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EDITORIAL

A WAKE-UP CALL

The recent cloudburst and subsequent floods in Jammu and Kashmir have once again underscored the fragile balance between nature and human settlement in the Himalayan region. Torrential rains caused rivers and streams to overflow, leading to flash floods, landslides, and loss of life and property. Entire villages were cut off, infrastructure was damaged, and thousands were displaced. While rescue and relief operations have been commendably swift, the deeper questions demand urgent attention.

Jammu and Kashmir, known for its breathtaking beauty, sits in an ecologically sensitive zone. In recent years, unregulated construction, deforestation, and encroachments on flood plains have amplified the region's vulnerability. The effects of climate change are no longer distant predictions — they are here, and they are devastating. Increased frequency of extreme weather events, including cloudbursts, is a direct result of global warming and erratic monsoon patterns.

This calamity must serve as a wake-up call. Beyond immediate relief, we need a long-term vision rooted in sustainable development, stricter enforcement of environmental regulations, and improved disaster preparedness. Local communities must be educated and involved in resilience-building initiatives. Investments in early warning systems, climate-resilient infrastructure, and ecological restoration are no longer optional — they are essential.

Let this tragedy not fade into memory with the passing news cycle. Let it be the beginning of a deeper introspection about how we treat our environment and how prepared we are for the challenges that lie ahead. As we rebuild, let's do so with wisdom, humility, and respect for the natural world that sustains us.

In the face of loss, there is also hope — that together, we can forge a path that protects both people and the planet.

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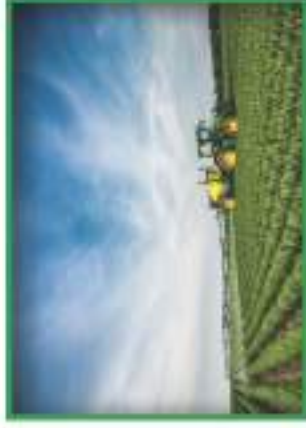
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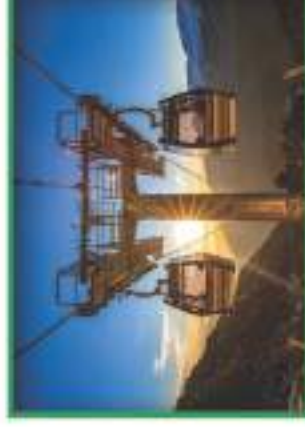
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Modi, Ishiba chart future path



Japan set a target of 10 trillion yen (\$68 billion) in private investments in India over a decade as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his counterpart Shigeru Ishiba finalized a 10-year roadmap to deepen economic cooperation in vital areas such as technology, digitalization and rare earths against the backdrop of uncertainty created by the trade policies of the US administration.

Modi and Ishiba launched an Economic Security Initiative at their annual bilateral summit in Tokyo to ensure supply chain resilience in strategic sectors such as semiconductors, telecom, pharmaceuticals and emerging technologies, and also finalised a Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation to guide joint efforts to respond to contemporary defence challenges.

Economic and trade cooperation was the focus of the sum-

mit, held amid the geo-economic churn affecting economies around the world due to the trade and tariff policies of the Trump administration in the US. Both Modi and Ishiba didn't directly refer to the US in their public remarks but spoke about the need to strengthen the international order and protect national priorities.

"He added, "The India-Japan partnership is rooted in mutual trust, reflects our national priorities, and is shaped by our shared values and beliefs. Together, we carry a common dream of peace, progress and prosperity of our peoples and for the world."

Ishiba said, "We share the responsibility to strengthen [the] international order as we see increasing opaqueness in international circumstances. Japan and India need to bring their strengths together for the peace and stability of the region." Both

PMs referred to Japan's target of 10 trillion yen in private investments in India over 10 years, with Ishiba saying Tokyo will promote cooperation in space, next-generation mobility and the Mumbai-Ahmedabad high speed railway, a flagship project for the two sides. Japan's earlier investment target of 5 trillion yen (\$34 billion) during 2022-26 was achieved two years ahead of schedule.

According to a joint statement, Ishiba requested the Indian side to continue its regulatory and other reforms to allow Japanese companies to deepen their supply chains in India. Modi "recalled his intent to carry out additional regulatory and other reforms to facilitate investment into India and invited more Japanese businesses to avail of these," the statement said. Modi said at the media interaction that their discussions laid the foundation for a new chapter in the bilateral special strategic and global partnership, which was finalised in 2014. "We have prepared a roadmap for the next decade. At the centre of our vision are investment, innovation, economic security, environment, technology, health, mobility, people-to-people exchanges and state-prefecture partnership," he said. The new Economic Security Initiative, he said, will provide a comprehensive approach towards critical and strategic areas. Cooperation in high technology is a priority for both sides and will include the Digital Partnership 2.0 and AI Cooperation Initiative. Besides the high-speed rail project, other areas of focus under a Next Generation Mobility Partnership will be ports, aviation and shipbuilding. In the space sector, the Indian Space Research Organisation and

the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) finalised an agreement to cooperate for the Chandrayaan-5 mission.

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He also highlighted an action plan for human resource exchanges that will lead to exchanges of 500,000 people from both sides in different fields over five years. “In this, 50,000 skilled Indians will actively contribute to Japan’s economy,” he said. Ishiba noted that despite the competence of Indian STEM talents, the number of Indian students in Japan is less than 2,000. “We need more high-skilled talents from India for the growth of the Japanese economy and for the vitalisation of local communities,” he said, adding the two sides will finalise an action plan for a “bigger flow of mutually complementary talents in both directions”.

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The Indian side appreciated Japan’s offer to introduce the E10 Shinkansen, which runs on the Japanese signalling system, in India in the early 2030s. “To this end, it was concurred to immediately commence work necessary for early installation of the signalling, including the Japanese system, as well as for the introduction of the General Inspection Train and one set of E5 series Shinkansen rolling stock,” the joint statement said.

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“Japan brings world-class technology but struggles with high-cost manufacturing at home, while India offers scale, talent and cost efficiency. The answer is Japan-India joint ventures that replicate the Suzuki-Maruti model of 1983, which transformed India’s auto sector into a global success story,” Srivastava said. “If Tokyo and New Delhi can recreate that template in electronics, green energy and advanced manufacturing, this

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Defence and security cooperation too figured prominently in the discussions between the two PMs, against the backdrop of China’s continuing aggressive behaviour in the South China Sea and East China Sea. Modi and Ishiba pledged to work jointly to uphold a free, open, peaceful, prosperous and rules-based Indo-Pacific. “We share common concerns on terrorism and cyber security. Our common interests are linked to defence and maritime security. We have decided to further strengthen mutual cooperation in the field of defence industry and innovation,” Modi said. Japan and India, Ishiba said, share fundamental values and need to maintain a free and open Indo-Pacific region based on international order and rule of law. Bilateral security cooperation has deepened dramatically over the past two decades, as reflected by the agreement between the two sides on the Unicorn or united combined radio antennae project for the Indian Navy. Such collaboration will be bolstered by the Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation, he said.

The two PMs expressed “serious concern” at the situation in the East China Sea and the South China Sea, according to the joint statement, and reiterated their “strong opposition to any unilateral actions that endanger the safety as well as freedom of navigation and overflight, and attempt to change the status quo by force or coercion”. In a reference to China’s activities in the South China Sea, the PMs also “shared their serious concern over the militarisation of disputed features”.

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370 ABROGATION; A NEW DAWN FOR KASHMIR



Shabir Ahmad

The abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, marked a historic turning point for Jammu and Kashmir. For decades, the region had been mired in a complex web of political maneuvering, militancy, and unfulfilled promises. The decision to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir was not merely a legal or administrative change; it was a bold step toward redefining the region's identity and its relationship with the rest of India. For the common Kashmiri, this change has ushered in a renewed sense of belonging, pride, and hope for a brighter future. As a young Kashmiri born in 1992, who witnessed the turbulent years of militancy and the subsequent political betrayals, I stand as a testament to the resilience of the people of Kashmir and their longing for a secure and prosperous life.

The abrogation of Article 370 was a seismic shift in the socio-political landscape of Jammu and Kashmir. For decades, this constitutional provision had granted the state a degree of autonomy, but it also became a tool in the hands of self-serving politicians who prioritized personal gain over the welfare of the peo-

ple. The common Kashmiri grew up in an era marked by militancy, fear, and uncertainty.

Born in 1992, when militancy was at its peak, people recall the sacrifices made for their families to ensure their safety and education in volatile environment. Despite these efforts, the dream of securing a government job—a lifeline for many in the region—was shattered by systemic corruption. Politicians entrusted with safeguarding the future of Kashmiri youth, manipulated merit lists and opportunities, leaving countless educated young people disillusioned and unemployed. The abrogation of Article 370, however, signaled a break from this cycle of betrayal, fostering a renewed sense of integration with India and a belief in a system that prioritizes fairness and opportunity.

For many Kashmiris, the abrogation has been more than a policy change; it has been a psychological and emotional realignment. The hoisting of the Indian national flag and the recitation of the national anthem are no longer mere formalities but symbols of pride and unity. The common Kashmiris now feel more Indian than the local politicians who once claimed to represent their interests. This shift in identity is significant. For years, divisive narratives fueled by external forces and local opportunists created a sense of alienation among Kashmiris.

The abrogation of Article 370, coupled with the Modi government's efforts to strengthen governance and security, has dismantled these barriers, allowing Kashmiris to embrace their Indian identity with confidence. The assertion that "no foreign interest will harm me and my family till PM Modi is there" reflects a newfound trust in a leadership that prioritizes the safety and aspirations of the people over geopolitical games.

However, integration is not merely about emotional or symbolic alignment; it must translate into tangible opportunities for the people of Kashmir, particularly its youth.

Despite overcoming immense challenges—militancy, political instability, and corruption—the youth of Kashmir face a daunting job market. For decades, systemic corruption in recruitment processes has eroded trust and stifled the ambitions of countless young Kashmiris. While the abrogation of Article 370 has opened doors to greater integration, it must be accompanied by robust policies to address unemployment and empower the youth to contribute to the region's development.

The Modi government has taken steps to improve infrastructure, tourism, and investment in Jammu and Kashmir, but the issue of unemployment demands urgent attention. The youth of Kashmir are not merely seeking jobs; they are yearning for dignity, purpose and a chance to build a secure future. Initiatives such as skill development programs, entrepreneurship support and transparent recruitment processes could be game-changers. For instance, expanding vocational training programs tailored to the region's economic

potential—such as tourism, handicrafts, and agriculture—could create sustainable livelihoods. Additionally, leveraging technology and digital platforms to connect Kashmiri youth with opportunities across India would bridge the gap between talent and employment. The government's focus on "Make in India" and "Digital India" could be extended to Kashmir, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship among its young population.

Security, too, plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of Kashmir's youth. The sense of safety under PM Modi's leadership is a reflection of the government's efforts to curb militancy and restore peace. The decline in terror-related incidents since 2019 has created a more stable environment, allowing families to focus on education and career-building rather than survival. However, sustaining this security is crucial for long-term development. The government must continue to strengthen intelligence networks, engage with local communities and counter external influences that seek to destabilize the region. For the common Kashmiri, security is not just about the absence of violence but the presence of hope and opportunity.

The integration of Kashmir with India also requires addressing the emotional and cultural aspirations of its people. The pride in hoisting the national flag and reciting the anthem signifies a deeper desire for inclusion and recognition. Cultural initiatives, such as promoting Kashmiri art, music, and literature on national and global platforms, can further strengthen this bond. Events like the "Kashmir Literature Festival" or collaborations with national cultural institutions could showcase the region's rich heritage while fostering a sense of unity.



Moreover, involving Kashmiri youth in nation-building activities—through programs like the National Cadet Corps or youth leadership forums—would instill a sense of ownership and pride in being Indian.

The legacy of mistrust, fueled by decades of political manipulation, cannot be erased overnight. While the abrogation of Article 370 has laid the foundation for integration, the government must engage with local communities to address their concerns and aspirations. Transparent governance, accountability and inclusive policies are essential to sustaining the goodwill generated by recent changes. The frustration with local politicians underscores the need for a new generation of leaders who prioritize the welfare of the people over personal gain. Empowering grassroots leaders and involving youth in decision-making processes can bridge the gap between the government and the people. Education, too, must be a priority. Credits goes to the families for providing a good education to their children despite challenging circumstances, but not all Kashmiri youth are as fortunate. Strengthening the education system—through better infrastructure, teacher training, and access to digital learning—can equip young Kashmiris with

the skills needed to compete in a globalized world. Scholarships and exchange programs with institutions across India would also expose Kashmiri students to diverse opportunities and perspectives, further fostering integration.

In conclusion, the abrogation of Article 370 has ushered in a new era for Jammu and Kashmir, one defined by hope, security, and a renewed sense of Indian identity. For the common Kashmiri, this change has brought pride in hoisting the national flag and a belief in a brighter future. However, the journey is far from complete. To truly integrate the hearts and minds of Kashmiris, the government must address the pressing issue of youth unemployment through targeted policies and opportunities. By empowering the educated youth, strengthening security, and promoting cultural inclusion, the Modi government can ensure that the promise of a "New Kashmir" is fulfilled. The path forward lies in building on this foundation, ensuring that every young Kashmiri has the chance to dream, achieve and contribute to a prosperous and united India.

Shabir Ahmad is a research scholar and Columnist from Raiyar Doodhpathri. He can be reached at sahilshabir@rocketmail.com

OMAR'S UN-KEPT PROMISES ERODE PUBLIC TRUST



Shabir Ahmad

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, leading the National Conference (NC) to a decisive victory in the 2024 assembly elections, secured 42 seats in the 90-member assembly, bolstered by alliances with Congress and independents. This marked a significant political milestone, as it was the first elected government in the Union Territory since the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019. The NC's manifesto promised sweeping reforms, including the restoration of statehood, job creation, addressing the concerns of daily-wage workers, and ensuring equitable development across Jammu and Kashmir. However, nearly a year into his tenure, accusations have already sur-

faced that Abdullah's promises were mere rhetoric—labeled as “jumla” (empty promises)—and he has prioritized political posturing and VVIP privileges over addressing the region's pressing issues. These commitments resonated with voters, who saw the NC-Congress alliance as a counter to the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) dominance in the region post-Article 370. Yet, the gap between these promises and tangible outcomes has fueled discontent, with opposition parties and sections of the public accusing Abdullah of failing to deliver.

A particularly glaring example of unfulfilled promises is Omar Abdullah's pledge to provide 12 free gas cylinders annually, double ration allocations and free electricity up to 200

units for economically weaker sections. These populist measures were central to the NC's 2024 manifesto, aimed at easing the financial burden on households grappling with rising inflation. However, nearly a year into his tenure, there has been no budgetary allocation, policy framework or implementation plan to roll out these schemes. These promises were crafted as electoral bait, lacking the groundwork for execution. The absence of progress has fueled accusations of “jumla” politics, with opposition parties and disillusioned voters pointing to these unfulfilled commitments as evidence of Omar's insincerity, further eroding trust in his administration. Omar Abdullah's defenders might point to the constraints of governing a Union Territory with limited autonomy, but this excuse does not absolve his administration's lack of initiative. The opposition, including the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and People's Conference (PC), has capitalized on public discontent, branding Omar Abdullah's moves as political stunts designed to deflect criticism rather than deliver results. For instance, his repeated appeals to the central government for statehood, without tangible outcomes, are seen as attempts to shift blame rather than assert leadership. The NC-Congress alliance, while securing a majority, has also been criticized for diluting regional priorities, with Congress's absence from the council of ministers signaling internal discord. This has weakened Abdullah's ability to project a united front, further fueling perceptions of ineffective governance. The NC's manifesto pledged to create 100,000 jobs and regularize daily-wage workers. However, reports indicate limited headway on these fronts. For instance, in March 2025, Omar announced the formation of a committee headed by the Chief Secretary to address the concerns of daily-wage workers, a step that is argued as bureaucratic procrastination rather than a concrete solution.

The committee's mandate to "work out a roadmap" for regularizing workers has not yet yielded visible results, leaving thousands in limbo. Similarly, the promise of free electricity remains unfulfilled, with no clear timeline or budgetary allocation to support it. These delays reflect a lack of urgency, accusing Abdullah of relying on symbolic gestures rather than substantive policy implementation.

The opposition, including parties like the PDP and the PC, has been vocal in branding Omar Abdullah's initiatives as political stunts. A notable example is his proposed signature campaign for statehood restoration, which drew sharp criticism. Opposition leaders, such as PDP's Mehbooba Mufti and PC's Sajad Lone, labeled it a "gimmick" and a "betrayal" of public trust, arguing that it was a performative act to deflect pressure rather than a genuine effort to engage with the central government. The campaign's lack of follow-through—there have been no reports of it gaining significant traction or influencing policy—has reinforced perceptions that Omar's administration prioritizes optics over action.

Omar's handling of VVIP protocols has also drawn scrutiny, with opposition alleging that he is enjoying the trappings of power while the public grapples with daily challenges. Upon taking office in October 2024, Abdullah made a public commitment to minimize public inconvenience caused by VVIP movements, instructing the police to avoid "green corridors," excessive siren use, and aggressive gestures like stick-waving. This move was initially praised as a people-friendly gesture, aligning with his promise to serve rather than inconvenience the public. However, reports suggest inconsistent implementation, with residents in Srinagar and Jammu complaining of frequent traffic

disruptions during ministerial movements. Social media platforms have amplified these grievances, with some users accusing Omar Abdullah of "hypocrisy" for enjoying VVIP privileges while failing to address basic infrastructure issues like road repairs or power outages. These criticisms paint a picture of a leader disconnected from the ground realities, further eroding public trust.

Economic and developmental challenges in Jammu and Kashmir add weight to the accusations of underperformance. The region faces high unemployment, with the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) reporting a 23.1% unemployment rate in 2024, among the highest in India. Omar Abdullah's promise of job creation has not translated into significant initiatives, with no major industrial projects or public-sector recruitment drives announced in his first year. Moreover, the administration's response to natural disasters, such as the recent cloudburst in Kishtwar, has been criticized for being reactive rather than preventive, with delays in relief efforts highlighting systemic inefficiencies.

Nevertheless, the opposition's narrative of "jumla politics" has gained traction, particularly as Abdullah's administration struggles to address public grievances. Issues like the misuse of the Public Safety Act (PSA) and arbitrary terminations of government employees—promises the NC vowed to tackle—remain unresolved. In March 2025, Omar Abdullah reiterated his commitment to reviewing PSA cases and reinstating wrongfully terminated employees, but progress has been slow, with no comprehensive policy framework announced. This has led to accusations that his administration is more focused on maintaining political alliances and managing relations with the central government than addressing the

miseries of the general public. The NC's coalition with Congress, while securing a majority, has also drawn criticism for diluting its regional agenda, as Congress opted out of the council of ministers, signaling internal tensions.

