic and socio-economic importance. The project is divided into four key legs: Jammu to Udhampur (53 km), Udhampur to Katra (25 km), Katra to Banihal (111 km), Banihal to Baramulla (135 km).

JAMMU AS RAILWAY DIVISION

On January 6, 2025, Prime Minister Modi inaugurated the Jammu Railway Division, carved out of the Firozpur Division, covering 742.1 km as the 70th division of Indian Railways. The Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS) conducts the final safety inspection of the Katra-Reasi section, paving the way for operationalisation. Railways also conduct a trial run of the first Vande Bharat train from Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra to Srinagar, traversing the Anji Khad Bridge (India's first cable-stayed railway bridge) and the Chenab Bridge (the world's highest railway arch bridge) –

326 Agniveers from J&K inducted into Army
Lt Gen Erry, according to the news agency – Kashmir News Observer (KNO) acknowledged the transformation of these young men into soldiers of the Indian Army.

The event was attended by senior military and civil dignitaries, alongside proud and emotional families who witnessed the culmination of months of rigorous training. The moment was especially poignant for the parents of the Agniveers, who were honoured with the 'Gaurav Padak' – a token of appreciation for their selfless contribution to the nation.

Addressing the Agniveers, Lt Gen Erry said, "Your commitment is not just to the uniform, but to the very idea of India. You are Jammu and Kashmir's finest sons; now India's mightiest shields."

He commended the instructors and training staff for maintaining high standards of discipline and combat readiness under a challenging regimen.

As the final salute rang out and the Tricolour fluttered proudly in the valley breeze, the significance of the occasion was clear: "The youth of Jammu and Kashmir are not only embracing a bright future, but are also stepping forward to defend the nation with courage, conviction, and pride." –

Lieutenant Governor reviews arrangements for Hon'ble Prime Minister's public meeting at Katra

Lieutenant Governor observed that the much-awaited inauguration of Chenab and Anji Rail Bridge and flag-off of the Vande Bharat Trains by Hon'ble Prime Minister will mark a historic moment for the nation and it will shape the future of J&K UT and future of its citizens.

ACB files disproportionate assets case against govt employee in Banihal

wealth. During the course of investigation, the ACB obtained search warrant from the Hon'ble Court of Special Judge Anti-Corruption, Doda and search was conducted at the residential complex situated at Old National Highway Road Chahal, Telsil Banihal, District Ramban in presence of Magistrate and independent witnesses. Further investigation of the case is in progress.

PM's Katra visit: Dr Jitendra, CM Omar review arrangements

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said the Vande Bharat, scheduled to be flagged off tomorrow by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, will benefit everyone. Speaking to the reporters, CM Omar said the Vande Bharat train project was started when he was in Class 7th. "It has been a long wait and now the train is set to benefit us all. The closure of highways will have the least impact on people and the loot of airlines will come to an end. We are being charged Rs 20,000 for a ticket instead of Rs 5,000 when the highway gets closed," he said.

He added that the Vande Bharat train has already set multiple records including being run on Chenab bridge, the world's tallest railway bridge, and also on the country's tallest railway bridge – Anji Bridge.

Moreover, Omar Abdullah posted, "Visited the tallest railway bridge in the world, The Chenab Bridge, to review arrangements for the visit of the PM @narendramodi ji tomorrow."

"Tomorrow is a landmark day for J&K when, finally, the valley will be connected to the rest of the country by a railway link to be inaugurated at the hands of the Honorable Prime Minister," the Chief Minister posted.

Pertinently, Prime Minister Modi will inaugurate the Chenab bridge and visit the bridge deck, and will also lay the foundation stone, inaugurate, and dedicate to the nation multiple development projects worth over Rs 46,000 crore on Friday at Katra in Jammu's Reasi district

Army launches "Operation Shiva" to ensure safe, smooth conduct of pilgrimage

Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), stationed across strategic locations along the two primary routes – Pahalgam (48 km) and Baltal (14 km). The operation incorporates advanced security protocols, including high-altitude route clearance, drone surveillance, CCTV monitoring, and the deployment of bulletproof

vehicles as part of a three-tier security setup," the officials said.

