

PM's package gives big push to J&K growth

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Thirty-one per cent of the Prime Minister's ₹80,000-crore development package for Jammu and Kashmir has been released to the state and 25 per cent of the total amount utilised so far, officials said on Friday.

Both Centre and the J&K government has been able to give a major push to development activity in the state in the last almost two years.

Out of the total package, ₹62,991 crore (79 per cent) has been sanctioned, ₹24,443 crore (31 per cent) has been released. Union home ministry officials claimed that out of the ₹24,443 crore released so far under the scheme, ₹20,417 crore (25 per cent) have been utilised for various projects. Similarly, out of the 63 projects which are covered under PM's special package as many as 13 have either been fully completed or are nearing completion.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had in a major initiative to boost development activity in J&K, where BJP is power in coalition with the PDP, announced a special package of ₹80,068 crore at a function in Srinagar in November, 2015. Sources said of the total package nearly ₹62,991 crore has already been sanctioned. Most of the

funds have been utilised for constructing bunkers in border areas, providing assistance to victims of cross-border firing, constructing roads and power sub stations in all three regions of Jammu, Srinagar and Ladakh.

Sources in the home ministry also claimed that the importance Centre is giving to development work in J&K can be judged from the fact that till March this year 11 review meetings have been held with various stake holders for utilisation of funds and execution of various projects.

Union home secretary Rajiv Gauba held the last such meeting on March 26 in Srinagar. These various projects in J&K, officials added, are being implemented by 15 Central ministries and the state government.

"Both the Centre and state are giving a lot of importance to projects being carried out under PM's special package scheme. Most of the funds released have also been utilised and 13 of these projects have either been completed or nearing completion. Work on the remaining 50 projects is also going on. Both Centre and state have agreed that irrespective of problems in the Valley, particularly related to terror, development activity should not be hampered," a senior ministry officials said.