Public sentiment, as reflected on social platforms like X, reveals a mix of frustration and cautious optimism. These sentiments underscore a broader challenge: balancing public expectations with the realities of governing a region with a complex political and security landscape.

In conclusion, Omar Abdullah's first year as Chief Minister has been marked by significant challenges that have fueled accusations of failure and "jumla" politics. While his administration has made symbolic gestures—like the signature campaign and VVIP protocol reforms—the lack of tangible progress on key promises such as job creation, statehood restoration, and worker regularization has deepened public and opposition skepticism. Structural constraints, including limited powers as a Union Territory and dependency on the central government, partly explain these shortcomings. However, the perception that Omar Abdullah is prioritizing political optics and VVIP privileges over public welfare risks undermining his mandate. To regain trust, his administration must translate promises into measurable outcomes, addressing the region's economic and social challenges with urgency and transparency. The road ahead remains arduous, but Omar Abdullah's ability to navigate these complexities will determine whether his tenure is remembered as a transformative era or a continuation of unfulfilled promises.

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ACHAN: THE GARBAGE THAT WON'T GO

The stench hits first—a thick, putrid wave that rolls through the streets of Downtown Srinagar every summer morning. For residents living near the Achan garbage dump, this has been their unwelcome alarm clock for nearly four decades. What began in 1986 as a temporary solution on 517 kanals of land has festered into one of Kashmir's most enduring environmental crises, with the mountains of untreated waste now visible from the upper floors of the Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences.

The crisis at Achan represents a perfect storm of bureaucratic inertia and environmental neglect. Despite the Jammu and Kashmir Economic Reconstruction Agency's efforts to convert the site into a scientific landfill between 2008-2015—complete with geo-synthetic liners and leachate treatment systems—the facility has been overwhelmed by Srinagar's growing waste burden. Official figures from the Srinagar Municipal Corporation reveal the city now generates over 500 metric tons of solid waste daily, with the landfill operating at 150% capacity since 2020.

The human cost has become impossible to ignore. A 2023 study by the Government Medical College Srinagar found respiratory illness rates in nearby neighborhoods like Syedpora and Noorbagh are 42% higher than



other urban areas of Kashmir. The Anchar Lake, once a thriving ecosystem, now receives untreated leachate through an interconnected canal system, with water quality tests showing dangerous levels of heavy metals and fecal coliform bacteria. Recent developments suggest little progress. The proposed waste-to-energy plant, first approved in 2017 with an 18-month deadline, remains stalled in tender disputes. The National Green Tribunal's intervention this year—ordering a joint committee to assess the site—marks the seventh such judicial intervention since 2010. Meanwhile, the landfill's expansion has consumed additional wetlands, reducing the natural

flood absorption capacity critical for Srinagar's climate resilience.

As the morning fog lifts over Achan, bulldozers continue their daily ritual of compacting fresh waste atop decades-old garbage. The cycle persists—not for lack of solutions, but because of what local environmentalist Dr. Raja Muzaffar Bhat calls “the tyranny of short-term thinking.” With Srinagar's population projected to double by 2040, the city's waste crisis threatens to become Kashmir's next environmental catastrophe, unfolding in slow motion beneath the noses of policymakers and the noses of residents forced to breathe its consequences every day.

The Origin and Production of Pashmina Shawls

Prof. Upendra Kaul

The word Pashm means “Wool” in Persia. However, in Kashmir Pashm is referred to raw and unspun wool of a special goat, also called the Pashmina goat, scientifically known as *Capra hircus*. It has a rich historical background. Samples of wool fibres recovered from corroded copper artefacts from the ancient civilization sources like from Harappa in western Panjab (now in Pakistan) are believed to be Pashmina and Shahtoosh (another rare, expensive, and soft wool that comes from the under-fleece of the Tibetan antelope, also known as the Chiru. It's considered the finest animal wool now banned because the animal needs to be killed and skinned to get the material.

The Pashmina goat as per the researchers is said to have originated in the high-altitude regions of the Himalayas. And ever since, these goats have thrived in the challenging terrains and climates of this majestic mountain range. Their adaptation to the harsh environment has endowed them with distinctive physical traits. These features set them apart from other goat breeds. One of the most noticeable features of a Pashmina goat is its modest size. Adult males weigh between 50 to 65 kilograms, while adult females typically weigh between 35 to 50 kilograms. Their relatively compact stature, long slender legs, and slender frame make them well-suited to navigate the steep, rocky terrains of the Himalayas.

These goats typically shed their winter coat every spring and an average of 100 to 170 grams of the fibre. It is their moulting season. This regrows in winter months. This undercoat is collected by combing the goat and not by shearing it as is done for sheep. The semi nomadic tribes of the Tibetan ori-

gin from the Changtang plateau of Ladakh also known as Changpas rear sheep in the harsh climates for meat, and Pashmina goats for wool. They export it to Kashmir by selling it to the traders.

The raw Pashmina is processed by first removing the impurities, guarding the hair and aligning fibres. It is then subjected to spinning, weaving and finishing, traditionally done by hand by craftsmen and craftswomen. In good old days elderly ladies sitting at home would do it in their spare times. I remember my nanee (maternal grandmother) used to be busy with it. The major centres of Pashmina fabric production are in the downtown areas of Srinagar city. It is a time-consuming process needing at least 2 to 3 weeks of work. The shawls were specially beautified by delicate artwork of putting different designs and patterns on the edges made of woven silk or gold (Zaree).

This material gained prominence through its use as Kashmir shawls in the Moghul times, especially during emperor Akbar's rule from 1556 to 1605. Pashmina was a part of the material used to make expensive decorative robes to honour the members of the durbar to acknowledge their high services as a royal favour. This was the practice of giving Khilat or “robes of honour”. In Iran also from the 16th to the end of 19th century the emperors used to wear Pashmina and gifted Kashmiri shawls as Khilat within their political and religious practices. These were also coded as women's luxuries.

These were passed on from mother to daughter, inherited rather than purchased. In France Pashmina shawls gained a special status as a fashion icon when Joséphine Bonaparte the first wife of Emperor Napoleon wore it enthusiastically and displayed it. These shawls suited the French well, providing the needed warmth, while adding visual interest to white French gowns through the traditional

teardrop buta pattern and discreet floral motifs. The shawl became a symbol of French upper classes status even after the downfall of Napoleon to the Second Bourbon Restoration in 1815. This material fulfilled 19th century French tastes because it looked rich, had extensive ornamentation, artistic qualities, and was made of expensive raw materials.

‘Cashmere’ is a well-known term used by foreigners for Pashmina. It actually is an anglicization of Kashmir and was used when Pashmina shawls reached Europe in 19th century. China, Mongolia, Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey, Kyrgyzstan in Central Asia have become big producers and it has become a huge industry to make wearing products out of it in the United States of America.

Pashmina came before cashmere, as pashmina is the local term for the material that became known as cashmere in Europe much later. A craze for pashmina shawls, in the mid-1990s resulted in high demand for the raw material, so demand exceeded supply. When these shawls rose to prominence during the era, they were marketed dubiously. In the consumer markets, pashmina shawls have been redefined as a shawl/wrap with cashmere/silk, notwithstanding the actual meaning of pashmina. Some shawls marketed as pashmina shawls contain (sheep) wool, while other unscrupulous companies marketed artificial fabrics as Pashmina.

Meanwhile, Kashmir's handicrafts department has proposed a triangular body to the Centre. This will comprise experts from the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology's pashmina department, officials of the Handicrafts Department and officials of the Wildlife Department, for the certification of pashmina shawls in Kashmir. The proposal needs to be looked at seriously.

The author Prof. Upendra Kaul, a prominent cardiologist, is the Founder Director, Gauri Kaul Foundation.

Citizen Science and its Significance

tice of public collaboration in the scientific endeavor that aims to increase our understanding and knowledge about various scientific phenomena.

CS science is being acknowl-



Dr. Ummer Rashid

Science is a universal endeavor which is based on observations and its rational interpretation through an appropriate method (known as scientific method). Generally, scientific endeavor requires professional training to unravel the hidden enigmas, which requires a stepwise process with the help of professionals.

However, in some cases, non-professionals can provide raw information that can have a huge impact on scientific activity. Using raw scientific information from non-professionals to advance scientific research is known as Citizen Science (CS). In the science domain, CS is a prac-

edged and appreciated in different domains and has significant potential to enhance our scientific knowledge about various phenomena. Let me elaborate the importance of citizen science and some of the challenges faced by citizen science.

Generation of Ideas

One of the important aspects of science over the aeons has been to gather creative ideas from different sources. One can imagine how human civilization has seen the emergence of ideas, and then the transformation of these ideas into inventions. In the past, however, the pace of creativity and generation of ideas was so slow that some ideas remained untouched due to a lack of scientific outreach and public participation.

In the present era, the public shows great interest and enthu-

siasm towards science-related things and discuss many scientific issues in their private life. There are also connections and linkages between scientists and the general public, as science is reaching the doorsteps of the general public, thanks to current fast information technology. In this scenario, public participation in science affairs, especially in the process of idea generation is pivotal for the growth of science and its application.

Even vague and raw ideas from non-professionals can play a significant role in the development of extraordinary hypotheses. Well, before integrating the opinions of the general public into the scientific domain, mainstream scientists need to scale down their ego and try to accommodate even a silly idea from a layman. Public engagement in idea generation will help integrate science into mainstream society, bridging the gap between science and the public.

Getting Science out of Nature

In recent years, the general public has shown a growing interest in nature, as reflected in social media updates about hiking, trekking, and nature tours. During these visits, people gather valuable information that can benefit science. Well, the primary objective of these outings has been recreation and nature watching; nevertheless, such engagements also motivate nature lovers to explore exciting natural phenomena and experience of natural science. However, there is no collaboration between scientists and the general public to utilize this information

for scientific purposes.

A sad part of the story is that we haven't developed a basic scientific temper yet and still rely on myths, which is evident in the reports of nature lovers about their journeys. Another issue is that we don't accept each other's contributions and often suspect others' input. Even if someone provides important scientific information for show-off, it should be acknowledged and appreciated.

However community tours and outings have great potential to provide valuable information to scientists, sometimes more so than laboratory work. For instance, scientists should approach non-professionals who trek unexplored areas to gather useful information about nature, ask key questions, and potentially use this information to design hypotheses, unravel scientific enigmas, or discover new findings.

CS in Education and Outreach Goals

The innate ability of an amateur and a non-professional to guide the education system should be appreciated and welcomed in all education institutions. Previously, it was discouraged to include the non-professional in designing and framing of education policies, which stems from the fact that only scholars having professional training could guide better in the process of framing an advanced education system. However, due to fast communication facility and easy access to various knowledge domains, even non-professionals can advise in the matters of revamping the education system in a certain direction.

The role of CS in the community outreach programmes with the involvement of edu-

cation institutions can build strong linkages that could benefit in the dissemination of scientific knowledge at the grassroots level. For instance, study of complex social structure in anthropology cannot be taught to students in the classrooms, instead CS can unravel these critical aspects in a better way. The idea of 'Beyond Class Room' teaching is another way of finding the role of non-professionals in the inculcation of scientific temper by using science stories that possess interesting 'Science' behind it. Another way is the formation of 'Citizen Forums' in towns and villages, where people can discuss science in their own way, and the best orators/presenters can be invited at the bigger stage (schools, college and Universities) to express their view point on a particular scientific topic.

Such endeavor will encourage citizens to express their innate scientific knowledge before the professional aspiring scientists. This exchange of science will help to bridge the gap that remained between layman and science for centuries, and pave the way for a better education system.

Ecological and Environmental Monitoring

In the collection of large data sets (from large geographical regions) which are inaccessible to professional scientists, Citizen science could play a crucial role in getting important data for better interpretation of environmental/ecological issues. Involvement of the public in the data collection centralizes the monitoring efforts, and helps to carry out coordinated field studies which enable researchers to

gather large data sets.

Keeping in view the importance of Citizen Science (CS), we need to understand that CS is not pseudo-science, rather it is the use of raw science for the large cause i.e., to unravel the unknowns that are sometimes difficult under mainstream science. Currently, the world is faced with multiple pressing issues which are difficult to combat, and there needs to be a holistic approach to find immediate solutions. In this connection, Citizen Science plays a crucial role to become a support system for mainstream science.

However, there are some loopholes which may hinder the integration of citizen science with professional science. Citizen science may advocate pseudoscience by explaining natural phenomena in an unscientific way, and in some cases the view of CS may conflict with mainstream science. CS may also discourage scientific debate which may lead to propagation of myths and other unscientific knowledge. To summarize, Citizen Science has great value to scientists and various stakeholders within different scientific fields including ecological and environmental sciences. CS may help generate new ideas, integrate public participation in the development of education policy, help promote outreach goals and finally help in the development of the scientific ecosystem.

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**Government of Jammu & Kashmir
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER REW DIVISION PULWAMA
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS**

e- NIT No. 72/2025-26 Dated 29-08-2025

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Of Union Territory Of J&K, e-tenders (**In Single cover system**) are invited on **Percentage basis** from approved and eligible Contractors registered with UT of J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works: -

Call 1st

S. No.	Name of the Work	Block	Est Cost lacs	TD	EMD	Class	Time	MH
1.	PLNDC2526100291-(CONSTRUCTION OF ROAD FROM PMGSY ROAD TO MIDDLE SCHOOL INDERWALI VIA CHOTAWALI AT INDERWALI (ACHGOOZA))	Achgoze	9.555	600/=	2%	DEE/CEE	30 days	APDP
2.	RDDC2526101070- Tractor crossing near land of Mohd Ashraf Sofi and others at Chandgam	Pulwama	1.98	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
3.	RDDC2526101277- Dev. Of Hajam Graveyard at Murran	Pulwama	0.891	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
4.	RDDC2526101278- Constt. Of P/Bund from Basharat ahmad Shelkh to Nazir Ahmad Shelkh at Murran	Pulwama	0.901	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
5.	RDDC2526101282- Constt. Of lane from H/O Bilal Ahmad Teli to Mushtaq Ahmad Shelkh at Murran	Pulwama	1.386	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
6.	RDDC2526101284- Constt. Of lane from M/R to H/O Mohd. Amin Ganie at Murran	Pulwama	0.891	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
7.	RDDC2526101287- Constt. Of lane from H/O Mohd. Ahsan Tramboo to Masjid Sharief Bonbagh Murran	Pulwama	0.891	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
8.	RDDC2526101290- Constt. Of lane from H/O Mohd. Ayoub Wani to onwards and Constt. Of lane from Bashir Ahmad Abanger to onwards at Murran	Pulwama	0.94	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
9.	RDDC2526101293- Constt. Of lane from H/O Bashir Ahmad Dar to H/O Latif Ahmad Dar and Constt. Of lane from M/R to H/O Gh. Qadir Shelkh at Murran	Pulwama	0.94	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
10.	RDDC2526101295- Constt. Of P/Bund on M/R from Gh. Hassan Ganaie to H/O Sheeraz Ahmad Shelkh at Murran	Pulwama	0.94	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
11.	RDDC2526101296- Constt. Of lane/ drain from Masjid Sharief Ganie Mohalla to H/O Ab. Satar at Murran	Pulwama	0.914	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
12.	RDDC2526101297- Constt. Of lane from M/R to H/O Nisar Ahmad Hajam and Constt. Of drain near H/O Manzoor Ahmad Gilkar and others at Murran	Pulwama	0.94	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
13.	RDDC2526101299- Imp. Of lane from H/O Mohd. Maqbool to Masjid Sharief and Masjid Sharief to Mohd. Abas Ganie at Wachipora Murran	Pulwama	0.94	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
14.	RDDC2526101341- Constt. Of P/bund near H/O Gulzar Ahmad Naikoo , Sonaulah Naikoo near Kachepora	Pulwama	0.8	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
15.	FINDC2526101068-C/O Culvert N/O Reyaz Ah Qadir at Muchpuna	Pulwama	1.98	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
16.	FINDC2526101317- Const of Irrigation NLO Mohd Ahsan Reshi and others Manzkhah at Arigam ph sec	Pulwama	1.98	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
17.	RDDC2526100009-(CONST OF DRAIN FROM HOUSE OF GH MOHAMMAD GANIE TO ONWARDS AT BONPORA CHANDHARA PH 2 PAMPORE.)	Pampore	2.00	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
18.	RDDC2526100012-(CONST OF 2 NO DRAINS NEAR HOUSE OF AB.AHMAD GANIE KHATOO MOHALLAH AND CONST OF DRAIN FROM LAND OF BASHIR AHMAD DAR TO ONWARDS AT KHAIKPATH MOHALLAH CHANDHARA PAMPORE.)	Pampore	2.00	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI

19.	RDDC2526100013-(CONST OF RWALL WITH FENCING AROUND PANCHAYAT GHAR CHANDHARA PH2 PAMPORE.)	Pampore	2.00	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
20.	RDDC2526100669 -(CO CHAIN LINK FENCING OF DAR MOHALLA GRAVEYARD INDER)	Newa	1.393	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
21.	RDDC2526100672-(CONST IMP OF LANE INSIDE GOVT MIDDLE SCHOOL PREMISES AT HASNWANJ)	Newa	0.989	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
22.	RDDC2526100738 -(IMP OF LANE AT 3 SPOTS FROM HO MUSHTAQ BHAT TO HO AB RASHID LONE AND FROM CHEWA KHURD ROAD TO HO MOHD AZZAL SHAH AND ALI MOHD GORIE AT KARIMABAD)	Newa	1.993	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
23.	RDDC2526100742 -(IMP OF LANE FROM HO FEROZE AHMAD GANIE TO HO ALI MOHD GANIE AT KARIMABAD)	Newa	1.497	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
24.	RDDC2526100828-(FENCING AROUND ASTAN SHARIEF AT KATIBUGH)	Newa	1.987	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
25.	RDDC2526100830 -(DEVELOPMENT OF CHAIN LINK FENCING AROUND JAMIA MASJID NEAR ASTAN SHARIEF HERPORA URWAN)	Newa	1.995	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
26.	RDDC2526100831 -(CO LANE FROM MAIN ROAD TO HO MANZOOR AHMAD MALIK AT URWAN)	Newa	1.498	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
27.	RDDC2526100832-(CO P BUND FROM LO MUZAFAR AH DAR TO LO ABAS DAR AT URWAN)	Newa	1.481	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
28.	RDDC2526100834 -(CO P BUND FROM HO AB RAHMAN WANI TO HO HABEEBULLAH ON NALLAH PARIGAM AT URWAN)	Newa	0.997	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
29.	RDDC2526100835-(CO P BUND FROM LO GH NABI MALIK TO HO NAZIR AHMAD WANI AT URWAN)	Newa	1.481	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
30.	FINDC2526101075-(IMP OF ROAD LANE FROM M R H O REYAZ AHMAD BHAT S O GH NABI BHAT AND OTHERS AT KARIMABAD BLOCK NEWA)	Newa	0.699	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
31.	FINDC2526101147-(DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC PARK NEAR ASTAN SHARIEF BUL BUL SAHAB B W OF TILE WORK URWAN BLOCK NEWA)	Newa	1.494	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
32.	FINDC2526101148-(CO R WALL ON NALLA PARIGHAM KUL HO MUDASIR AHMAD NEAR MASJID SHARIEF URWAN BLOCK NEWA)	Newa	0.696	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
33.	FINDC2526101151-(CO DRAIN FROM H O AASHIQ RUSSAN MALIK AB RAHAMI MALIKARSHED AH KHAN TO SAMIL OF KHURSHED AH MALIK URWAN BLOCK NEWA)	Newa	1.183	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
34.	FINDC2526101153-(CO O LANE FROM M R H O GUZZAR AHMAD SHEIKH TO H O GH AHMAD DAT AT KATIBUGH URWAN BLOCK NEWA)	Newa	0.791	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
35.	FINDC2526101154-(CO P BUND FROM H O FAROOQ AH MALIK TO H O MANZOOR AH MALIK AT URWAN BLOCK NEWA)	Newa	1.996	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
36.	RDDC2526100455-(DEVELOPMENT OF ZIYARAT SHAREEF MALIK BAUDSHAH AT HALQA ACHAN)	Litter	1.963	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
37.	RDDC2526101375-(DEVELOPMENT OF LANE FROM HO ABUL REHMAN MALIK TO MOHAMMAD ASHRAF MALIK AT ACHAN)	Litter	0.977	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
38.	RDDC2526101401-(FENCING OF PANCHAYAT GHAR WITH GATE ALONG WITH CONSTRUCTION OF DRAIN AT ARIHAL B)	Litter	1.500	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
39.	RDDC2526101409-(FENCING OF GRAVEYARD AT KUMAR MOHALLA ARIHAL B)	Litter	1.000	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI

