



*Jehlum Post News / Srinagar/ August 12, 2015/In order to make expensive medical treatment affordable for patients suffering from terminal diseases like cancer, Chief Minister, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, Wednesday announced substantial hike in allocation under the corpus of revolving fund created for the purpose. The Chief Minister had sanctioned a revolving fund for cancer patients during the District Development Board meeting of Srinagar and announced Rs. 1 crore each for SKIMS Soura and Jammu Medical College respectively so that poor patients can be provided instant financial assistance for treatment. Mufti Sayeed was speaking at a function organized to flag off 70 ambulances and vaccination vans, procured under National Health Mission (NHM), at SKICC.*

*Minister for Health & Medical Education (H&ME), Ch. Lal Singh, Minister of State for Health & Social Welfare, Asiya Naqash, Commissioner / Secretary, H&ME, Dr. M. K. Bhandari, Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar, Farooq Ahmad Lone, Director Health Services, Kashmir, Dr. Sameer Mattoo, besides senior doctors and officers from the Health Department were also present on the occasion. The Chief Minister said with strengthening of tertiary healthcare sector, patients with terminal diseases will get succour as advanced medical treatment will now be available within the state. "It pains me to see that those who require huge amount for cancer treatment are provided meagre financial assistance," he said while instructing the Health Department to work out modalities for enhancing the corpus of funds. Available figures indicate a global surge in patients with terminal diseases, especially cancer. With SKIMS in the process of setting up a State Cancer Institute with an amount of Rs. 120 crore as grant-in-aid received from the Union Health Ministry, it is expected that cancer patients can avail advanced treatment within the state. Expressing concern over brain drain in the health sector, Mufti Sayeed said there is dire need to avail services of qualified and specialist doctors in our health institutions. "I have seen infrastructure, but lack of specialist doctors is a matter of grave concern," he said, while urging*

*the doctors who are serving away from home to come back and serve in the State.*

□ *Asking the doctors and paramedic staff to work with missionary zeal, the Chief Minister said the Government will consider setting up a nursing college in each district of the State so as to tide over the shortage of trained medical staff in the hospitals. "J&K PSC and SSB are now at full strength. I am hopeful that filling up of posts of doctors and paramedics will be fast-tracked in a time-bound manner," he added.□ In order to ensure prompt delivery of quality healthcare, the Chief Minister said the Government will see that specialist doctors are posted in far-flung areas of the state, so that people do not come running to Srinagar or Jammu for advanced treatment. He said the Government is converting two health institutions in all the constituencies of the state into Maternity & Childcare and Model Hospitals. The Chief Minister said his Government has been in power for less than six months and needed time to put the State back on track. He said his Government wants to end uncertainty and instill peace in the state to take forward its development agenda. Immediately after addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister flagged off 70 vehicles, including 63 ambulances, procured by Health Department under the National Health Mission. Stressing upon procurement of more ambulances, in particular critical care, the Chief Minister said these facilitate quick referrals and save lives of patients. He said the Government has chalked out a comprehensive plan to equip our healthcare institutions with adequate men and modern machines.*

*Earlier, in his address, Ch. Lal Singh highlighted the importance of ambulance in cases of emergencies. He said the department has also floated tenders for procuring critical care ambulances, which are urgently required by the state. "The ambulances will soon have a special siren, which will allow them smooth passage during heavy vehicular traffic," he added. The Health Minister said with six vaccination vans being provided to Kulgam, Shopian, Pulwama, Baramulla, Budgam and Srinagar, all the 22 districts in the state have now been equipped with vaccination vans. The State Health Department has procured 102 ambulances under NHM, out of which 34 have already been distributed. The ambulances flagged off today will be provided to various districts, with preference to those which have locational disadvantage.*