Additionally, they said that anti-sabotage operations and rigorous checks along the pilgrimage routes are being conducted to thwart any potential threats.

"Army's efforts are complemented by enhanced medical facilities, improved transport services, and upgraded accommodation arrangements starting from Lakhampur, the entry point to the Union Territory," they added.

Pertinently, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, during a high-level review meeting in Jammu on May 29 had emphasized the government's commitment to ensuring a seamless and secure pilgrimage. "The government led by PM Modi, in collaboration with the Jammu and Kashmir administration, is dedicated to making the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra safe, smooth, and accessible for all devotees. We have instructed security forces to maintain utmost vigilance to ensure the sacred journey is completed without any disruptions," he had said.

The SASB has also introduced mandatory Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) cards for pilgrims to enhance safety and tracking.

Registration for the yatra, which began on April 14 is available online through the SASB website and offline at over 540 designated bank branches across the country.

Pilgrims are required to submit a Compulsory Health Certificate (CHC) to ensure their fitness for the high-altitude trek –

Direct Jammu-Srinagar train to commence in Sep: Railway Minister

the 'political will, guidance and support to the Railway Minister' and that is the dream, the long-standing dream is fulfilled today, he added.

Vaishnaw said the 1.3-km highest railway bridge in the world over Chenab river, forms a crucial link in the 111-km stretch from Katra to Banihal. "It is a huge technical marvel completed after overcoming many challenges," he said.

If technical parameters are taken into account, the bridge is designed in such a way to withstand 260 km per hour wind speed. Since the bridge area falls within seismic Zone V, its design was a complex process," he said.

The minister said the foundation of the bridge is half of the football field and 30,000 tonnes of steel was used in its making. Similarly, he said, the Anji Khad bridge is equally important as it is the first cable-stayed railway bridge in the country.

Vaishnaw said, "We found a new way of tunnelling called Himalayan tunnelling method which is the result of technical innovation carried out by the Railways. It is also a great achievement for the country," he said.

He said that travellers will enjoy a train trip to Kashmir.

"The tunnel construction was done in such a way as to ensure the comfort of the travellers. The service will prove a great facility for the people of Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

The minister said the Jammu railway division of the Northern Railways recently conducted an experiment to transport cherry parcel vans from Katra to Mumbai and many more facilities would be included as time passes

NIA conducts raids at 32 locations in Kashmir in terror conspiracy case

Al-Badr etc. The cadres and workers whose premises were searched are under the NIA's scanner for their involvement in supporting terrorist activities such as facilitating terrorists, collection and distribution of sticky bombs/magnetic bombs, IEDs, funds, narcotic substances, and arms/ammunitions. According to the NIA investigations, the above-mentioned organisations supported by their leaders in Pakistan have been conspiring to commit acts of terror and violence by radicalising local youth and mobilising overground workers to disturb peace and communal harmony in J&K. Investigations have revealed that Pak-based operatives were using social media / online apps to facilitate and promote terror. Drones were being used by them to deliver arms/ammunition, explosives, narcotics etc. to their operatives and cadres in the Kashmir valley. 02 Live cartridges, 01 fired bullet head and 01 bayonet have been recovered during the searches. Apart from this, several digital devices containing large volumes of incriminating data & documents have been recovered by NIA in these searches. These will be subjected to a thorough scrutiny by the agency to unravel the details of the terrorist conspiracy. NIA is continuing its investigation in the case.

J&K ACB arrests Deputy

Forester & Forest Guard for demanding & accepting bribe of Rs 11,000

for the Dy. Forester and rest of the amount for Forest Guard) from the complainant for doing the needful. Since, the complainant didn't want to pay bribe and he approached Anti-Corruption Bureau for taking legal action against the accused public servants under law. On receipt of the complaint, a discreet verification was conducted, which confirms the demand of bribe by the public servants concerned and accordingly, a case FIR No. 11/2025 U/S of Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 and section 61(2) BNS, 2023 was registered in Police Station ACB Jammu and investigation taken up. During the course of investigation, a trap team was constituted. The team laid a successful trap and accused public servants were caught red-handed while demanding and accepting bribe amount of ₹11,000 from the complainant in the presence of independent

witnesses. The accused persons were arrested on the spot by the ACB team after following due process of law. The bribe money was also recovered from their possession in presence of independent witnesses associated with the trap team. Moreover, searches are also being conducted in the residential houses of both the accused in presence of independent witnesses and Magistrates. Further investigation of the instant case is going on.