40.	RDDC2526101485(DEVELOPMENT OF PARK AT ASTAN SHARIF PETIPORA)	Litter	1.000	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
41.	FINDC2526101052(DEVELOPMENT OF PARK BEAUTIFICATION OF ZIMARAT SHAREEF ACHAN)	Litter	4.904	200/=	2%	DEE	30 days	DDC
42.	FINDC2526101060(CO RIVER WALL AND CULVERT NEAR HO SHARIF AH WANGROO AND OTHERS AT ARIHAL A)	Litter	1.400	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
43.	FINDC2526101063(CO CULVERT ON LAR KULL NEAR LO GH HASSAN KUMAR AND HO MOHD ASHRAF KUMAR AT ARIHAL B)	Litter	2.700	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
44.	FINDC2526101070(CO QURBAN GAH NEAR HO JAVID CHAAT AB RASHID BHAT AND OTHERS AT RATHERPORA ARIHAL B)	Litter	0.600	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
45.	FINDC2526101086-DEVELOPMENT OF 3 NO OF INTERIOR LANES WITH FLOOR TILES AT ZAASO)	Litter	1.651	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
46.	FINDC2526101107(DEVELOPMENT OF PARK AND ALLIED WORKS AT BDO OFFICE LITTER LASSIPORA)	Litter	1.700	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
47.	FINDC2526101121(CO DRAIN FROM LO GH QADIR KHAN TO ONWARDS AT TANTRAYPORA)	Litter	0.480	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
48.	RDDC2526100098-(DEV OF LANE FROM MIR TO ONWARDS VIA HO NOOR MOHD HURRAH AT MANDUNA)	Kakapora	1.000	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
49.	RDDC2526100103(CO DRAIN FHO MOHD RAJAB BHAT TO ONWARDS AT TALANGAM)	Kakapora	0.997	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
50.	RDDC2526100108(CO DRAIN FHO NAZIR AH DAR TO HO RIVAZ AHMAD SHERGOIR AT TALANGAM)	Kakapora	0.476	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
51.	RDDC2526100112(CO PARALLEL R WALL ON DANIBAL KULL FLO. RIVAZ AH HURRAH TO ONWARDS AT MANDUNA)	Kakapora	0.480	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
52.	RDDC2526100113-(DEV OF LANE FHO AB RASHID HAJAM TO ONWARDS AT ASTAN MOHALLA SANZIVATRO)	Kakapora	0.699	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
53.	RDDC2526100116-(DEV OF SEKDOY WATER CHANNEL FLO GH RASOOL RATHER TO ONWARDS AT KUNIPORA)	Kakapora	0.700	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
54.	RDDC2526100121-(DEV OF BHAT MOHALLA MASIID SHARIEF LANE AT RAKHI LAJOORA)	Kakapora	0.698	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
55.	RDDC2526100128-(DEV OF BAHVOT WATER CHANNEL FHO GH MOHD BHAT TO ONWARDS AT KUNIPORA)	Kakapora	0.700	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
56.	RDDC2526100134(CO R WALL NEAR HO PARVIZ AHMAD BHAT AND OTHERS AT PUCHAL)	Kakapora	1.495	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
57.	RDDC2526100135-(CO ROAD FROM MAIN ROAD TO HO FAVAZ AHMAD WANI WITH DRAINS AT PUCHAL)	Kakapora	1.130	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
58.	RDDC2526100139-(CO 02 NO LANES AT ASTANPORA QASIMABAD)	Kakapora	0.996	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
59.	RDDC2526100148(CO CHAINLINK FENCING WITH GATE OF JANAZGAH AT UTHOORA)	Kakapora	1.980	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
60.	RDDC2526100297-(RAISING OF R WALL ON GRAVEYARD AT HANIUPORA PHASE II)	Kakapora	2.000	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
61.	RDDC2526100299-(CO R WALL NEAR NEW MASIID SHAREEF AT HANIUPORA)	Kakapora	2.990	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
62.	RDDC2526100304(RENOVATION OF GRAVEYARD BWO FENCING GRILLING CONCRETING AT KHARBARPORA)	Kakapora	2.320	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
63.	RDDC2526100402-(CO LANE FROM MAIN ROAD TO HO AB GANI RESHI AND OTHERS INCLUDING DRAIN AT RATNIPORA A)	Kakapora	1.206	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI

64.	RDDC2526100403-(CO LANE FROM MAIN ROAD TO HO ALI MOHD NAJAR TO HO MANZOOR AH SHAH AT RATNIPORA A)	Kakapora	1.483	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
65.	RDDC2526100404-(CO LANE FROM SYED AASHIQ HUSSAIN TO MIR ISMAIL MAJID AT RATNIPORA A)	Kakapora	2.450	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
66.	RDDC2526100408-(CO IRRIGATION YEN BWO BOTH SIDES CONCRETING FROM LO GH MOHAMM BHAT TO ONWARDS AT KAKAPORA)	Kakapora	2.600	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
67.	RDDC2526100409-(CO IRRIGATION YEN BWO BOTH SIDES CONCRETING FROM LO ASHAQ HUSSAIN SOFI TO ONWARDS AT KAKAPORA)	Kakapora	2.600	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
68.	RDDC2526100410-(CO FOOT STEPS LANE NHO ASSAD ULAH KHAN AT KAKAPORA)	Kakapora	1.987	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
69.	RDDC2526100411-(CO PROTECTION BUND ON IRRIGATION NALLAH SHURGERBAGH NEAR LO NAZIR AHMAD LONE TO ONWARDS AT KAKAPORA)	Kakapora	2.395	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
70.	RDDC2526100412-(CONSTT OF WALLING AROUND EDGAH FRONT SIDE QAZIGUND OF R WALL ASTHAN GRAVEYARD AT RESHIPORA)	Kakapora	0.992	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	PRI
71.	FINDC2526100832(RAISING WITH GRILLING OF R WALL AT SHAN GRAVEYARD AT RESHIPORA)	Kakapora	1.925	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
72.	FINDC2526100842-(DEV OF PUBLIC PARK WITH BENCHES AND LIGHTING AT RESHIPORA)	Kakapora	1.500	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
73.	FINDC2526100849-(RAISING OF R WALL WITH GRILLING OF EID GAH AT RESHIPORA)	Kakapora	2.891	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
74.	FINDC2526100851(RENOVATION OF RESHBAB SAHAB ASTAN SHARIEF AT RESHIPORA)	Kakapora	2.978	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
75.	FINDC2526101016-(CONSTT OF LANE NEAR HOUSE OF SYED MOHIUDDIN ANDRABI TO HOUSE OF MOHD RAFI ANDRABI AT QASIMABAD PUCHAL)	Kakapora	1.500	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
76.	FINDC2526101024-(CONSTT OF LANE NEAR HOUSE OF MOHD YASEEN AT DAR MOHALLA PUCHAL)	Kakapora	1.000	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
77.	FINDC2526101025-(CONSTT OF LANE NEAR MASIID SHAREEF TO HOUSE OF NAEM ANDRABI AT PUCHAL)	Kakapora	0.699	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
78.	FINDC2526105343-(CONST OF R WALL FROM LO ASHIQ HUSSAIN BHAT TO LO MUNIR U DIN BHAT AND OTHERS AT MANDUNA)	Kakapora	1.000	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	DDC
79.	FINDC2526100005(FENCING AROUND SEGREGATION SHED AT LAJOORA)	Kakapora	0.491	200/=	2%	DEE/Other	30 days	BDC

Position of A/A: - Accorded **Position of T/S: - Accorded**

The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates.

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	29-08-2025
2.	Online Bid Submission Start Date	29-08-2025 from 06:55 PM
3.	Online Bid Submission End Date	25-09-2025 up to 06:55 PM
4.	Date & time of opening of Online Bids	26-09-2025 at 09:00 AM or any convenient day in the office of the Executive Engineer REW Pulwama

The tender/bid is liable to rejection if it does not fulfill the requirements as laid down in NIT. All other terms conditions are as per PWD Form 25(Double agreement Form).

Sd./ Executive Engineer
REW Division Pulwama

DIPK/ 5786/25 20
01/09/2025

Let Himalayas Continue To Thrive

Arhan Bagati

The Himalayas often referred to as the “third pole,” serve as the ecological backbone of South Asia, regulating climate patterns and sustaining millions of livelihoods. Within this vast expanse, Kashmir occupies a unique position, not only as a region of unparalleled beauty but also as a critical component in the battle against climate change. With its lush valleys, expansive glaciers, and biodiverse ecosystems, Kashmir’s role in preserving the Himalayan ecological balance is indispensable. However, the region faces mounting environmental challenges that demand urgent attention and collective action.

The Himalayan ecosystem is one of the most climate-sensitive regions in the world. Rising temperatures have accelerated the melting of glaciers in Kashmir, threatening water security for millions. According to recent studies, Kolahoi Glacier, the largest in the Kashmir Valley, has shrunk by over 23% in the last five decades. This alarming retreat has far-reaching consequences for agriculture, hydro-power, and biodiversity.

Erratic weather patterns have exacerbated these issues. Unseasonal rainfall and prolonged droughts are disrupting traditional farming practices, lead-

ing to decreased yields of iconic crops like saffron and apples. Additionally, the region’s rich biodiversity is under threat. Species like the Kashmir stag (Hangul) and the snow leopard face habitat loss, endangering their survival.

Deforestation and urbanization have significantly disrupted the region’s ecological balance. Illegal logging, often driven by short-term economic gains, has stripped forests of their ability to act as carbon sinks. This deforestation not only accelerates soil erosion but also heightens the risk of landslides and floods.

Water scarcity is another pressing issue. Reduced snowmelt from receding glaciers has diminished the flow of rivers like the Jhelum, impacting both agriculture and daily living. Pollution in water bodies such as Dal Lake and Wular Lake further exacerbates the crisis. Once pristine, these lakes now face contamination from untreated sewage and agricultural runoff.

A stark example of climate change’s impact is the declining yield of saffron, a crop deeply intertwined with Kashmiri identity. Over the past decade, irregular rainfall and temperature fluctuations have reduced saffron cultivation by nearly 40%, threatening the livelihoods of thousands of farmers.

Community Initiatives and Local Solutions

Despite these challenges, local communities in Kashmir are at the forefront of ecological conservation. Afforestation drives, led by grassroots organizations,

have successfully restored degraded lands. For instance, initiatives in South Kashmir’s Shopian district have seen the plantation of thousands of native trees, revitalizing the local ecosystem.

Traditional water management systems like kuhls (ancient irrigation channels) are being revived. These systems, maintained collaboratively by communities, ensure equitable water distribution for agriculture and domestic use, even during periods of scarcity. Additionally, Kashmiri youth and NGOs are playing a pivotal role in creating awareness about climate change and promoting sustainable practices.

The reforestation project in the Lidder Valley stands out as a notable success story. Passive restoration efforts, such as fencing off degraded forests in the region, have significantly improved soil health, increased tree density, and enhanced carbon storage. These initiatives not only combat deforestation but also create sustainable livelihoods through eco-tourism.

Policy and Governmental Efforts
Recognizing the urgency of the situation, the Jammu and Kashmir administration has launched several initiatives to combat climate change. The Green Jammu and Kashmir Drive aims to increase forest cover by planting millions of saplings annually. Meanwhile, wetland preservation programs are being implemented to protect vital ecosystems like Hokersar and Shallabugh wetlands.



Renewable energy solutions are also gaining traction. Mini-hydropower projects and solar energy installations are being deployed to reduce dependency on fossil fuels. For instance, the government's partnership with private firms has led to the establishment of solar power plants in remote villages, ensuring energy access while minimizing environmental impact.

Cross-border cooperation is another promising avenue. Given that the Himalayas span multiple nations, regional collaboration on glacier monitoring, water resource management and afforestation efforts can significantly bolster conservation efforts.

Global Perspective and Opportunities for Kashmir

Kashmir's environmental challenges mirror global climate issues, making the region a microcosm of the broader struggle against climate change. However, this also presents opportunities for innovation and leadership.

Eco-tourism is emerging as a sustainable development pathway. By leveraging its natural beauty and cultural heritage, Kashmir can attract environmentally conscious travelers. Initiatives like homestays in eco-

logically sensitive areas not only promote sustainable tourism but also provide economic benefits to local communities.

International collaborations have also begun to bear fruit. Partnerships with organizations like the World Bank and UNDP have facilitated funding and technical expertise for conservation projects. Digital platforms are being used to create awareness and mobilize global support for preserving Kashmir's fragile ecosystem.

A Personal Vision for Preservation

Having spent considerable time in Kashmir, I have witnessed both its unparalleled beauty and the urgent need for ecological preservation. Local communities' efforts to restore balance, from planting saplings to reviving traditional water channels, are both inspiring and instructive. However, the scale of the challenge demands broader participation.

A Collective Responsibility

The path forward requires a collective approach. Expanding grassroots initiatives, integrating advanced technologies like AI for climate monitoring, and fostering global partnerships can accelerate progress. Educa-

tion also plays a crucial role; by empowering the next generation with knowledge about sustainability, we can ensure lasting change.

The establishment of eco-parks, development of renewable energy hubs, and strengthening policies against deforestation are tangible steps that can make a significant impact. Moreover, incentivizing sustainable agricultural practices can help farmers adapt to changing climates while preserving traditional crops like saffron.

A Call to Action

As the Himalayas face unprecedented environmental challenges, Kashmir's role in preserving ecological balance is more critical than ever. The stakes are high, but so are the opportunities. By uniting local wisdom, governmental efforts, and global collaborations, we can forge a sustainable future for this fragile region.

Kashmir's story is not just one of challenges but also of resilience and hope. As stewards, of one of the world's most vital ecosystems, it is our collective duty to ensure that the Himalayas continue to thrive, sustaining life and inspiring generations to come.

Jammu Ancient Encounters Modern

Col Satish Singh Lalotra

“The old order changeth yielding place to new and God fulfills himself in many ways lest one good custom should corrupt the world”—Alfred, Lord Tennyson. Though I have been writing for quite some time on myriad subjects that fancy my sight or past / present experience which have crossed my path in the course of my personal or professional life, it is with a sense of anticipation that I am touching this hitherto relatively untouched topic which though visible to many of us has been pushed to the backburner. The relative ease and incongruity simultaneously of archaic and outmoded lifestyles co-existing with that of contemporary ones in the ‘City of temples’ Jammu, is what baffles me the most. The fact that this co-existence of outmoded lifestyles, long lost social mores, practices bordering on the bizarre with that of ultra-modern lifestyles espousing the emerging aspirations of a neo-rich class of people in the ‘city of temples’ has much for the social scientists to mull upon and

figure out the way the ‘Social reengineering’ is being effected in this part of the UT of J&K. Hence the prime reason for my touching this all too ubiquitous topic, but yet hidden from the prying eyes of the public.

The present effort of mine is primarily to get to the so called ‘Cross -roads’ of modernity and the antiquity found obtained in the Jammu city. The year of 1991 under the prime minister ship of late PV Narsimha Rao was a watershed in the lives of countless Indians who were ushered into the LPG (Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization) regime that was further given a fillip by his redoubtable finance minister Dr Man Mohan Singh in all his sincerity.

The advent of LPG doctrine in turn ushered in a culture of ‘consumerism’ in the Indian masses that hitherto were smug in their own world of restricted marketing practices. Though the city of Jammu was tad slow in catching up with the rest of the country in matters concerning consumerism, but then a host of factors viz an exploding population, stress on the living spaces, both horizontal and vertical expansion of the city limits, an increased shifting population, opening up of the market to outside forces, a decartelization of transport business as well as that of a concerted push by the Central Government to make the winter capital a valued destination in terms of business opportunities have had an environment that pushed the aspirational levels of the people to astronomical limits.

It is no secret that the primary source of conflict involving cultural or religious identities is the ‘de facto’ harbingers for ‘Clash of civilizations’. The American political scientist ‘Samuel P Huntington’ in his seminal work

as mentioned above has theorized that future conflict cum fault lines will be based on the above premise; and the ability to bridge the above fault lines will test our ‘Saliency’ in maintaining a modicum of societal balance on a much larger scale. The ‘City of temples’ Jammu, off late has been experiencing this typical ‘Clash of civilizations’ that encompass a bevy of activities, places, way of life etc.

Seeped in traditionalist way of leading their lives, the masses of Jammu have been bombarded with an onslaught of ultra-fast paced facets of their existence ranging from an exposure to typical ‘Nine to five’ jobs that demand quick on the move decisions to eat, travel and reach office at the appointed time to spending their leisure time. This called for a revolutionized road systems with an equally fast way of commuting. The roads of Jammu which were on the brink of getting on the nerves of the commuters have now been given a total face lift accompanied with state of the art flyovers, over bridges, by-passes etc.

This was just not possible a few decades back, when the narrow serpentine roads of the city were clogged with an equally antiquated transport system consisting of old tempos, horse driven tongas, cycle rickshaws, bullock carts and the ilk. The proverbial ‘Icing on the cake’ which proved the coming of age of transport system of Jammu was all too evident recently when innovative e-autos, and e-rickshaws part of the JSCP (Jammu smart city project) won the ‘National award of excellence in urban transport ‘ at the 17th Urban mobility India conference and expo- 2024’ held in Gandhi Nagar , Gujarat.



