

## Kashmir rail link project will be crucial part of Viksit Bharat's developmental journey: Jitendra Singh

GY CORRESPONDENT

**KATRA JUNE 5**  
Union Minister Jitendra Singh on Thursday lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi for ensuring a speedy completion of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Railway Link (USBRL) project after taking office in 2014 and said it marks the beginning of a historic journey in setting up the world's highest railway bridge in Jammu and Kashmir. On Friday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to inaugurate the world's highest railway bridge over the Chenab river and the Anji Khad bridge, India's first cable-stayed bridge, before flagging off Vande Bharat trains to mark the completion of the 272-km USBRL, that will provide direct train connectivity to the Kashmir valley.

Singh, who along with Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah visited the bridge over the Chenab river, the Anji Khad bridge, and the Katra railway station to review the arrangements for Friday, said in the coming days, the project will become a crucial part of the developmental journey of 'Viksit Bharat' (developed India). When Narendra Modi became the prime minister in 2014, this work had almost come to a halt. The world's tallest railway bridge, which the prime minister is now going to inaugurate, was surrounded by many controversies.

There were doubts -- would building it be feasible? would it be safe? Singh told reporters here.

He said several railway ministers repeatedly visited the site. "A new alignment was made. It was realised that the bridge would be



extremely high. Upon checking, we found that it is actually 35 metres taller than the Eiffel Tower.

That marked the beginning of a historic journey under the Modi government," he said. Singh said the train route will now serve as a path for business, travel and commerce. "You will be able to reach Srinagar in just three hours from here," he said. The Union minister said in the times to come, if the government and policymakers think imaginatively, the project could become a major tourist circuit.

"Even the pilgrims visiting Vaishno Devi can be integrated into this circuit. I believe that travel agencies should be prepared for this."

After visiting Vaishno Devi, tourists can come here and then reach the (Kashmir) valley in just three hours," he said. Asserting that the journey on Vande Bharat trains through the hills will be beautiful, Singh said, "It is a scenic route with beautiful views along the way. Children,

youngsters and even couples can take photos en route. This will also serve as an alternative route and reduce congestion on the highway."

"Earlier, due to Army movements, there used to be a lot of pressure on the highway and extensive security arrangements had to be made."

With the Army now using the train route, the load on the highway has significantly reduced," he added.

The Union minister termed the train to Kashmir the beginning of a new chapter and said, "The Katra station has already played a major role in connecting Jammu and Kashmir with India's growth story."

In the coming days, this project will become a crucial part of the developmental journey of Viksit Bharat." Singh said the project is a historic one. "First of all, I believe that

there is a long history behind this. The vision of laying railway tracks in Jammu and Kashmir and connecting Kashmir with the rest of the country and the world was conceived nearly 150 years ago by Maharaja Pratap Singh," he said.

He said engineers and architects were brought in, and at that time, there were plans to lay a narrow-gauge track like the ones seen in Darjeeling or Shimla.

"A simple kind of railway line was envisioned," Singh said, adding, "But the plan did not move forward then."

Then came Independence and we had to wait until 1972 for the first train to arrive in Jammu.

Earlier, we used to have a railway station in Sialkot, which was lost after Independence. Singh said the train route will be unique.

"It will go uphill and then pass through snowy regions."

Coaches had to be designed keeping both the terrain and the climate in mind. In February, the snow in Jammu starts to melt due to warmer weather."

It is going to be a unique experience," he said. A multi-tier security setup has been put in place for Modi's visit to Jammu and Kashmir on Friday to inaugurate the much-awaited Kashmir rail link and also dedicate to the nation multiple development projects worth over Rs 46,000 crore in Katra, officials said.

This will be Modi's first visit to the Union Territory post Operation Sindoor, launched by the Indian armed forces in retaliation to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack that left 26 people, mostly tourists, dead

## National quality monitors flag deficiencies in rural road connectivity program

**12.9 % completed works, 26.47 % bridge works graded unsatisfactory: J&K asked to submit 54 ATRs of inspection reports**

GY CORRESPONDENT

**SRINAGAR, JUNE 5**

A significant portion of road projects executed under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) have been deemed unsatisfactory by National Quality Monitors (NQM). Official documents in possession of news agency, reveal that NQMs have found 12.9 % completed works, 8.17 % ongoing works, 16.39 % maintenance works and 26.47 % bridges works unsatisfactory.

These works were graded as unsatisfactory during the inspections carried out by NQMs from April 2022 to March 2025, reads record note of PMGSY's empowered committee meeting held for J&K in New Delhi on April 25, 2025.

The findings have raised questions about quality of works executed under the

Govt's flagship rural road connectivity program.

According to record note of the EC meeting, Jammu & Kashmir government was also asked to submit Action Taken Reports on NQM inspections.