Govt jobs aspirants can apply for SSC recruitment tests through dedicated Mobile App

future vision is to make this app a one-stop solution for the entire recruitment lifecycle," he added. In the past, candidates could apply online through the Commission's website and take a live photo via the mySSC mobile app, according to a notice issued by the SSC.

"Starting from June 2025, the entire application process can now be completed seamlessly within the app itself," said the notice dated June 2, 2025. Candidates will be able to apply for SSC examination using specific android mobile phones through the mySSC mobile app which can be downloaded from Google Play Store, it said. "This will be applicable for all the exams being conducted June 2025 onwards," the Commission said.

The mySSC mobile app of the Commission has been significantly upgraded which is aimed at enhancing the user experience and expanding the range of services available, it said. The update would include integration of the Aadhaar authentication services, the Commission said. In order to apply through the mySSC mobile app, candidates must first register using their Aadhaar number on the OTR page. The mobile app works only on Android phones with version 11 or higher, the SSC said.

Before applying for the examinations candidates must also install the Aadhaar Face RD app on their phone to complete the face authentication form, it said and shared a link to it. In another notice issued on Wednesday, the Commission said that candidates are seeking clarification whether demographic details such as name, date of birth, address etc. from Aadhaar will prevail over the data filled by the candidates in the OTR form.

"In this regard, it is clarified that the information entered by the candidates in the OTR shall be treated as final for all recruitment related purposes and details mentioned in Aadhaar will not override the candidate-provided information in OTR," the notice said. The SSC had in April this year decided to implement Aadhaar-based biometric authentication in its all examinations in order to verify candidates' identity on a voluntary basis. The Commission is one of the largest recruitment agencies of the central government with its main mandate to conduct selections for non-gazetted posts in various central ministries and departments, among others. The SSC conducts seven mandated all India open competitive examinations, including the Combined Graduate Level Examination (CGLE) besides three limited departmental competitive examinations, according to the officials.

'J&K generates over 5.4 Lakh tons waste annually'

the multiple challenges facing the environment today—including climate change, global warming, forest degradation, and other environmental crises that were unimaginable just decades ago. He noted that while the government is taking several steps to improve environmental cleanliness in Kashmir, these efforts can only succeed with active public participation.

Professor Ayaz Hassan Moon, Dean of Academic Affairs at Islamia University, highlighted the vital role of educational institutions in combating plastic pollution. He emphasized the urgent need to seriously explore alternatives to plastic. Other participants stressed the importance of preserving nature to maintain ecological balance, warning that life cannot thrive without a healthy environment, and that it is every individual's responsibility to live in harmony with nature. Although Minister for Environment and Forests Javed Ahmad Rana was scheduled to attend the event as the chief guest, he could not participate due to unforeseen commitments. In a separate program held in Ganderbal, Director of School Education Kashmir, Dr. G.N. Yatoo, emphasized that one of the biggest global challenges today is environmental degradation. "Jammu and Kashmir is an ecologically fragile region. Even a slight environmental imbalance can have serious consequences," Dr. Yatoo said.

He stressed the need for future generations to understand the importance of environmental preservation. "Especially in today's context, the focus must be on eliminating single-use plastic. Viable alternatives are already available, and we must adopt them. Additionally, our water bodies, natural resources, and forests must be protected. When people—especially students—are sensitized and made aware, they will understand how critical this issue is," he added –

Car plunges into gorge in Poonch. Policeman killed

said. They said locals rescued the police personnel in an unconscious state from the scene of the accident and took him to sub-district hospital Surankote but he was declared brought dead by the doctors.