The award conferred by union minister for housing and urban affairs, ML Khattar recognizes the project in the category of ‘City with most innovative financing mechanism’. What more stamp of approval of a revolutionized system of transport could be spoken of than conferring of this prestigious award on Jammu? Approximately 800 low income families in Jammu are benefitting from this green initiative. CEO of JSCL (Jammu smart city limited) Dr Devansh Yadav along with his team received the award. Dr Yadav’s refrain was directed at three key objectives while receiving this award -providing economical end -mile connectivity, promoting pollution free transportation and enhancing employment opportunities for low income families.

Now compare these high voltage achievements with the milieu of the bygone decades of decadence of transportation in Jammu. Just not comparable, but then there are certain outlying areas of Jammu city where still the outmoded models of transport (read tongas, tempos etc) are doing rounds. This is what one would call meeting point of

archaic with the contemporary – so very seamlessly stitched in the overall mosaic of Jammu city.

The burgeoning population of the city had its first brush of non-resident Jammuites, when in the early 1990s it experienced the influx of KPs (Kashmiri Pandits) from across the Pir Panjal mountains reeling under the onslaught of militancy. The city never remained the same thereafter. Every other nook and cranny of the city was under the resident ship of these hapless people who even defined new limits of the city by settling at places that were hitherto ignored.

It prompted the city planners of Jammu to rejig their mathematics and extend the civic amenities to these areas thus making possible new settlements come into existence which overshadowed the traditional living spaces of the city. The old settlements of Jammu had equally old and archaic names to go by. Names like Fattu Chaugan, Purani Mandi, Pakki Dhaki, Gummat, Peer Kho had a halo about themselves which boasted their linkages to the Dogra royals of the bygone era. Even today these settle-

ments have an air hanging about themselves which give a whiff of times long gone by, with many of the people living in these places refusing to unclog their associations with the times now confined to pages of Dogra history. Juxtaposed with the new high rises that boasts of both horizontal and vertical expansion in areas across the river Tawi, only accentuates the inevitable— the clash of civilizations.

Even today a passerby can spot tarot card readers based on parrots, half-baked quacks claiming mastery in dentistry displaying their wares on the road leading to Gummat trying to entice them with all their aplomb. The fact that even in this day and age these quacks are doing a roaring business speaks volumes about the unflinching faith and unwavering resolve that these people have had on the mental firmament of the locals. A perfect example of co-existence cum confluence of archaic with the contemporary. It further proves that even toady the constant media bombardment by ‘manufacturing Mughals’ has failed to unhinge some of the time tested tenets of living in the minds of the masses of



Jammu city.

The spread of the Mall culture in Jammu is another facet that has driven masses from their chosen places of shopping like the iconic Raghunath Bazar and link road in the city's center to that of the burgeoning malls which are now a staple choice with the young generation to splurge their money. Spoilt for choice, the so called 'Generation Next' never had so good to fulfill their 'Bucket of choice', that off course has had some adverse effects on the long standing customer – shopkeeper relation built on the anvil of years of trust, bonhomie, mutual respect and more value for their money.

The fact that these malls are spreading a quick sense of gratification, with most of the times the above mentioned qualities missing from their wares as well as marketing strategy has seeped into the psyche of the younger lot too; who have willy nilly imitated these values of instant gratification in their personal and professional lives too. This loss of personal contact between a prospective buyer and seller is the most precious transactional loss which often is reflective in

our today's society too.

A typical side kick of this emerging mall culture has been the sky rocketing prices of the real estate in Jammu city (more often than inflated) leading to nefarious designs by the builders to indulge in encroachments on government lands, obfuscating the details from the prospective buyers thus duping them of their hard earned money. A vicious circle of gratification which has no beginning and end in sight, but despite these inroads by the modern consumerists, the bastion of palate is still retained by some age old names like Pahalwan di Hatti & Billu di Hatti who have no equals in churning out some of the most mouthwatering delicacies this side of the river Ravi. This popularity of old eating hubs over the sprouting new ones in the city goes to prove the discerning nature of a consumer who doesn't bat an eyelid while loosening his /her purse strings to get what he or she wants.

As if the above developments are not enough, the authorities too have realized to give a total facelift to the city of temples yet

retaining its pride of place that defines this centuries old bastion of Dogra land. The Jammu master plan and Smart Jammu city project with the sole objective- 'Of the people, for the people and by the people' which is an epitome of sustainable and healthy living and a city where happiness quotient reigns supreme is the new buzz word. Vertical gardens (KC Chowk to Dogra Chowk), refuse compactors, signage and way finding, smart Aganwadi centers, cycle tracks, façade lighting illumination of Bahu fort, TRF (Tawi river front), cable car are some of the new facets that would put a new spring in the gait of Jammuites, and why not? It was not for nothing that Lord Tennyson stated-'The old order changeth yielding place to new and God fulfills himself lest one good custom should corrupt the world'. It is but natural that a cacophony would rise when old meets the new, but herein lies the sagacity and resilience of the people of Jammu to accept the both with a sense of equanimity to convert this cacophony into a symphony.

(The writer is a retired army officer.)

Masala Roti

That Smells Dreams, Struggle and Valor

Shagufta Maqbool

In the heart of Sopore's lively Iqbal Market, where the streets hum with life and the air is rich with the smell of sizzling food, there's a corner that tells a story of grit and determination. It's not just about food—it's about one man's journey to keep his family afloat. That man is Tariq Ahmad Khan, son of Mohammad Maqbool Khan, a resident of Nigli, Sopore.

For nearly two decades, Tariq has been serving his signature Masala Rotis, each bite carrying not just flavor but the story of his struggle. Every morning, as Sopore begins to wake, Tariq is already hard at work in his humble kitchen. Unlike other vendors, he doesn't buy rotis from the market. He makes them himself at home, pouring in his effort, skill and a dash of love into every piece. By afternoon, these freshly made masala rotis find their way to his stall in Iqbal Market, where loyal customers wait to taste the simplicity and warmth of his masala roti.

Tariq's life is anything but simple. Working tirelessly from morning until sometimes 1 or 2 a.m., he juggles the demands of running his stall and caring for his family. His hands may be tired, but his spirit remains unbroken. "This work is my life," he says, his eyes reflecting years of unspoken struggles. Behind his quiet resilience lies a family that depends on him—his wife, his children and an extended family that he supports through the earnings of his stall.

Life has not been kind, but Tariq has fought every challenge with hard work and determination. For him, every



roti he sells is not just a piece of bread but a means to keep his family's dreams alive. What make his masala rotis unforgettable is not just the spices or the crispy texture—it's the soul he puts into making them. Locals say Tariq's food tastes different because it carries the flavor of his dedication. "You can feel his struggle in every bite," says one regular customer. Tariq's stall is more than just a place to grab a quick snack. It has become a part of the community, a reminder of how determination can transform even the smallest efforts into something extraordinary.

As customers gather around his stall, they don't just come for the food—they come to hon-

or and support a man who refused to give up, no matter how hard life got. As the clock strikes midnight and Sopore quiets, Tariq's work doesn't end. His hands are calloused, his body exhausted, but his heart remains strong. In that quiet moment, his stall becomes a symbol of hope—a light that refuses to dim in the darkness.

To many, his stall is just a place for a quick bite, but to him, it is a lifeline—a bridge between hardship and survival. In every roti he makes lies the story of sacrifice, resilience, and love, reminding us that even the simplest food can carry the weight of a lifetime's struggle and the warmth of a father's dream.

Kashmir to Kanyakumari Express



Avinaash Mehra

‘The difference between the impossible and the possible lies in one’s determination.’

The dream of much anticipated Udhampur-Srinagar Baramulla Railway Link Project (USBRLP) is coming true by couple of weeks. The project is being constructed by Indian Railways as National Project in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir since 2002. The Railway Board, Government of India has entrusted the construction of section of Katra-Dharam section project to KRCL and Dharam-

Baramulla to IRCON International limited through Northern Railway. The project has been in progress for more than two decades.

It is unique and has various sections, many of them are operational. Among the operational are Jammu to Udhampur (2005), Qazigund to Baramulla (2008), Qazigund to Banihal (2013) Udhampur to Karta (2014), Banihal to Sangaldan (2024). The section between Sangaldan to Reasi was completed in June 2024. Total Length of the USBRL Project is around 300 kms out of which 119 kms is cumulative length of tunnels, which is constructed in sections.

However, the most challenging

sections of USBRLP are completed including world’s highest steel and concrete arch Chenab bridge, India’s longest T49 railway tunnel and iconic cable stayed Anji bridge, but the connectivity of railway link was impeded due to ongoing execution of To1 tunnel, which is situated in the western flanks of Trikuta hills, abode of reigning deity Shri Mata Vaishno Devi, in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir. Without the completion of To1 tunnel, the USBRL project could have remained pendulous. The total length of the To1 tunnel is 3209 m out of which 370 m stretch was very challenging while execution. It is also considered as one of the most



challenging tunnels in India, as it is excavated through significant Reasi Thrust, subsidiary of main boundary thrust. It is a significant fault in the Himalayas, marking the boundary between the lesser Himalayas and the sub-Himalayas.

The ground conditions near the vicinity of fault/thrust reaches are not favorable for tunnels due to incompetent ground conditions. The presence of Reasi thrust across the tunnel alignment created many problems. Although there was re-alignment of the tunnel to escape the major stretch of the Reasi thrust but even after re-alignment, over 370 m stretch encountered incompetent and flowing ground condition in To1 tunnel.

It was primarily because the tunnel had entered a gravity-driven ground medium with highly water charged ground categorized as 'Flowing'. In other words, it is like mud and slush like ground (Visco-elasto-Plastic). Negotiating through such ground was like 'one step forward, two steps back' situation. This is the only tunnel of USBRL project where the ground condition was totally different from rest of the sections of USBRL project.

Many attempts were made but no major advancement was made between August 2016 and January 2022. In this period of no face advancement, many renowned design consul-

itants failed to suggest appropriate methodology. Numerous unsuccessful attempts were made, resulting in 16 failures. On-going tunnel excavation methods like NATM and conventional proved incoherent to tackle the encountered zone of Reasi thrust because of their applicability only in rocks but not to flowing ground and soils. At that moment, the tunnel advancement was apparently impossible.

'We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope'- Martin Luther King, Jr.

Higher Authorities of Railway were still hopeful and determined to complete this tunnel. Finally, Northern Railway and KRCL entrusted Dr. Bineshian Hoss (Principal, Technical Director, Amberg Engineering AG) and introduced innovative Index of Ground Structure-tunnelling method-(I) TM in January 2022 for detailed design consultancy service for the remaining and most challenging stretch of To1 tunnel. This is the only Tunneling method which is applicable to both rocks and soils due to its comprehensive approach.

This innovative method surpassed prevailing rock classification systems due to its usage in any type of ground conditions. This system assists to delve deep the nuances of ground and helps to provide adequate support system dur-

ing tunnel advancement. Gradually, the tunnel advancement paced-up and To1 tunnel had its successful breakthrough in December 2023 and completion of final lining works in October 2024. It is pertinent to mention here that higher officials and site staff of Northern Railway, KRCL, Amberg and ABCI has given their 24x7 dedicated services to complete, almost the abandoned tunnel. Its accomplishment and hard-earned success will be commemorated very soon as this rail link will provide connectivity to remote areas as well to populous places and will make travel easier within the region and to other parts of India. The project will also boost the tourism and socio-economic development of the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir. Dedicated to nation, successful completion of magnificent USBRL project is in wrought by hard work of various teams of Northern Railway, KRCL, IRCON, foreign experts, consultants and various construction companies. Having worked in various sections of USBRL project for 12 years, the author expresses his sincere gratitude to Ministry of Indian Railway (Govt. of India) and hundreds of workers of all associated agencies for making this project, possible.

(The author is formerly, Sr. Geologist-
Amberg Engineering)

Brewing Love and Faith:

Ehsaas Foundation Keeps Kashmir's Sufi Spirit Alive

Owais Ahmad Yatoo

Srinagar-based 'Ehsaas Foundation' is a beacon of Sufi-humanitarianism in the picturesque but troubled valley of Kashmir.

Nurtured on the time-tested principles of Sufism, which find its roots in love, mercy, brotherhood and peace at the spiritual level, the organization has carved a niche for itself in the work of rehabilitating and popularizing the divine heritage of Kashmir's Sufi saints. Kashmir, or at least its less formal epithet as the "PirVaer" or land of saints, has a long Sufi heritage dating back to the 14th century when Persian mystics like Shah-e-Hamadan introduced into the valley the mystical elements of Islam.

This syncretic heritage was appropriately blended with indigenous Kashmiri traditions in order to produce a religiously non-based, tolerant, and brotherly society. In an era of political tensions in the realm of geopolitics and disintegration in society, such institutions as that of Ehsaas Foundation are necessary in restoring this ethos.

Commencing with a dream to promote cultural empowerment, social well-being, and Sufi values, the foundation operates at the core of Srinagar by adopting people's movements that echo in the discourses of great saints such as

Hazrat Sultan-ul-Arifeen, Nund Rishi, and Lalle Ded. Their work is not altruistic endeavors; it is an intentional effort to bring the Sufi message of the unity of God and man into everyday life so that the spiritual fabric of the valley is maintained in spite of the lures of the modern world.

One of the most emotionally appealing and distinctive ways in which the Ehsaas Foundation has left its imprint on Sufism in Kashmir is by providing free Chai stalls on the occasion of annual Urs (festivals) at Sufi shrines. Urs was so named from the Arabic term for "wedding" and is the symbolic "wedding" of the saint's soul to the Divine upon his or her death.

These remembrance memorial services draw tens of thousands of pilgrims from across the region, galvanizing shrines as vibrant foci of piety, music, and shared introspection. The foundation's tea stalls are not simply refreshment stalls; they are expressions of Sufi ethic service for service's sake (khidmat) and charity, evoking the early Sufi orders' langars (community dining halls).

For instance, during the lead-up to the Urs of Hazrat Sultan ul Arfeen (RA), a Sufi saint whose shrine in Srinagar city is swarmed with pilgrims seeking spiritual benediction, Ehsaas Foundation set up a vibrant tea stall offering day-and-night service to devotees.

Abida Rashid, who is the trust's General Secretary, summed up this effort's larger mission in words as not just to provide nourishment and warmth but also to disseminate the saint's message of love, service, and harmony for the rapidly polarized world.

Free hot spicy tea flavored with saffron and cardamom was also offered, creating a culture in which strangers came together through common piety, thus affirming the Sufi ideal of unity in diversity.

This chai stall ceremony is performed on one day, and it is a recurring emblem of Ehsaas Foundation's commitment to Sufi revival. On the Urs of Hazrat Faqeer Abil Wani (RA.), a Sufi poet whose couplets are voices of the goodness of humility and love for the divine, the foundation served complimentary tea to thousands of guests, turning the shrine into a collective warmth abode.

Consumption of chai, an emblem of Kashmiri culture, holds a profound significance in Sufi culture as well, where drinking and consuming as sharing is seen as a means to purification and unity. Volunteers from the Foundation, typically dressed in humble clothing in imitation of Sufi humility, operated these stalls day and night, engaging pilgrims in discussions about the teachings of the saints.

These sessions offer informal spaces for the sharing of Sufi teachings, reminding the participants that true enlightenment comes from deeds of kindness and not from ritual observance. At the urs of Hazrat Rehman Dar Sahab (RA) at Safakadal, Srinagar, too, Ehsaas Foundation organized a fine free tea service and the traditional langharkhana, nourishing and satiating multitudes and reminding one of the saints of peace and brotherhood.

These efforts are particularly crucial in Kashmir, where Sufism has long served as an anti-extremism movement, spreading a moderate, liberal Islam that invites Hindus, Muslims, and others equally to a shared path of devotion.

Other than the tea stalls, the Ehsaas Foundation's overall efforts at maintaining the message of Sufi saints are cultural and educational efforts that imbue modern activities with mystical flair. Included in them is that they collaborated with Callisto Art & Culture for the second International Online Art Competition that drew over a hundred artists from nine countries. Drawing inspiration from Sufi teachings on cultural growth and public service, the competition brought online space into an international canvas for projecting ideas of harmony, peace, and inspiring divine guidance.

Burhan Nazir, Vice Chairman Ehsaas Foundation, underscored how the competition exemplified Kashmir's ambition to be a center for cultural diplomacy, bringing people together on the principles of Sufism.

Kashmiri painters showcased works like "Sacred Threshold" and "Peace Series," portraying Sufi principles of peace within and global harmony, so that the gospels of the saints resonate on the global stage. This enterprise is especially important in an area where art galleries and museums are scarce and the only lifeline to artists, as much as one that instills Sufi values of persistence and hope.

Commemoration of individual Sufi saints by the foundations also continues to prove their resolve to uphold such legacies. In a vibrant commemoration of Sufi saint Ahad Bab Sopore, who was renowned for his preachings

of love and integration, Ehsaas Foundation conducted an event which commemorated his life by hosting poetry recitation, debate, and get-together events. These initiatives not only do justice to what the saint practiced but also make youths aware of generations about how Sufism has assisted in establishing social harmony in Kashmir.

Similarly, during Urs of Hazrat Rehman Dar Sahab (RA), the organization hosted a Mehfil-e-Sama, which is a Sufi music reunion of qawwalis and dua songs that take the participants to spiritual ecstasies. These performances, typically held in the open under an open sky in the midst of the valley's towering mountains, revive the Sufi tradition of using art and music as tools for attaining divine union while avoiding the materialistic tendencies of modern life.

Activities of Ehsaas Foundation also extend towards community service, where Sufi values of empathy are expressed in material support. After fires which hit Kashmiri Pandit home-revoked families, the foundation provided relief camps with food, beds, and counseling as an extension of Sufi service to all of humanity on an equal basis.

This cross-religious movement is harmonious with Kashmir's syncretistic Sufi tradition, where saints like Nund Rishi educated Hindus and Muslims to coexist peacefully. On such occasions as the "Sabeel E Hussain," based on Sufi rituals of reverence for Imam Hussain's martyrdom, the organization distributes refreshments to promote brotherhood. These efforts reinforce the Sufi ethic of service to humanity as service to the divine, and help to heal the wounds of three decades of war in the valley.

In the broader Kashmiri Sufi renaissance, the activities of

Ehsaas Foundation are open to a cultural renaissance immune to the theatre of dismemberment. Kashmiri Sufism, drawn from orders like the Suhrawardi and Kubrawi, has never been one of external strife but of internal peace, something the world today cannot hear enough of.