"54 ATR of NQM inspections (22 completed works and 32 ongoing works) are pending from the UT. The UT was requested to submit ATRs at the earliest," reads minutes of the meeting. Under the PMGSY, a three-tier quality control monitoring system has been adopted for these roads. While the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) represents the first tier, the second tier comprises State Quality Monitors (SQMs), who carry out independent inspections of road projects, while the third tier consists of National Quality Monitors (NQMs)."

## Eid-ul-Adha: SMC to deploy 'free hooper vehicles' for animal waste collection

Commissioner appeals for public cooperation to maintain hygiene

GY CORRESPONDENT

**SRINAGAR, JUNE 5**

The Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) will deploy a free hooper vehicle service across all municipal wards to collect animal waste and hides during the upcoming Eid-ul-Adha festival.

An official from the SMC Srinagar told the news agency, the department has made comprehensive arrangements to ensure the scientific disposal of sacrificial animal remains. He said the service will be active on all three days of Eid, starting Saturday, June 7, 2025, with dedicated team of drivers and ward officers deployed across all 74 municipal wards of Srinagar.

He added a detailed roster of ward-wise drivers and vehicles has been prepared by the Chief Transport Officer and published for public reference. Each ward will

have a designated hooper vehicle with assigned staff operating in rotational shifts to maintain continuity of service throughout the festive period.

"This is a door-to-door service and all arrangements have been put in place to facilitate a clean and hygienic environment during Eid. We urge the public not to dump animal waste in open spaces or drains," he said.

Notably, the SMC has also publicized the ward-wise contact details of sanitation team heads, and the service will be completely free of cost. In addition, 24x7 control rooms will remain operational to register complaints or requests.

Moreover, the Commissioner SMC, Dr. Owais Ahmad, has appealed to religious leaders and civil society to help raise awareness among the public about safe waste disposal

## JMC observes World Environment Day

Organizes awareness campaign, human chain & plantation drive



GY CORRESPONDENT

**JAMMU, JUNE 5**

On the occasion of World Environment Day, the Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) organized a series of impactful programs under the jurisdiction of Jammu Municipal Corporation to promote environmental awareness and sustainable practices. The event commenced with the formation of a human chain on bridge at Gujjar Nagar over Tawi River which was ceremonially flagged off by MLA Jammu East, Yudhvir Sethi, along with Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Sachin Kumar Vaishya, and JMC Commissioner, Dr. Devansh Yadav. The chain, comprising students, sanitation champions and workers, JMC officials, and enthusiastic citizens, raised slogans to spread awareness on environmental conservation.

The human chain culminated at Maharaja Hari Singh Park, where an oath-taking ceremony

was conducted, reaffirming the commitment to cleanliness and sustainable living and not to throw garbage in water bodies. The momentum continued with a tree plantation drive, where dignitaries, students, and citizens planted various types of saplings to contribute to a greener future. Speaking on the occasion, the MLA emphasized the vital role of both children and adults in taking proactive steps to safeguard the environment. He encouraged everyone to adopt eco-friendly habits and contribute to making Jammu a cleaner and greener city.

The Deputy Commissioner urged citizens to plant more trees and minimize pollution, stressing that even small efforts can collectively make a significant impact on the environment. In his message, the JMC Commissioner highlighted the importance of proper waste disposal, especially avoiding the dumping of

garbage in water bodies. He appealed to the public to work toward the elimination of plastic waste and to adopt sustainable waste management practices.

The event saw active participation from schools, civil society groups, and municipal staff, reflecting a united commitment to protect and preserve the environment for future generations. Among others, Environmentalist Retd. IFS, O.P. Sharma Vidyarthi, Joint Commissioner (A), JMC, Krishan Lal, Joint Commissioner health and Sanitation, Abhishek Sattar, Deputy Commissioner (South), JMC, Lal Chand, Health Officer, Dr. Vinod Sharma, Chief Transport Officer, Dharamveer Singh, Animal Welfare Officer, Dr. Gourav Choudhary, MVO, Dr. Jaswant Singh, VAS, Dr. Divya Sharma, VAS, Dr. Priyanka Malhotra, Chief Revenue Officer, JMC, Sunil Gupta, besides a large number of locals and students from educational institutions were present on this Occasion.

## Jammu: 1st District Level Implementation Committee meeting held under Mission YUVA



GY CORRESPONDENT

**JAMMU, JUNE 5**

The first meeting of the District Level Implementation Committee under Mission YUVA was held today under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner, Sachin Kumar Vaishya. The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner Sher Singh, Director IT (DIO NIC) Sanjeev Kapoor, Assistant Director Employment Jammu, Mukhlis Ali, District Nodal Officer JKEDI Jammu, DDM NABARD and officials from the

District Industries Centre and Social Welfare Department.