By setting up chai stalls in Urs, the organization creates miniature worlds of this utopia, wherein saints' blessings are availed by believers from all walks of life. Through their art competitions and donations, Sufi philosophy and poetry become easily accessible to create counter-narratives among Kashmiris. Amid heightened global interest in Sufism, Ehsaas Foundation brings Kashmir alive as an everlasting treasure house of mystical wisdom, with scholars and pilgrims thronging to it.

Their presence is vast, ushering in an atmosphere of home and spiritual continuity in an otherwise world broken apart by identity crises. The Sufi followers sense the warmth of Sufism on the street stalls, reminding them of the saints' call to awaken from within. The cultural projects like the art contest are a part of it, displaying how Sufi principles can unite a divided world. Basically, Ehsaas Foundation is not just clinging to the past; it is actually building a future in which the light of Sufism will light Kashmir the way towards peace.

Along the trials of its socio-political evolution, the Ehsaas Foundation's unwavering commitment ensures that the words of Sufi saints' love and harmony resonate forever, cup of chai at a time.

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J&K Faces Nature's Wrath

130 Lives Lost in 15 Days as Monsoon Unleashes Devastation. From cloudbursts and flash floods to landslides and tragic losses, J&K once again found itself at the frontline of nature's fury. But what emerged amid the chaos was more than destruction — it was a test of resilience, leadership, and community spirit.



Shah Abbas

As the monsoon season swept across the northern Himalayan region of Jammu and Kashmir with unprecedented ferocity, the region faced a severe test of its resilience and preparedness. Between August 14 and 30, a relentless onslaught of cloudbursts, landslides, and flash floods devastated multiple districts, claiming at least 130 precious lives, injuring over 150 people, and leaving dozens missing. The impact was profound, not only in terms of human loss but also through the widespread damage to infrastructure and disruption of daily life.

A Region on Edge

The Jammu region bore the brunt of these natural calamities, with districts such as Reasi, Kishtwar and Ramban suffering catastrophic damage. Vital transport arteries, including highways and railway tracks, were either damaged or rendered

unusable, severely impacting connectivity. The pilgrimage route to the Vaishno Devi shrine, a lifeline for both the local economy and spiritual tourism, was forced to close temporarily following multiple landslides, underlining how the disasters affected both the economy and cultural fabric of the region.

The tragedy in Kishtwar on August 14 remains etched in memory. The quiet village of Chashoti, an essential motorable base for pilgrims heading to Machail Mata, was ravaged by a sudden cloudburst that caused violent flash floods. Homes, shops, security posts, and vehicles were swept away within moments, resulting in more than 60 deaths and over 125 injuries. According to official sources more than 30 people are still missing (considered dead now) after the devastation. The scale and suddenness of this disaster tested the mettle of the region's emergency response like never before.

Subsequent torrential rains submerged large swathes of Jammu, Reasi, and Kathua districts. Entire neighborhoods, farmlands, and vital infrastructure were inundated, forcing mass evacuations and a halt to normal life. Bridges collapsed, roads were washed away, and communities found themselves isolated, yet the state machinery, acted decisively to bring relief and order amid chaos.

In late August, the pilgrimage route to Vaishno Devi near Katra witnessed another tragedy when landslides killed more than 30 people and severely damaged critical infrastructure. The rapid deployment of army relief columns and government teams highlighted the administration's preparedness to tackle escalating natural disasters.

There were reports of few more fatal casualties in separate flash flood incidents in Doda district.

At least 11 people,

including five children were killed by floods and landslides caused by unprecedented heavy rainfall in Ramban and Reasi districts on August 30. According to state disaster management officials the fatalities occurred due to nocturnal heavy rain and landslides.

While nature's fury was unrelenting, what stood out was the remarkable speed and coordination of the government's response. Under the leadership of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, disaster response teams from the SDRF, police, local volunteers, and the Indian Army were mobilized immediately.

On-ground leadership proved crucial. Deputy Commissioners personally supervised rescue operations, ensuring that aid reached even the most inaccessible regions. LG Sinha's pledge to "leave no family behind" became a rallying cry, echoed by national leaders including Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh and former Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad, emphasizing a unified approach to relief.

This coordinated response underscores how Jammu and Kashmir has evolved in disaster management, demonstrating administrative maturity and compassion even under immense pressure.

Nature's Warning

Experts warn that these calamities are not isolated but part of a growing pattern intensified by climate change and human factors. The Himalayan terrain, characterized by steep mountains, narrow valleys, and fragile ecosystems, is particularly susceptible to cloudbursts and landslides.

Meteorological scientists explain that moisture-laden clouds trapped by mountain ranges cause sudden and intense

downpours, triggering flash floods.

The United Nations Environmental Panel and national climatologists highlight a worrying trend. Scientists are observing changes in the Earth's climate in every region and across the whole climate system, according to the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report, released on August 9. Many of the changes observed in the climate are unprecedented in thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of years, and some of the changes already set in motion are irreversible over hundreds to thousands of years.

What were once predictable, moderate monsoon rains have transformed into erratic, extreme events. A single hour of rainfall today can equal a week's worth of precipitation in previous decades. This change is exacerbated by deforestation, unchecked construction, and urban sprawl, which diminish the natural land's capacity to absorb water, turning heavy rains into deadly floods.

Building Resilience

While the immediate relief efforts have been commendable in Jammu and Kashmir, the disasters expose the urgent need for long-term planning and sustainable development. Authorities have initiated steps to monitor vulnerable areas and issue timely advisories, but experts argue for a more structural approach. Expert recommendations include:

A: Strict enforcement against illegal construction in flood-prone and ecologically sensitive zones to prevent exacerbating risks.

B: Large-scale afforestation drives on mountain slopes to reduce soil erosion and stabilize the terrain.

C: Advanced forecasting and early warning systems integrated with local networks to provide timely

alerts, helping communities prepare before disasters strike.

D: Community-level disaster preparedness training to empower residents to respond effectively in emergencies.

According to official sources the government has already begun exploring partnerships with national meteorological bodies and international climate resilience organizations to develop modified forecasting systems tailored to Jammu and Kashmir's unique topography.

A Call for Collective Responsibility

The journey toward disaster resilience requires more than government action. It calls for a collective commitment from citizens to respect environmental regulations, avoid settling in vulnerable zones, and participate actively in conservation efforts.

May it was October 2005 earthquake or September 2014 Kashmir flood, the people of Jammu and Kashmir have shown extraordinary courage and unity during these kinds of crises. Now, by combining resilience with preparedness and responsible governance, they can transform these tragic lessons into a safer, sustainable future.

Strength in Adversity

The monsoon onslaught has been a stern challenge for Jammu and Kashmir. Yet, amid the devastation, the strength of the UT's institutions, the empathy of its leadership, and the spirit of its people shine through. With visionary policies, coordinated governance, and community cooperation, Jammu and Kashmir stands poised not only to recover but to build a future marked by resilience, safety, and sustainable progress.

Kishtwar's Looming GLOF Crisis

GLOF events threaten major power projects in Chenab Valley. Downstream communities face difficult situation as Kishtwar Himalayas witness significant glacial lake expansion. Chenab River fed by glaciers and glacial lakes, sensitive to changes, according to a risk assessment report of DDMA.



In the remote Himalayan valleys of Kishtwar district, nature is quietly scripting a catastrophe. Behind the majestic peaks and glistening glaciers, a crisis is unfolding — one that is intimately linked to the warming of our planet and has placed the very fabric of life, infrastructure, and ecology in the region under dire threat.

A recent risk assessment report by the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) Kishtwar paints a stark picture: the district is increasingly vulnerable to Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) — sudden, destructive floods caused by the failure of natural dams containing glacial lakes. These events are no longer hypothetical. They are becoming more frequent, more intense, and more dangerous due to accelerated glacial melt triggered by climate change.

Hydroelectric Dreams Under Threat

The ambitious hydropower infrastructure in the Chenab Valley — including the Pakal Dul, Kiru, Kwar, and Dangduru

projects — could become collateral damage if GLOFs strike. The report warns that these billion-rupee installations are situated in zones that face extreme flood risk from the upstream glacial lakes.

“Rising water levels or sudden dam breaches could severely damage project infrastructure, disrupt operations, and amplify the flood risk for downstream communities,” the report notes.

With Chenab River’s glacial-fed waters already sensitive to hydrological shifts, any disruption could ripple across power generation, agriculture, and settlements across Jammu and beyond.

Silent Expansion of Glacial Lakes Perhaps the most alarming revelation in the report is the expansion of glacial lakes in the region — particularly Mundiksar Lake, which has significantly increased in size over the last four decades. These lakes are often held back by fragile moraine dams — accumulations of rock and debris left behind by retreating glaciers — which can collapse without warning.

The Kishtwar Himalayas, particularly tehsils like Padder, Marwah, Dachhan, Machail, and Warwan, are now considered “high-risk zones.” This is not only because of the presence of glacial lakes but also due to their steep terrain, seismic activity (Zone IV), frequent landslides, and lack of robust disaster response mechanisms.

The Human Cost of Climate Change

Kishtwar’s remote and underserved regions — Marwah and Warwan, also known as “Shadow Areas” due to their inaccessibility — are home to vulnerable populations with minimal emergency preparedness. The report underscores the potential for massive displacement, contamination of water sources, and collapse of critical infrastructure like roads, schools, and health facilities.

In these fragile communities, a GLOF event could isolate entire villages, making rescue and relief almost impossible.

“Public health risks would also spike due to waterborne diseases following floods,” the report warns.

An Environmental Ticking Bomb

Beyond human settlements, the Kishtwar High Altitude National Park — a biodiversity hotspot — faces the threat of habitat destruction, species loss, and ecological imbalance. The cascading effects of GLOFs could devastate conservation efforts in this protected zone.

The environmental and ecological costs, while less visible than damaged bridges or blackouts, could leave permanent scars on the region's natural heritage.

From Risk to Resilience

The DDMA's report doesn't just sound alarms; it outlines a multi-layered mitigation plan that demands urgent action:

1. Real-Time Monitoring & Early Warning Systems

Deployment of automated sensors to monitor water levels and moraine dam stability.

Utilization of satellite imagery (like Sentinel-1 and Sentinel-2)

for mapping lake expansion.

Collaboration with IMD to issue timely alerts based on rainfall and temperature patterns.

2. Engineering Interventions

Controlled drainage of high-risk lakes to lower water pressure.

Structural reinforcement of unstable moraine dams based on geotechnical assessments.

3. Risk Mapping & Community Preparedness

Detailed vulnerability assessments of downstream infrastructure.

Establishment of evacuation routes and buffer zones.

Public awareness campaigns in local languages focusing on early signs of GLOFs and emergency response.

Policy Imperatives: Climate-Smart Development is No Longer Optional

The GLOF threat in Kishtwar is a climate-induced crisis that underscores the need to mainstream environmental risk into development planning. Hydropower, hailed as clean energy, must also account for climate resilience in design and execution.

Kishtwar's case is not isolated. Across the Himalayas — from Ladakh to Sikkim — the story is the same: warming mountains, retreating glaciers, expanding lakes, and vulnerable populations. What differentiates disaster from tragedy is preparedness.

The DDMA's GLOF Management Plan is a wake-up call, not just for Kishtwar, but for policymakers across Jammu & Kashmir. It reminds us that climate change is not a distant threat; it is unfolding here and now, with real and deadly consequences.

The Path Ahead

The Himalayas are resilient, but their resilience is not infinite. What is at stake is more than infrastructure or policy — it is lives, landscapes, and legacies. The need for coordinated action between government bodies, scientific institutions, and communities has never been more urgent.

Kishtwar stands at a precipice. Whether it becomes a model for climate adaptation or a case study in climate disaster will depend on what we choose to do next.



Kashmir Fauna Protection

Dr Rakesh Verma

The history of wildlife protection in Jammu & Kashmir is marked by significant milestones that reflect the evolving relationship between humans and nature. It began in 1901 with the establishment of the Game Preservation Department, primarily aimed at managing wildlife for royal hunting and recreational purposes. This initial focus on sport led to unregulated hunting practices, resulting in the decline of various species and the exploitation of the region's rich biodiversity. As the 20th century unfolded, the consequences of these practices became increasingly apparent. By 1979, there was a growing recognition of the need for a more structured approach to wildlife conservation, culminating in the formation of the Directorate of Wildlife Protection. This institution was a pivotal

development that shifted the focus from mere preservation for sport to a broader understanding of wildlife's intrinsic value. The formation of this directorate marked a critical transition towards recognizing the ecological importance of wildlife and its habitats, laying the groundwork for comprehensive conservation strategies.

The establishment of the Department of Wildlife Protection in 1982 further cemented the commitment to conservation in Jammu & Kashmir. This agency was tasked with the management and protection of wildlife and natural habitats across the region. The focus shifted from exploitation to a more holistic conservation approach, emphasizing biodiversity preservation and ecological balance. This transition was not without challenges, as the pressure of organized trade on wildlife populations became increasingly evident. Hunting evolved from a recreational activity into a commercial endeavor, driven

by domestic and international demand for various wildlife products.

In response to these challenges, the newly formed department prioritized the creation of stringent regulations to combat illegal wildlife trade. Public awareness campaigns were initiated to educate communities about the importance of wildlife conservation, fostering a collective responsibility toward protecting the region's unique fauna. This ongoing struggle against illegal practices highlights the deepening understanding of the interdependence between human activities and wildlife health, emphasizing the need for sustainable practices that benefit both nature and local communities.

Biodiversity Overview

Jammu & Kashmir's unique geographical features contribute significantly to its rich biodiversity. Nestled in the northernmost part of India, this region is characterized by its towering Himalayan Mountains, deep valleys, and expansive meadows. These diverse landscapes create a variety of ecosystems, each fostering different forms of life. The altitudinal gradient ranges from lush temperate forests to arid alpine zones, supporting an impressive variety of flora and fauna that thrive in these distinct habitats. Among the notable species that inhabit the region is the majestic Golden Eagle, a top predator that plays a crucial role in controlling the population of smaller animals. These raptors are not only vital for maintaining ecological balance but also serve as indicators of environmental health. The Kalij Pheasant, recognized as the Union Territory's bird,



inhabits the forested areas and symbolizes the rich avian diversity of Jammu & Kashmir. Its vibrant plumage and unique behaviors contribute to the region's ecological tapestry.

Another iconic species is the elusive Snow Leopard, which roams the rugged mountain terrains. As a keystone predator, it helps regulate prey populations, ensuring the health of the entire ecosystem. Similarly, the Hangul, a critically endangered deer species, is indigenous to the region's forests and serves as a cultural emblem for the local communities. Protecting these species and their habitats is essential not only for biodiversity but also for preserving the cultural heritage of the region.

The habitats of these species—ranging from dense forests to alpine meadows—are crucial for their survival. They provide essential resources such as food, shelter, and breeding grounds. The ecological importance of these habitats extends to the communities that rely on the surrounding environment for their livelihoods, underscoring the need for effective conservation strategies to protect both wildlife and human interests in Jammu & Kashmir.

Habitat Diversity and Ecosystem Services

Jammu & Kashmir encompasses a remarkable variety of habitats, each contributing significantly to the region's ecological integrity and the well-being of its local communities. The primary habitats include dense temperate forests, expansive alpine meadows, and rugged mountain terrains. These environments not only support a diverse range of wildlife but also provide critical ecosystem services that sustain the livelihoods and cultural identities of the people who inhabit these landscapes.



Forests in Jammu & Kashmir are characterized by majestic stands of Deodar and Blue Pine, providing essential habitats for numerous species, including the Snow Leopard and Kalij Pheasant. These forests act as carbon sinks, helping to mitigate climate change, and play a vital role in water regulation. They filter rainwater, replenish aquifers, and maintain the hydrological cycle, which is crucial for agricultural practices in the region. Moreover, forest resources provide local communities with timber, medicinal plants, and non-timber forest products, forming the backbone of their economic activities.

Alpine meadows, often adorned with vibrant wildflowers in spring, are another significant habitat within the region. These meadows serve as critical grazing grounds for herbivores such as the Hangul and various species of sheep and goats. The biodiversity within these meadows sustains not only the wildlife but also the pastoral communities, who depend on these resources

for their livelihoods. The seasonal migration of livestock to these meadows exemplifies the symbiosis between humans and nature, reinforcing cultural traditions and practices passed down through generations.

The diverse habitats of Jammu & Kashmir also contribute to cultural identity, as local communities often have deep-rooted spiritual connections with the land and its wildlife. Traditional practices, folklore, and cultural events frequently revolve around the region's natural resources, highlighting the intrinsic value of biodiversity. Protecting these habitats is paramount, not only for the survival of wildlife but also for preserving the cultural heritage and livelihoods of the communities that coexist with the rich tapestry of life in Jammu & Kashmir.

Impact of Human Activities on Wildlife

Human activities, such as urbanization, agriculture, and tourism, have significantly affected wildlife populations and habitats in Jammu & Kashmir.



As the region experiences rapid urban growth, natural habitats are increasingly fragmented, leading to a loss of biodiversity and disruption of wildlife corridors. Urban expansion encroaches on critical ecosystems, forcing wildlife to adapt to new challenges or face displacement. This alteration of habitat can lead to increased human-wildlife conflicts, as animals seek food and shelter in populated areas, often resulting in negative interactions.

Additionally, the use of pesticides and fertilizers can contaminate surrounding ecosystems, affecting not only target pests but also non-target wildlife. The introduction of monoculture farming reduces the availability of diverse food sources for wildlife, further exacerbating the decline in certain populations. In particular, herbivores that rely on native vegetation face challenges as their food sources dwindle.

Tourism, a significant economic

driver in Jammu & Kashmir, presents both opportunities and challenges for wildlife conservation. While it can generate funding and awareness for conservation efforts, unchecked tourism can lead to habitat degradation, pollution, and increased human presence in the sensitive areas. The influx of visitors can disturb wildlife, particularly during critical breeding seasons, and create pressure on resources that both wildlife and local communities depend on.

One notable issue stemming from human activities is the so-called “monkey menace.” As urbanization and agriculture have expanded, the availability of food for monkeys has increased, leading to their proliferation in human settlements. This adaptation results in health problems for the monkeys, as they come into contact with waste and diseases in urban areas. Moreover, their presence can disrupt local communities, leading to crop

damage and heightened human-animal conflicts.

In conclusion, the interplay between human activities and wildlife in Jammu and Kashmir illustrates the delicate balance that must be maintained to ensure both ecological integrity and community well-being. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive strategies that promote coexistence and sustainable practices, ensuring the protection of the region’s rich biodiversity.

Conservation Challenges and Strategies

The conservation landscape in Jammu & Kashmir is fraught with challenges that threaten the region’s rich biodiversity. Among the most pressing issues are illegal wildlife trade and habitat destruction, both of which have far-reaching consequences for local ecosystems. The illegal trade of wildlife, driven by domestic and international demand, poses a significant threat to various

species, including endangered ones. Poaching and trafficking for body parts and exotic pets have resulted in the drastic decline of populations that are crucial for maintaining ecological balance.

Habitat destruction, primarily due to urbanization, agriculture, and infrastructure development, further exacerbates these challenges. As natural habitats are converted into farmland or urban spaces, wildlife is forced to adapt to fragmented ecosystems, resulting in increased human-wildlife conflicts. The loss of vital habitats not only threatens the survival of species but also disrupts the delicate interconnections within ecosystems, jeopardizing the region's ecological integrity.

Habitat restoration initiatives are equally important. Establishing protected areas and wildlife corridors can facilitate the movement of species and promote genetic diversity. Additionally, engaging local communities in conservation efforts fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility, encouraging sustainable practices that prioritize the coexistence of humans and wildlife. Integrating traditional ecological knowledge with modern conservation techniques can also enhance the effectiveness of these strategies. By valuing the insights of local communities who have coexisted with wildlife for generations, conservation initiatives can be more culturally relevant and successful.

Ultimately, a collaborative approach that includes government agencies, local communities, NGOs, and international organizations is essential for creating a sustainable future for wildlife in Jammu & Kashmir.

Case Studies

Jammu & Kashmir has seen



several successful conservation initiatives that have made a significant impact on wildlife populations and habitat protection. One of the most notable case studies is the Snow Leopard Conservation Program, which was initiated in response to the declining population of this iconic species. This program combines scientific research, community engagement, and habitat preservation. By involving local communities in conservation efforts, the program has fostered a sense of stewardship towards the Snow Leopard and its habitat. Monitoring activities, including the use of camera traps, have helped gather data on the species, leading to informed management strategies that promote coexistence between humans and wildlife.

Another successful initiative is the Hangul Recovery Project. The Hangul, or Kashmir stag, is a critically endangered species with a population concentrated in the Dachigam National Park. This project focuses on habitat restoration and anti-poaching measures to safeguard the remaining population. By creating a protective environment and enhancing the availability

of food resources, the initiative aims to stabilize and eventually increase the Hangul population. Moreover, awareness campaigns targeting local communities have been instrumental in reducing poaching incidents and fostering an appreciation for this culturally significant species.

Furthermore, the Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) initiative promotes community-based conservation in Jammu & Kashmir. These committees empower local communities to participate in decision-making processes related to biodiversity management. By integrating traditional knowledge with contemporary conservation practices, BMCs have successfully implemented various projects that enhance habitat protection and restore ecological balance.

These case studies exemplify the potential for effective conservation strategies in Jammu & Kashmir, showcasing the importance of community involvement and innovative approaches in safeguarding the region's unique wildlife and habitats.

(The author is from J&K Forest Services)

Old Tales, Rich Lessons

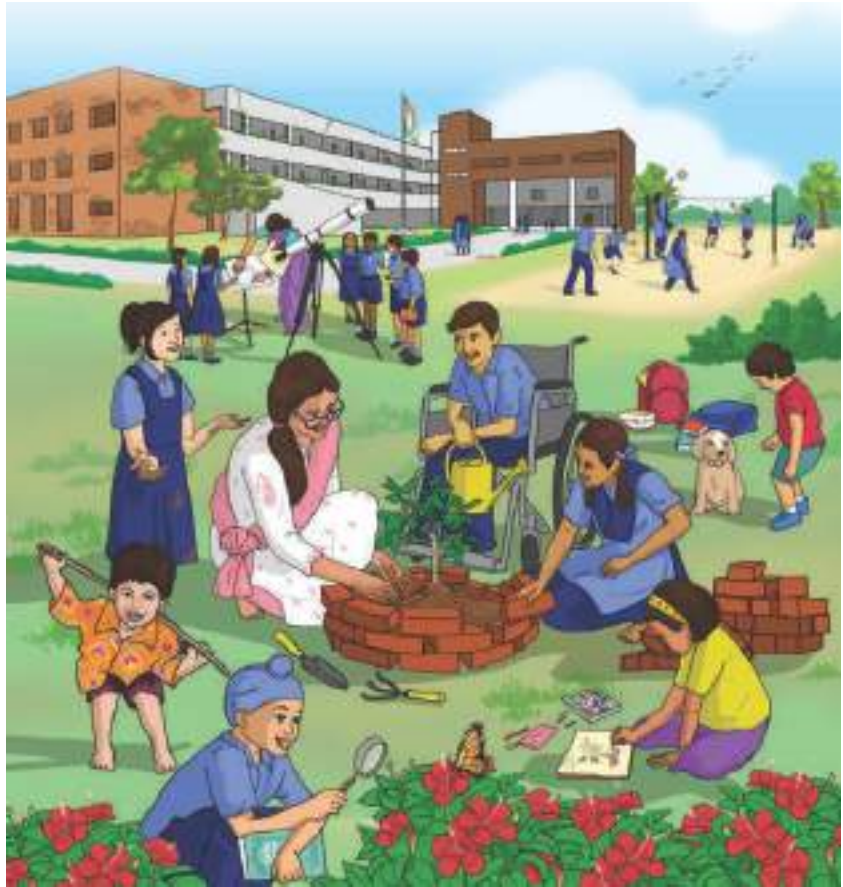
Syed Majid

Growing up, I was fortunate to be surrounded by a closely-knit community of family members, neighbours, and relatives who valued the importance of storytelling. These tales, rich with lessons, guided us in shaping our morals and ethics.

Among the storytellers was my grandmother, the late Syeda Sakina Gilani, whose wisdom and life experiences left an indelible mark on me. An educated woman of great moral principles, she not only shared valuable insights but lived by the values she imparted. What made her stories even more special was that she reserved them for our family, making them personal and deeply meaningful.

One of her stories, in particular, stands out as a haunting reminder of how unchecked indulgence and misguided love can lead to devastating consequences.

In a quiet village, a woman lived with her husband and their only son. The husband worked tirelessly, often traveling long distances to provide for his family, while the wife's toxic behavior subtly pushed him further away from home. She created an unbearable environment, compelling him to spend most of his time working in distant places. Despite his efforts to provide, the wife took sole control of the household, regarding



their son as the center of her world, lavishing him with her undivided affection and attention. In her eyes, the son was her possession, while the husband was merely a provider, denied any meaningful role in their child's life.

As the boy began attending a local school, his behavior began to show signs of trouble. He had learned these disruptive and irregular behaviors directly from his mother, who deliberately taught him to act in ways that went against the norms. This saddened and troubled his noble, innocent father, who had always strived to raise him with integrity and discipline. One day, he brought home an extra pencil and

confessed to his mother that he had taken it from a classmate's bag without permission. Rather than correcting him or explaining the gravity of stealing, his mother dismissed the incident with silence. This small but significant moment marked the beginning of a path that would lead to ruin.

Not long after, the boy got into a fight with a classmate and was summoned to the principal's office. When his mother was called to address the situation, she shockingly defended her son, arguing that the classmate had provoked him. Instead of holding him accountable, she justified his actions, inadvertently encouraging his behavior. The boy began to perceive

grew bolder with time.

As the years passed, the boy's actions became increasingly troubling. One day, he was caught smoking by his classmates, who reported him to the school authorities. Hoping to prevent him from developing a harmful habit, the school called his mother to discuss the matter. Yet again, she dismissed the issue, claiming that smoking was insignificant compared to the worse habits others of his age were indulging in, such as gambling and committing more serious offenses. Her normalization of his behavior only reinforced his belief that he could act without consequence.

By the time he was a teenager the boy had dropped out of school and turned to theft. Under his mother's tacit approval, he became skilled at robbery, often targeting homes in the village. Meanwhile, his father, now too old to travel for work, stayed home to manage local business. He was horrified to see his son's wayward path but found himself powerless to reverse the damage.

The turning point came one fateful night when the boy, during a robbery, was confronted by a homeowner. A scuffle ensued, and the boy ended up killing the man. The authorities swiftly arrested him, and he was sentenced to death by hanging. As per custom, the condemned man was granted a final wish. To everyone's shock, he requested that his mother be hanged alongside him.

When the King, perplexed by this request, asked the boy to explain, he recounted the story of his downfall. He described how his mother's silence and justification during his childhood incidents—starting with the stolen pencil—had planted the seeds



of his destructive behavior. He blamed her for normalizing his misdeeds and undermining his disciplined father's attempts to instill discipline. He spoke of how her refusal to correct him had emboldened him, ultimately leading him down a path of crime and destruction.

Overcome with grief, the mother realized the gravity of her mistakes. Her misplaced love, coupled with her failure to set boundaries, had cost her son his life and destroyed her family. The King, bound by tradition, granted the son's wish. As the mother and son stood together on the gallows, the son's final words served as a chilling reminder of the consequences

of unchecked indulgence and a lack of accountability.

This tale, passed down through generations, remains a powerful lesson about the importance of responsible parenting and the dangers of enabling destructive behavior. My grandmother would often conclude this story with a reminder that love, while essential, must be balanced with discipline and accountability. It is through this balance that we guide the younger generation to become responsible and compassionate individuals, capable of building a harmonious society.

Syed Majid Gilani is a writer and serves as a GST Inspector for the

From Maruti-800 Days to Chaos:

The Traffic Surge



Dr Mohammad Amin

Once upon a time, in late 1980s, Maruti-800 was a sensation on our quiet roads. In just four decades, there has been an unprecedented surge in the number of vehicles, with advanced automobiles filling every available space. Their overwhelming presence clutters the view of once-beautiful surroundings. Navigating the city or the town lanes, the vehicles are permanently lined up on both sides of the roads. With no space for parking in their homes, the residents leave their vehicles permanently on public roads. On the main roads, buses, matadors, cars, 3-wheelers, pushcarts and

pedestrians move haphazardly, stopping anywhere-even in the middle of the road, giving rise to endless phantom traffic jams. Behind the crawling vehicles, you will find a long queue of other stranded automobiles desperately seeking an escape route. It is so infuriating to be stuck behind a slow-moving car/three-wheeler, only to later discover, the driver casually engaged on a phone conversation, unconcerned about the growing line of vehicles behind. Municipality Garbage trucks arrive at peak hours, creating bottlenecks. The reckless and haphazard parking of vehicles on main roads and encroachment of footpath adds to the problems. Constant truck movement, potholes, and bumpy roads worsen the mess. Overall, the problem stems more from indiscipline than from the sheer

volume of vehicles on the roads. The consequences of traffic congestion extend far beyond mere inconvenience; they affect people's productivity, air quality and overall wellbeing. The fuel wasted as vehicles crawl in lower gears, not only drives up costs but also causes air pollution. One can imagine the impact of lacks of vehicles emitting pollutants like particulate matter, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides etc., into the atmosphere on daily basis across our cities/towns. Remember, transportation is the largest source of carbon emissions and more vehicles means further from our climate goals. Besides, it leads to health issues like asthma and heart disease, while the prolonged waiting in queues causes stress and other health problems. If roads remain clogged for hours, it disrupts the daily life and economic activities.

At time even the ambulances remain trapped in traffic jams putting lives at risk. This entire situation unknowingly siphons billions from the public exchequer while inflicting significant harm on the environment and wellbeing of the people. Despite new strategies, thousands of additional vehicles hit the roads every month, worsening the situation. The crisis demand urgent attention as it is deeply linked to road safety, environmental sustainability and overall well-being of people.

Addressing traffic congestion and violations demands a holistic, multi-faceted approach. It requires integrating awareness programs, strict enforcement, efficient public transport and infrastructure development. Recognizing these challenges, the College administration at SAM Govt. Degree College, Budgam, organized a road

safety/traffic management Program. The Road Safety Club and Transport committee made necessary communications/arrangements, coordinated with Traffic/Transport Departments, legal services and NGOs to arrange an event. The SSP Traffic Rural, RTO Kashmir, chairman KRSF and legal experts from District Budgam were invited and a program was held on 25th of Feb. in the College auditorium.

The meticulously planned event drew a large gathering of students, NSS volunteers and over a hundred faculty plus staff, eager to engage with top officials. However, unforeseen circumstances led to changes in the expected line-up. Instead of SSP a DySP was deputed to participate in the function. The RTO was expected to be present from the beginning of the program, arrived near the conclusion of the session. Personally, I would have been delighted if these officials were present and taken note of insights of our learned speakers, assessed its feasibility, on this important occasion.

While much has been written about the government policies, not much attention has been paid to the road behaviour of the general public. It is an issue that is often overlooked in society. Generally speaking, people have poor traffic literacy and road ethics and the violations largely happen due to ignorance or negligence rather than deliberate actions. The awareness programs can play a crucial role in addressing violations, reckless driving and traffic congestion. Counselling drivers, transporters, commuters, pedestrians and general public about traffic rules,

responsible driving and road safety measures, can sensitise people and instil traffic ethics in their daily lives.

Traffic police and allied agencies should conduct regular counselling sessions, deploying expert teams to engage with drivers and people at bus yards, taxi/auto stands and truck terminals. These sessions should feature live demonstrations, documentaries and informative materials highlighting the consequences of traffic violations, reckless driving, wrong parking and footpath encroachments. A clear advisory must go that roads are public spaces and no one has the right to cause disruptions on roads. Commuters need to be informed about the impact of crowding near bus stops and junctions.

The traffic rules and laws in the UT have to be made more stringent to ensure better compliance and discipline among the commuters. We have seen digital monitoring systems and surveillance through CCTV cameras which needs further augmentation using smart traffic signal devices to accommodate traffic demands. In recent years, we have seen lot of improvements in issuing driving licences but those who have already obtained licences through shortcut methods over the years are there on the roads driving vehicles.

Driving is not a mechanical skill but a culture and an attitude. If people are considerate, disciplined and law-abiding on the roads, they likely exhibit similar traits in other aspects of life. Getting a driving licence is not a matter of right but a privilege which one has to earn by studying traffic rules, taking

trainings in driving schools and appearing in the driving test. The traffic police struggle to enforce regulations effectively due to limited human resources. To improve compliance with traffic rules and ensure swift enforcement, certain levels of gazetted officers at the District/Tehsil level should be empowered to impose fines on offenders through an online portal as part of their routine duties. This would deter habitual offenders, keep them under constant scrutiny and promote transparency in traffic enforcement.

Old vehicles with inefficient engines are major contributors to pollution and congestion. A zero-tolerance approach should be adapted to phase them out while also reducing the operational lifespan of general vehicles on the roads. Footpath encroachments directly impact pedestrian safety and traffic flow. The municipality and traffic police should coordinate to ensure that footpaths remain clear for public use. A dedicated task force comprising R&B and municipal authorities should be established to address minor road repairs at critical junctions strategically targeting bottlenecks and making more parking places. There is a concept in transportation planning called "induced demand". Building more and bigger roads attracts more people to drive which cause more congestion and, in some cases, making the situation worse. The key to resolving the issue is ensuring a continuous and smooth traffic flow by removing all obstacles along the way.

NAIRA NOOR INSPIRES ASPIRANTS

Rakshanda Gul

From a small room to a thriving boutique, the journey of Naira Noor, who has battled challenges, gained expertise and provided employment, inspires aspiring entrepreneurs.

Naira Noor, an entrepreneur from Sopore, has now become one of the most famous names in the town of Sopore. She has registered her name and left a mark in the fashion design industry. She owns a very successful boutique and has created a niche for herself through her design style. Naira has been determined, resilient, and constantly learning on her road to success, and now, she inspires others to take the step and start their own business. Naira has completed her BSc in Fashion Designing and also has an ITI diploma in the same area.

She is proud of the fact that she is the first from Sopore who has acquired a BSc in Fashion Designing. She is now an inspiration to many aspiring entrepreneurs in the region. Having begun with a small boutique, Naira did not have an easy ride. She began with one room in her house and said, "I began crying initially because I used to not be able to handle the clients."

Then it was her brother, who kept her motivated all along. "He says, 'You can do it,' and those words themselves gave me the strength." And soon, with time, good comments from the customers were motivating her to take the next level of business. Naira, in her story, has crossed several hurdles. Like most

of entrepreneurs, she also had experienced quite several problems starting off her boutique and admits, "Challenges are an innate part of every new business."

"Challenges are a part of life, especially when you are starting something new," she says. Naira has learned to embrace these challenges and make them stepping stones for growth in her personal and professional life.

"With time, I gained experience and I learned a lot about the industry and my field," she adds. Fashion designing, Naira explains, is an ever-evolving field where one can continuously learn and experiment. "Every day, there's something new to learn about fashion designing. It is not about just making clothes; it is about how to handle fabrics and some techniques that enhance designs. Tailoring is very important; however, it does not require the same creativity as innovation," she explains.

This helps Naira be different with her boutique by attracting different customers who would want something different. Naira began the business from scratch and is very determined to achieve her dream. In raising the finances for the business, she applied for a loan under the KVI scheme.

This is an initiative taken by the government to support starters in that region. She adds this scheme helped her substantially to establish her boutique off the ground, providing her with the much-needed finance that had become necessary for her to expand the business.

"The KVI scheme was a great help. It gave me the financial backing to expand my boutique and take it to

the next level," she shares. One of Naira's long-held dreams has been to start her own business and provide employment opportunities to others. Today, she is not only running her boutique successfully but also providing jobs to many girls who work with her, helping them earn their livelihood.

"I always dreamed of having my own business, and now, I'm able to employ others. It's very rewarding to see my team thrive and grow with me, she says with pride. Naira appreciates the role of social media in promoting her work in the digital age. She uses Instagram and Facebook to promote her designs and attract clients. "Social media is a powerful tool." It helps my work get the visibility it deserves and brings in clients from different places, she says. Naira's boutique has attracted a loyal following of customers who appreciate her unique designs and techniques due to her online presence. Her clients come to her because they know they will get something special.

"I give them fresh designs and innovative techniques that they cannot find elsewhere." She says, "I believe in giving something new and unique to my customers." She stands out through her commitment to quality and creativity as one of the region's top fashion designers. She is eagerly looking forward to further expansion of her boutique and inspiring people to take the entrepreneurial road.

"I believe in learning, evolving, and constantly pushing the boundaries of what I can do. Fashion designing is my dream, and I want to keep learning and creating for as long as I can," she says. Naira Noor's story is a great example of persistence and a powerful vision, anyone can defeat all challenges and achieve success in the competitive business world. She has become a beacon of hope and inspiration for aspiring entrepreneurs in Sopore and beyond.



A DAY OF TOGETHERNESS

Syed Majid Gilani

It was the first March after Waleed's marriage to Zarah, which had taken place in September 2010. Life had begun to shift, slowly, gently, and Waleed had started to see the world through a different lens. One morning, the newlyweds decided to take a short trip, just a simple drive towards Sonamarg. Waleed didn't know that the road beyond Gagangeer usually remained closed until late April due to heavy snowfall. Now, that route stays open year-round, thanks to the Z-Morh tunnel, but back then,

they were simply excited and unaware.