The committee met to review and approve applications received under the Mission YUVA scheme and to assess the progress of nano entrepreneurial ventures supported in the district. Eight applications verified by the Skill and Business Development Unit (SBDU) were presented before the committee. After detailed scrutiny of eligibility criteria, viability of proposed venture and the socio-economic background of applicants, all eight applications were approved for financial

assistance and support under the scheme.

The District Development Commissioner underscored the importance of promoting self-employment opportunities for youth, particularly those from a marginalised backgrounds. He directed departments to ensure timely disbursement of financial assistance and regular monitoring and support to beneficiaries to help sustain their ventures.

He also highlighted the need for continued awareness and outreach to encourage wider participation in the scheme.

## '1,747 Sq KM's declared as High Risk forest fire zone'

GY CORRESPONDENT

**SRINAGAR, JUNE 5**

In Jammu and Kashmir at least 1,747 square kilometres of forest area have been categorized in 'High Risk' zone of forest fire while 62 square kilometres have been categorized in 'Very High Risk' zone.

The official document available with the news agency, reveal that "62 square kilometres of forest area of Jammu and Kashmir is under High Risk" zone of forest fire and 8,972 square kilometres of forest area lie under moderate risk zone and 10,606 square kilometres of area with low risk of forest fire respectively."

The documents however state that 62 square kilometres of forest areas have been categorized in

'Very High Risk' zone in terms of catching forest fire while 33,237 square kilometres of forest areas of Jammu and Kashmir have been categorized as 'No Risk' zone.

It states that certain regions across India are more susceptible to forest fires due to factors like type of fuel load, local human activities, topographical features, forest type, and climatic conditions. "In order to have a better and robust system for controlling and managing forest fires in a region, an effective fire risk zonation helps to delineate different risk areas for prioritizing a n a g e m e n t interventions in an effective manner," it reads.

The documents said that a pilot study has been

carried out for the West Himalayan State, UT comprising Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh to identify Fire Risk Zones and categorize them into different risk classes using suitable variables. "In Jammu and Kashmir, 79.01 % of the detections fall under 19.74 % of the Digitized Boundary Area," it reads.

The document of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change further states that frequency of detected forest fires in an area over a period of time indicates proneness of the area to forest fires. "Maps showing forest area in different classes of fire proneness can be an effective management tool for controlling forest fires."

## By CM meets 3 times National Wushu Champion 'Geenakshi'; lauds her remarkable achievements



GY CORRESPONDENT

**JAMMU, JUNE 5**

Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today met a young budding Wushu champion, Geenakshi Mehra, who brought laurels to J&K by winning gold medal in the National Wushu Championship held between 26th to 31 May, 2025.

Pertinently, 10 years old Geenakshi had already won the gold medals in

Khelo India Women League Nationals 2024 held in Gandhi Nagar, Gujrat and National Wushu Championship held in Tarantaran, (Punjab).

The Deputy Chief Minister applauded Geenakshi for her remarkable achievements and encouraged her to strive hard for excellence. He also congratulated her parents for their support and the girl. He assured his unwavering support to her saying that the

government is committed to elevate the culture of sports in junior and sub-junior female athletes. He asserted that the female athletes should receive the best possible support to achieve global excellence.

Choudhary also reaffirmed the government's commitment in promoting sports with modern infrastructure and opportunities for the sportspersons in J&K.

## NIA court in Doda frames charges against 4 accused in UAPA case

GY CORRESPONDENT

**JAMMU, JUNE 5**

A special NIA court on Thursday framed charges against four men for allegedly aiding terrorism in Doda district. The charges have been framed against Muneeb Hussain of Malawas, Tanveer Ahmed of Kullhand, Noor Alam of Baggard-Assar and Kunj Lal of Herani, who were booked under various sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) by the Dossa police station on July 16 last year. Hearing the case under the UAPA, the additional district and sessions judge (fast track) of the NIA court framed the charges against the accused, police said. Senior Superintendent of Police, Doda, Sandeep Mehta, said a case under sections 103 (murder), 147



(waging war against the government of India), 149 (unlawful assembly), 315 (dishonest misappropriation of property) of the BNS, besides sections 13 (unlawful activity), 16 (further acts), 19 (harbouring a terrorist) and 20 (member of a terrorist gang) of the UAPA, was registered at the Dossa police station on July 16 last year. The investigation was conducted professionally and it was found that these people were involved in the

commission of the crime, he said.

Accordingly, a challan of the case was produced in the NIA court for judicial determination. During the trial, the court found sufficient evidence to proceed further and accordingly, framed the charges against the accused, who are presently in judicial custody. Giving further details, officials said the accused had covertly and overtly supported terrorists in Doda by providing food and other logistical support to them.