So they set out, happily, in Waleed's sparkling white Maruti 800. It was a small, humble car, but to Waleed, it was priceless. Waleed had never been on long outings or real picnics before. His life had always been quiet, home-bound, conservative and limited. Ever since his school days, Kashmir's unrest and the overprotective love of his family had kept him away from such experiences. He had never seen Pahalgam. He had visited Gulmarg just twice in his early years. Yes, he had travelled outside the Valley, to Jammu, Ludhiana, Amritsar, Delhi,

and Ajmer, but those journeys were always for studies, family responsibilities, or other obligations and not for leisure and joy. But now, with Zarah by his side, everything felt different. He had begun to live differently, to feel something new, something warm, something free.

On the way to Sonamarg, Waleed and Zarah were joyful; sharing stories, singing softly, and living those small, beautiful moments that make life feel fresh and alive. As they passed a roadside shop, Waleed slowed down and pulled over. Inside, they picked up a chilled bottle of fruit juice, a large packet of tangy Chips, and some chewing gum. Waleed also bought some freshly fried local snacks, still warm, wrapped in crinkled newspaper, the kind of nostalgic street-side food that always tastes better when shared.

Zarah giggled as they stepped out, arms full like two kids on a fun day out. They sipped and munched as the car moved ahead, laughing at silly jokes, flipping through old songs, and feeding each other crisps without worrying about the mess. Zarah looked radiant, her eyes sparkling with excitement. And Waleed? His heart felt light and unburdened.

They reached Gagangeer around noon. The moment they stepped out, some locals informed them that the road ahead was closed. Sonamarg was still covered in snow. It wouldn't open until late April. A few horsemen were offering short rides, not all the way to Sonamarg, but just a few kilometers ahead. Waleed had never sat on a horse before. Zarah, on the other hand, found the idea of horse riding a bit unsettling. Waleed smiled gently and he too didn't ride. Her comfort and choice meant more than the ride.

As it turned out, Gagangeer itself looked no less than a wonderland that day. Everything was white. The place was buzzing with locals and tourists alike. The ground, the trees, the rooftops, all buried under five to six feet of thick snow. Waleed had never seen such a sight with his own eyes. He stood there, quietly overwhelmed, like a child who had stepped into a fairy tale. They noticed a Jammu and Kashmir Tourism café nearby, a charming little spot whose lawn had vanished beneath a thick velvet blanket of snow. Even hidden, it looked magical.

Hand in hand, Waleed and Zarah carefully walked over the soft snow, balancing each step. The sun was bright. The snow shimmered like crushed

crystals. Everything around them sparkled, and so did their hearts. Inside the café, they ordered sweet tea and sat by the window, watching the snowy world outside. There was silence, but a kind of silence that spoke volumes. Waleed looked at Zarah and felt something shift within him, a calmness he had never known before.

For lunch, they had brought along a homemade Tiffin, spicy fried chicken and soft phulka rotis, lovingly packed by Zarah that morning. They didn't want to eat indoors. Waleed suggested they sit outside in the open, and Zarah readily agreed. Red plastic chairs and tables had been set up in the snow. As they tried to sit, one of the chair's legs sank deep into the snow, then another, and the table tilted too. They burst out laughing. Zarah's laughter echoed through the crisp air like music. Waleed laughed with her, feeling like a carefree college boy on his first date. With some effort, they adjusted the chairs and finally sat down, right there in the snow, to enjoy their simple meal. The fried chicken tasted even better in the chilly air. The rotis were still warm. They added in some leftover chips, sipped more juice, and even shared another chewing gum, grinning like children with secret sweets in their pockets.

After lunch, they took another gentle stroll over the snow. The world around them was painted white, but inside, their hearts were filled with colour. They hadn't reached Sonmarg, but Waleed felt like he had arrived at something far more beautiful.

That day, he experienced what real companionship means. What it feels like when some-

one walks beside you, listens to your silence, and trusts you completely. He understood what freedom really is, not about going far, but about being close. By late afternoon, they began the drive back. Waleed wasn't too used to driving on hill roads, but he was careful. Zarah looked at ease. She trusted him entirely, and that quiet trust gave him strength. Her faith was the confidence he carried around every curve of the winding road. Their car's tape recorder played a mix of songs, some old favourites of Waleed's, some new fast ones Zarah loved. The playlist was mismatched, like them. Different pasts, different backgrounds, different cultures, different preferences, but one shared journey.

To others, that day may have seemed simple, even ordinary. They didn't even reach their destination. But for Waleed, that day was the destination, a day of snow, sunshine, laughter and silent understanding. A day etched gently into memory, like a snowflake that never melts. Who could have known that such an innocent day would become part of a much bigger story? Who could have guessed what storms lay ahead, what memories would one day ache?

But for now, it remained untouched a soft, white, quiet chapter, a day of togetherness, forever frozen in time.

Syed Majid Gilani is a government officer by profession and a storyteller by passion. He writes about family values, moral wisdom, pain, real-life memories, and emotions. He can be reached at syedmajid6676@gmail.com

Beyond Chalk and Talk

Rekindling the Teacher-Student Bond in the Age of AI

As another Teachers' Day dawns upon us, it brings with it more than just the ceremonial flowers, social media tributes, and feel-good celebrations. It compels us to reflect—deeply and sincerely—on a crucial question: Is the sacred bond between a teacher and a student waning in our times? The answer, if we're honest, is more unsettling than comforting.

Take the case of Mr. Vikram Gupta, a teacher not just by profession but by passion. For more than fifteen years, Mr. Gupta has been commuting nearly 100 kilometers each day, all for the sake of fulfilling his duties as an educator. His day begins early, brimming with responsibilities—from morning assembly to back-to-back classes, managing students, lesson planning, assigning work, and navigating unexpected classroom challenges. His day doesn't end when the school bell rings. Even during his long commute home, he finds himself immersed in thoughts about the teaching-learning ecosystem—particularly, the erosion of the warm, respectful, and emotionally fulfilling bond that once defined the teacher-student relationship.

But Mr. Gupta's story is far from unique. It's emblematic of a broader malaise affecting countless educators today. Once seen as torchbearers of wisdom and moral integrity—almost god-like in stature—teachers today are grappling with a system and a society that seems to have lost sight of their vital role. Where once students would bow down with reverence before their gurus, today, many see the teacher merely as a facilitator, a service provider in an increasingly transactional educational framework.

Historically, teaching was not a job;

it was a calling. Teachers were considered gurus, guiding their disciples beyond textbooks, shaping not just minds but characters. Their influence stretched beyond the classroom—into the home, the psyche, and the very soul of their students. They were friends, philosophers, and guides rolled into one. Their counsel mattered. Their presence commanded awe. Their approval meant the world.

But times have changed—dramatically. With rapid shifts in societal, economic, and technological paradigms, teaching has undergone a stark transformation. The guru has become a teacher; the classroom has become a screen; the personal touch has been replaced by algorithms and apps. Today's youth, armed with smartphones and laptops, increasingly turn to Artificial Intelligence (AI) as their primary source of information and problem-solving. With everything available at the click of a button, the perceived need for a human teacher has declined. When AI can deliver answers instantly and impersonally, why wait for a classroom explanation?

This AI-reliance, though efficient, comes at a great cost: the human connection. The emotional bond, the trust, the mentorship—these are things no machine, no matter how advanced, can provide. But in this transition, even teachers have become somewhat passive. In a system that often prioritizes performance metrics over meaningful engagement, many educators now see themselves as mere professionals clocking in hours, rather than mentors nurturing futures.

Yet, this is exactly where the turning point lies. Empathy, not efficiency, must be the guiding principle in education. Teenagers face immense psychological and emotional challenges. Teachers have the unique advantage of having walked that

path themselves—they understand the storms that rage within young minds. More than discipline, students today need understanding. More than correction, they need connection.

Teachers must strive to be emotionally accessible—not merely content deliverers but mentors who inspire, guide, and uplift. Students, in turn, must be taught to value their teachers, not just for their knowledge, but for their role in shaping character and life values.

Every year, Teachers' Day (September 5) speeches glorify the profession. Social media gets flooded with tributes. School assemblies echo with lines about teaching being the "noblest profession." Managements deliver flowery messages. But unless this emotional and intellectual gap between teachers and students is bridged, these celebrations will remain hollow rituals.

The onus is on both sides. Students must learn to appreciate that no AI tool can replicate the warmth of a teacher's encouragement or the wisdom born from real-life experience. Teachers, on the other hand, must rise above systemic fatigue and rediscover their inner calling—to be more than just instructors, to be guides in the truest sense.

As Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, a teacher at heart, once said:

"Teaching is a very noble profession that shapes the character, calibre, and future of an individual. If the people remember me as a good teacher, that will be the biggest honour for me."

This Teachers' Day, let us honour not just the profession, but the profound relationship that lies at the heart of it. Let us strive to reclaim the lost magic of the teacher-student bond—because only then can we truly hope to build a better society and an empowered nation.

AI AND JUDICIAL LIABILITY



With the proliferation of Artificial Intelligence (AI), our existence turns fascinating yet stranger day by day. It was predominantly supposed to be a mere tool to replicate human intelligence and create efficiency. It can be said that AI has sufficiently achieved its purpose. The average human life is arguably easier today, yet it contemporaneously burdens the judiciary and policymakers with novel dilemmas. AI's applications and the (relative) newfound autonomy in its operations blur the lines of accountability, particularly in the

context of adverse incidents.

So the next time your chatbot defames individuals, your med-tech software produces erroneous diagnoses, or your car's autopilot harms innocent pedestrians, courts still struggle to determine who or what shall take the blame.

The harms resulting from an AI's malfunction are often conflated to fall solely within the technological context, such as, loss of personal data. However, the ease with which AI is being integrated into cars, surgery robots etc., is alarming as regards its liability implications.

Burdens and Ethical Dilemmas
Consider a scenario where you own the newest self-driving car. The vehicle, whilst on its autopilot mode, crashes into another vehicle; the court is now tasked with determining liabilities and damages. Despite not being in control of the wheel, you are after all the owner of the vehicle and should be held liable.

Conversely, by virtue of the AI being in control of the car at the time of the accident, the car manufacturer could also face the brunt. This scenario underscores the persistent ambiguities in relevant

liability frameworks, leaving difficult questions for judges and lawmakers to answer.

Liability decisions are further complexified as developers attempt to integrate moral choices into their AI systems. The supposed moral choices rest with the 'artificial human', but it is ultimately a burden on the developers designing these systems, to make such choices for them. Furthering the example above, would the AI controlled car either hurt innocent pedestrians to save its passengers, or crash into a tree and hurt its own passengers, whilst saving the pedestrians? Car manufacturers are forced to programme answers to the 'Trolley Problem' for when the AI unfortunately ends up in such a situation.

The advent of AI ought to make us contemplate upon revamping existing liability frameworks. With reference to adversities that do not concern AI based systems, there exists a clear chain of accountability and the responsibility of a wrongdoer is easily determined. If there appears to be a defect in a specific component, the liability is typically assigned to the party responsible for such component.

Blurring the Lines

With AI technologies however, there are three distinct features that come into play and dissolve boundaries of accountability.

Firstly, an AI system bears the potential to learn, adapt and improve by itself. It can automatically alter its conduct, making its behaviour unpredictable. Secondly, its decisions hinge upon 'black box' algorithms, which uncover hidden relationships within datasets beyond human comprehension. Interestingly, one



cannot precisely determine why and how it reached a particular outcome. Thirdly, the output from an AI system is not solely attributable to the entity distributing such technology. There are several players concerned with specific processes, such as; providing datasets to train the algorithm, designing the algorithm, integrating the algorithm and compiling all such functions into a single software/system.

The blurring lines of accountability with AI systems (as explained above) makes it impossible to create a causal link between the harm caused and the fault of the AI involved. Consumers are met with the hurdle of establishing this link, since it's usually impossible for an AI system to delineate exactly how it arrives at an outcome. Consequently, the European Union's AI Liability Directive ("Liability Directive") aims to create an automatic presumption of this particular causal link.

The Liability Directive proposed in September 2022, has set the groundwork as regards liability claims for damages caused by an AI system. Ar-

ticle 3 of the AI Liability Directive is merely procedural; in so far, it prescribes courts to order disclosure of evidence by AI systems alleged of causing damages. Article 4 of the Liability Directive, is however a significant regulatory first. Although the provision retains the claimant's duty to establish a causal link, it establishes an automatic presumption of the link between fault by the AI system provider and the damages caused to claimants. This presumption is nonetheless rebuttable, balancing the procedural rights of both parties in dispute.

The European Union's Artificial Intelligence Act, California's AI Safety Bill and other relevant frameworks (proposed as well as implemented) levy penalties upon the distributors of AI systems causing such harm. However, courts are not obligated to wait for legislations to be passed in order to proceed with such claims. The common law rule of negligence makes the 'negligent' wrong-doer liable to compensate the other party with damages.

This tort law theory rests upon the tenet that parties are obligated to conduct themselves with due care. Victims/plaintiffs shall prove their case adhering to the 'preponderance of evidence' threshold i.e., there shall be a 50% or more probability of truth within the claim. Whether an AI system provider has exercised requisite due care, shall be determined based upon thorough diligence in designing, testing, training and maintaining their AI program.

Interestingly, industry use cases of AI systems are merely assistive. Hence, by an extension of the negligence rule, it shall be the users of AI systems held liable for causing harm. The frameworks however, disregard this particular aspect and make 'distributors' of AI systems liable for fault. The regulations notably classify the users of such AI systems to be the 'end-users', whereas individuals utilising these AI systems shall still be held liable for negligence. The ordinary consumer could therefore sue AI system providers for causing harm, but litigating such disputes is far more complicated.

Building on an earlier hypothetical, suppose the consumer trusts its self-driving car to autonomously park the vehicle. The AI somehow hallucinates and hurts nearby pedestrians, for which litigation is initiated against the car manufacturer. In response to the same, the car manufacturer shifts the burden of liability towards the third-party AI software (which was allegedly in control of the vehicle) integrated within the car. This blame allocation is already effectively acknowledged by the consumer, as they construc-

tively take notice of the indemnity clause within the terms of service agreement with the car manufacturer.

EU's Revised Product Liability Directive: Mostly Bane

With reference to the above scenario, EU's Revised Product Liability Directive 2024 (Revised PLD) is another pivotal regulatory development. The regulation allows third-parties responsible for specific defective components to be made liable under the directive. In other words, it strengthens the position of the car manufacturer and helps allocate the liability burden upon the third-party developer responsible for the AI software.

Following the EU's lead, Brazil's Artificial Intelligence Act adopts a similar approach in exempting AI system providers, once they establish that the harm resulted from third-party defective components. There further exists an inherent conflict in burden allocations within the Revised PLD. The regulation considers any modifications to a third-party component, as a means to remove such the safe harbour accorded to car manufacturers. In other words, a mere customisation effort from the car manufacturer would then relieve the third party AI-software developer of any liabilities, and hold the manufacturer liable. Courts are yet to delineate the scope of 'modifications' within the revised PLD, and achieving the right balance would be a challenging pursuit.

A thorough exploration of the directive reveals that it is fraught with inequities against the consumers. The revised PLD not only endorses burdening a third-party for the defect,

but also provides the defendants with additional grounds for disclaiming liabilities.

AI hallucination is one prominent liability exemption, seemingly arising out of the directive. The regulation allows AI system providers to escape liabilities arising out of 'a defect which did not exist at the time it was placed on the market.' An AI system's ability to learn and adapt using its black box algorithms makes it impossible to determine if the defect really existed at the time it was 'placed on the market.'

It needs to be underscored that AI is capable of 'hallucinating' even when it's designed and implemented with meticulous caution. Defendants claiming this exemption and proving that such defect did not exist in technologies capable of producing vague and unpredictable outcomes, is a straight-forward endeavor. In all honesty, it is a relatively effortless task.

The ease with which defendants can invoke above-illustrated exemptions raises significant concerns as regards their accountability. California's AI Safety Bill seems to be a step in the right direction, as it holds indemnity clauses by AI distributors to be void as a matter of public policy. But this only accords minimal safeguards in the law of equity. Future legislations across the globe ought to refine such exemptions, and ensure that consumers are not left vulnerable in the face of rapidly advancing AI systems. The current frameworks desperately requisite an overhaul, as the future might just belong to AI, but the responsibility still remains human.

Government Of Jammu & Kashmir
Office Of The Executive Engineer Rew Division Pulwama
Notice Inviting Tenders

E- Nit No. 73/2025-26 Dated 29-08-2025

For And On Behalf Of The Lt. Governor, Of Union Territory Of J&K, E-Tenders (In Single Cover System) Are Invited On Percentage Basis From Approved And Eligible Contractors Registered With Ut Of J&K Govt., Cpwd, Railways And Other State/Central Governments For The Following Works: -
 Call 1st

S. No.	Name Of The Work	Block	Estimate / Adv. Cost (In Lacs)	Tender Documents (In Rupees)	Emd (In %)	Class Of Contractor	Time Of Completion	Major Head
1.	Rdddc2526101246-(Co Lane From Main Road To Masjid Shareef Sheroo Mohalla Aglar B(Block Achgoza))	Achgoze	1.685	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
2.	Rdddc2526101247-(Co Lane From Main Road To Masjid Shareef Kanikoot Aglar B(Block Achgoza))	Achgoze	1.397	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
3.	Rdddc2526101279-(Construction Of Lane With Bund From Masjid Shareef To Graveyard At Sumbal At Bamnoo (Block Achgoza))	Achgoze	1.800	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
4.	Rdddc2526101298-(Co Drain From Primary School Wanchiward To Ho Abdullah Kalas Ph 2Nd Draklaran(Block Achgoza))	Achgoze	1.257	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
5.	Rdddc2526101300-(Co Drain From Lo Bashir Magray To Ab Rehman Wagay At Draklaran And Co Drain From Ho Nazir Kalas To Sideeq Master Draklaran (Block Achgoza))	Achgoze	2.195	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
6.	Rdddc2526101302-(Co Kull Near Ho Mysar Ahmad Kalas At Gujjar Lab Draklaran (Block Achgoza))	Achgoze	0.905	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
7.	Rdddc2526101307-(Co Lane From Masjid Sharif To Ho Sheeraz Ahmad Najar And Others At Draklaran And Co Lane From Chak Road To Onwards At Wanchiward Draklaran (Block Achgoza))	Achgoze	2.500	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
8.	Rdddc2526101320-(Co Lane From Masjid Sharief To Ho Gulzar Ahmad Najar At Draklaran And Co Lane From Masjid Sharief Draklaran To Onwards At Draklaran (Block Achgoza))	Achgoze	2.900	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
9.	Rdddc2526101326-(Const Of Graveyard Fencing P Bund Near Riyaz Kholi At Inderwali (Block Achgoza))	Achgoze	2.500	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
10.	Rdddc2526101451-(Co Borewell For Jamia Masjid Sangerwani A (Block Achgoza))	Achgoze	4.041	300/=	2%	Dee	30 Days	Pri
11.	Rdddc2526101455-(Co Path And Tiling Of Ground For Ps Kumhar Mohalla And Co Lane Path Near Hanfia Masjid Aditrag Sangerwani B (Block Achgoza))	Achgoze	2.520	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
12.	Finde2526100975-(Co Borewell Near Ho Shabir Ahmad Riyaz Ahmad Mohd Sabir And Others At Ch Nath Achgoza)	Achgoze	2.987	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Ddc
13.	Rdddc2526100701 (C/O Culvert At Bonpora Reshipora Awantipora	Awantipora	1.000	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
14.	Rdddc2526100706 (Concreting Of Yen From Irrigation Canal To Land Of Abdul Rahim Pandit & R Wall Around Kadimia Masjid Gulzarpora Ph Ii Tokina I Awantipora	Awantipora	0.990	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
15.	Rdddc2526100707 (C/O Drain From Ahledis Masjid To Shabir Ah.wani Gulzarpora Awantipora	Awantipora	1.090	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
16.	Rdddc2526100721-(Const Of Road From Hss Gulzarpora To Mozimkha Gulzarpora) Tokina I Awantipora	Awantipora	0.990	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
17.	Rdddc2526100146-(Const Of Lane From House Of Ab Rashid To House Of Gh Nabi Lone At Gulabagh)	Dadasara	1.471	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
18.	Rdddc2526100158-(Const Of Lane From House Of Gayas Udin Shah To House Of Nazir Ahmad Rasray At Gulabagh)	Dadasara	0.985	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
19.	Rdddc2526100161-(Const Of Wazu Khaana At Arabal Gulabagh Near Masjid Sharief)	Dadasara	0.791	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
20.	Rdddc2526100187-(Const Of Ghat At Pandith Mandir At Nowdal)	Dadasara	0.775	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
21.	Rdddc2526100197-(Const Of Lane From Main Road To Dar Masjid Sharief At Baygund Baragam)	Dadasara	0.597	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
22.	Rdddc2526100222-(Const Of Side Walls Of Lane From House Of Ab Rashid Ganie To Onwards At Chandrigam)	Dadasara	1.287	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
23.	Rdddc2526100265-(Const Of Bathroom Near Masjid Sharief Gashinad Noorpora A)	Dadasara	1.990	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
24.	Rdddc2526100270-(Development Of Graveyard At Kadlbal Noorpora A)	Dadasara	1.470	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
25.	Rdddc2526100276-(Fencing Around Graveyard At Khankah)	Dadasara	0.990	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
26.	Rdddc2526100294-(Development Of 02 No Lanes From House Of Gh Hassan Shah To Bashir Ahmad Rather At Pethgam Noorpora B)	Dadasara	0.995	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
27.	Rdddc2526100296-(Development Of Graveyard At Bonimteng Phase 2Nd Noorpora B)	Dadasara	0.990	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
28.	Rdddc2526100388-(Fencing Of Chana Mohalla Graveyard At Saimoh Payeen)	Dadasara	0.985	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
29.	Rdddc2526100389-(Const Of 3 No Lanes 1 From Main Road To House Of Suraj Singh 2 From House Of Ab Khalig Bhat To Atam Singh 3 Main Road To House Of Late Janak Singh At Saimoh.)	Dadasara	1.471	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
30.	Rdddc2526100390-(Const Of Lane From Main Road To House Of Shair Singh At Saimoh Goriwan)	Dadasara	0.988	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
31.	Rdddc2526100391-(Const Of Pbund At Different Spots At Dramandiji Road At Saimoh)	Dadasara	1.950	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
32.	Rdddc2526100392-(Const Of Rwall At Different Spots At Pamposh Colony Road Near Land Of Zahoor Ahmad Sheikh And Others At Saimoh)	Dadasara	1.967	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
33.	Rdddc2526100393-(Const Of Pbund From Bashir Ahmad Bhat To Onwards At Athwooth Saimoh)	Dadasara	1.493	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
34.	Rdddc2526100394-(Const Of Lane From Main Gate Tibi Sahib To Nishan Sahib At Saimoh)	Dadasara	1.483	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
35.	Finde2526102146-(Construction Of Flood Protection Crate Bund Near The Orchard Land Of Nazir Ahmad Mir And Others At Poshwan Larmoo)	Dadasara	0.997	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Ddc
36.	Finde2526102147-(Const. Of Pbund Near He House Of M Ashraf Sheikh And Nisar Ahmad Sheikh At Poshwan Larmoo)	Dadasara	1.477	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Ddc
37.	Finde2526102148-(Raising Of P Bund Near House Of Ali Mohd Dar And Others At Larmoo)	Dadasara	0.986	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Ddc
38.	Finde2526102153-(Construction Of Pbund Near The House Of Ab Aziz Sheikh Son Of Qadir Sheikh At Kamla Buchoo)	Dadasara	1.118	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Ddc
39.	Finde2526102154-(Construction Of Lane From Main Road To Onwards Via Houseof Ab Salam Tantray At Buchoo)	Dadasara	0.96	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Ddc
40.	Finde2526102158-(Construction Of Badminton Court Near Middle School Chandrigam)	Dadasara	1.294	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Ddc
41.	Finde2526102159-(Const Of Lane Near The House Of Rajinder Singh And Others At Saimoo Payeen)	Dadasara	0.69	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Ddc
42.	Finde2526102169-(Construction Of P Bund At Draman Daji Road From The Land Of Gh Mohd Wani To Onwards At Saimoo)	Dadasara	2.436	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Ddc
43.	Finde2526102451-(Construction Of P Bund At Draman Daji Road From The Land Of Mohd Afzal Wani To Onwards At Saimoo)	Dadasara	2.436	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Ddc
44.	Finde2526100001-(Upgradation Of Road From House Of Ab Ahad Dar Mushtaq Ahmad Najar And Others To Onwards At Abdullah Colony Noorpora)	Dadasara	1.96	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Bdc
45.	Finde2526100015-(Const Of Pbund Near House Of Mudasar Ayoub On Both Sides Near Receiving Station Dadsara B)	Dadasara	1.188	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Bdc
46.	Rdddc2526100864-(Fencing Around Peer Mohalla Graveyard At Arigam Kuchmulla Tral)	Tral	2.390	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
47.	Rdddc2526100888-(Co Of Two Number Lanes Bwo Tiles From Mr To Ho Shakeel Ahmad Kumar And From Mr To Ho Gulzar Ahmad Bhat And Onwards At Arigam Kuchmulla Tral)	Tral	2.500	200/=	2%	D e e / Other	30 Days	Pri

48.	Rdddc2526100906-(Co Culvert Near Ho Mohd Anwar Bhat Aslam Dar And Others At Arigam Kuchmulla Tral)	Tral	1.000	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
49.	Rdddc2526100910-(Dev Of Jinaaz Gah Bwo Tiles Near Ahle Hadees Masjid Kuchmulla Tral)	Tral	2.000	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
50.	Rdddc2526100912-(Co Lane With Drain From Jinaaz Gah To Ho Late Gh Hassan Ahanger And From Ho Shabir Ah Dar To Link Road At Kuchmulla Tral)	Tral	2.000	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
51.	Rdddc2526100916-(Co Drain From Shop Of Bilal Ah Sheikh To Roop Reshi School At Kuchmulla Tral)	Tral	1.600	200/=	2%	Dee/Other	30 Days	Pri
52.	Findc2526111677 Construction Of Culvert (Badi Kul) From The House Of Ab Ahad Malik To The House Of Mohd Yousuf Malik And Others At Urwan	Newa	2.498	200/=	2%	Dee	30 Days	Cdf
53.	Findc2526111678 Construction Of P Bund Near The House Of Mushtaq Ahmad Malik Via Mohd Shafi Malik And Others At Urwan (Parigam Kol)	Newa	1.49	200/=	2%	Dee	30 Days	Cdf
54.	Findc2526111669 Installtion Of Borewell At Jamia Masjid Bonpora Malware	Newa	0.997	200/=	2%	Dee	30 Days	Cdf
55.	Findc2526111670 Installation Of Borewell Near The House Of Wali Mohd Dar At Ganai Mohalla Malwari	Newa	0.997	200/=	2%	Dee	30 Days	Cdf
56.	Findc2526111671 C/O Fpb Near The L/O Gh Nabi Wani And Others Via Shernpur Kul At Malwari	Newa	1.498	200/=	2%	Dee	30 Days	Cdf
57.	Findc2526111672 Installtion Of Borewell Near The House Of Haji Mohd Ramzan Sheikh At Newa	Newa	0.997	200/=	2%	Dee	30 Days	Cdf
58.	Findc2526111674 Installation Of Borewell Near The House Of Bashir Ah Qazi At Shupdani Newa	Newa	0.997	200/=	2%	Dee	30 Days	Cdf
59.	Findc2526111680 Installation Of Borewell Near The House Of Younis Khan At New Colony Ugargund	Newa	0.997	200/=	2%	Dee	30 Days	Cdf
60.	Findc2526111684 Installation Of Borewell Near The L/O Manzoor Ah Bhat S/O: Gh Mohd Bhat At Chinari Bagh Pulwama	Newa	0.997	200/=	2%	Dee	30 Days	Cdf
61.	Findc2526111686 Construction Of Drain From L/O Shabir Ah Wagay To L/O Javid Ah Malik At Hassanwani	Newa	1.00	200/=	2%	Dee	30 Days	Cdf
62.	Findc2526111689 Construction Of Lane From Main Road To Khurdaji Hassanwani Ph Inder	Newa	1.996	200/=	2%	Dee	30 Days	Cdf
63.	Constr. Of Community Soakage Pit At Dastigeer Colony	Pampore	0.83	200/=	2%	Dee	30 Days	S b m li
64.	Constr. Of Community Soakage Pit Near Gousia Masjid Pulpar.	Pampore	0.83	200/=	2%	Dee	30 Days	S b m li
65.	Constr. Of Community Soakage Pit At Panchayat Halqa Kadalbal Pulpar	Pampore	0.83	200/=	2%	Dee	30 Days	S b m li

Position of A/A:- Accorded

Position of T/S:- Accorded

The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates.

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	29-08-2025			
2.	Online Bid submission Start Date	29-08-2025	from	06:55 PM	
3.	Online Bid Submission End Date	27-09-2025	up to	06:55 PM	
4.	Date & time of opening of Online Bids	29-09-2025	at	09:00 AM or any convenient day In the office of the Executive Engineer REW Pulwama	

5. Note: - Fee Receipt and EMD shall be deposited after the financial bids opened. Incase

The Original Tender Document Fee Receipt and EMD is not Deposited within 5 days after the Financial Bids Opened for all responsive bidders Who have participated online, the Department shall take action as per Rules.

Special Condition 01:

Only the eligible contractors of respective Panchayat Halqa shall take part in the tendering process for works under District Capex with Advertised Cost 3.0 Lacs or below for District Capex works only. Bidders must upload any document viz residential certificate/ Adhar Card/ Ration Card/Electricity Bill showing panchayat name, as residence proof that he/she is residing the respective Panchayat Halqa (Applicable for DEE Class contractors in call 1st only).

SC02: - Contractors Strictly not eligible

The Bidders who had participated in 2023-24/2024-25 and has not completed the works within stipulated time frame/who had left the work midway/ who had not started/taken up the works are strictly not eligible. Any such participation may lead to cancellation of their bid and No claim shall be entertained in this regard.

Conditions for Bidders:

Every Participating supplier/contractor to mandatorily disclose the Bank Account No. which is linked with their GSTIN at the time of bid submission. No Payment shall be released by Govt. Deptt./Agency to any other Bank Account except the one linked with GST Registered number of the Successful bidder. As per Circular No. 01 (Adm) FD of 2025 Dated 08/07/2025 issued by Govt. of J&K Finance Department Civil Secretariat Jammu/Srinagar.

1. As per Government Order No. 238-F of 2021 Dated 07-09-2021, in case of inadequate response to a tender, participation from adjoining Panchayats will be permitted (i.e in 2nd call of tendering preceding condition will be applied).

2. Contractors who failed to execute the allotted work/works during the previous financial year (2024-25) are not eligible for-tendering for the current financial year (2025-26).

Any Bidder who will go down more than 10% of Advertised Cost shall upload the Additional Security online in shape of CDR/FDR during tendering process as per Unbalance Bid Table mentioned in NIT at S. No 09 (Non uploading of Additional Security will let to the rejection of the tender).

4. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer REW Division Pulwama (Tender receiving authority).

In Addition to Earnest Money Deposit (Bid Security), the 1st lowest Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 5% of allotted cost as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR within 05 days before fixation of contract. The EMD (Bid Security/Earnest money) of 2% of advertised cost of successful bidder shall be released after receipt of 5% Performance Security, which will be released after successful completion of the DLP/Maintenance Period.

6. The 1st lowest responsive (Successful) shall submit all the hard copies of uploaded documents within 05 Days before fixation of Contract. Failure to produce the documents shall render the L1 as non-responsive and he shall be debarred to participate in any tendering process up to 12 months after forfeiting the CDR and case for debarring of the Contractor is forwarded to Higher Authorities for a period of 01 Year.

7. The Earnest Money Deposit (EMD@2% of Advertised Cost) in the shape of CDR/FDR of the unsuccessful Bidder shall be released after opening the Tender on production of Treasury Challan.

8. The Tender Opening Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders or any part of any tender without assigning reason thereof.

9. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of technical bids

10. Unbalanced Bid: The bidders have to produce additional security in shape of CDR/FDR of recognize scheduled/commercial Bank, pledged to Executive Engineer REW Division Pulwama. The CDR/FDR shall be valid for maximum six months or more after the last date of receipt to bids along with the bid document as per following break up:

DIPK:5785-25

Dated: -01/09/2025

Sd/= Executive Engineer
REW Division Pulwama

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
JAMMU AND KASHMIR SERVICES SELECTION BOARD

CPO Chowk, Panjtirthi, Jammu/Zamzam Complex Rambagh, Srinagar
www.jkssb.nic.in

Notice

Subject: Conduct of Physical Standard Test (PST)/Physical Endurance Test (PET) for the post of Constable (Armed/SDRF/IRP/Executive), Home Department.
The list of candidates who have qualified the PST/PET for the post of Constable, (Armed/SDRF/IRP/Executive), Home Department advertised vide Notification No. 01 of 2024 conducted on 29-08-2025 at Bakshi Stadium, Srinagar is hereby notified for the information of candidates as Annexure "A" to this Notice.

Reyaz Ahmad Malik (JKAS)
Controller of Examinations JKSSB
Dated: 29-08-2025

No. JKSSB-COESEXAM (UT)/36/2024-03 (7593651)

Annexure A
Constable (Armed, SDRF, IRP, Executive), Home Department Recruitment
Advt No. 01 of 2024 PET/PST Result Qualified candidates
Venue: Bakshi Stadium
Date: 29.08.2025

SIno.	Rollno	Name
1	970050036	TAJAMUL SHAFI
2	960220004	TAHIR HABIB TANTRAY
3	940140005	INAYAT ULLAH
4	900370015	JAMSHED JAVAID
5	990440002	GOWHAR HUSSAIN PIRZADA
6	900610002	PEER MOHAMMAD IRFAN
7	950140013	MOHAMMAD RAFIQ LONE
8	900110056	FAISAL RASHID ITOO
9	950150004	ZAHID IQBAL
10	990210012	MOHAMMAD ASHRAF DAR
11	950100006	BURHAN SHABIR
12	910070017	SHAKIR HUSSAIN CHAKET
13	980150005	TAQVEER QAYOOM THOKER
14	920230020	MUSHAHIED AHMED BABZADA
15	920120009	MIR AAMIR UL ISLAM
16	990500029	ZAHID ASLAM
17	960220003	SAQIB MOHAMMAD
18	990390009	ZAKIR MOHAMMAD TALI
19	970020019	UMER AKBAR SHAH
20	990360033	SAQIB RASHID WANI
21	960250028	AAFAQ AHMAD RATHER
22	990360009	WAHEED AHMAD RATHER
23	990260007	ZAKIR AFZAL
24	950150017	ZAKIR HUSSAIN KHAN
25	990231040	MUBASHIR AHMED PADDER
26	900470010	FAIZAN ZAHOOOR KHATANA
27	980040016	SAHIL NAZIR
28	910120004	MOHAMMAD YASEEN MALIK
29	920080050	ABID AHMAD MALIK
30	990380011	IFTIKAR HUSSAIN MIR
31	900330010	ARBEEN BASHIR
32	990310021	AKHLAQ AHMAD LONE
33	940140019	ZUBAIR AHMAD BHAT
34	920540014	SHOAIB MUSHTAQ
35	925050006	IRSHAD AHMAD DEEDAD
36	990400018	SHAKIR JAVID TANTRAY
37	990420001	IFTKHAR AHMAD
38	960200002	AFREED BASHIR
39	990290001	MOHAMMAD ADIL NAJAR
40	950060008	NAEEMUL HAQ
41	910070012	ARSHEAD AHMAD MIR
42	900470005	RASHID AHMAD GANIE
43	900470004	SARMAD REYAZ
44	950030009	BASIT REHMAN MIR
45	930140007	SHEIKH MUSHARAF
46	970070002	MUBASHIR MUSHTAQ
47	930050033	MOHMMAD AIYAZ SHAH
48	900060023	SARTAJ MANZOOR NAJAR
49	990140035	HAMID AZIZ KALOO
50	970200014	SAMIN ALTAF
51	930340004	DANISH FAROOQ
52	930130018	MOHAMMAD ALTAF KHAN
53	910220006	AASIF AHMAD BHAT
54	990390019	SAJAD AHMAD TANTRAY
55	960250048	AZHAR MEHMOOD MANHAS
56	940120004	SAHIL SHAFI RESHI
57	940010008	BILAL AHMAD BHAT

58	920100011	UMAR QADIR KUMAR
59	940240009	TAUFEEQ AHMAD AHANGER
60	940010019	BASIT RAMZAN BHAT
61	910100004	ISHFAQ MUSHTAQ LONE
62	930290012	ZUBAID AHMAD MIR
63	970080032	TAHIR BASHIR
64	910080003	JUNAID RASHID KUMAR
65	990250005	MALIK ZULFUKAR ALI
66	940180007	SARKHAIL BASHIR
67	940110011	HAFIZ ASHRAF
68	900610003	TAWSEEF AHMAD WAGAY
69	920600009	RAYEES AHMAD DAR
70	990450013	WASEEM ASHRAF WANI
71	990460005	BILAL AHMAD MIR
72	950280002	JALEEL UL HAQ
73	990310006	MOHAMMAD BILAL KHAN
74	980140002	DANISH MANZOOR
75	920330011	JAN MOHAMMAD
76	980120013	SHAHID HAMID KUMAR
77	900050004	ZAKIR AHMAD BHAT
78	920460018	IRSHAD AHMAD GOJREE
79	920390015	IRFAN AHMAD NAJAR
80	920380012	SHEEZAN KHAN KHKHA
81	980110017	ARIF AHMAD LONE
82	990220021	HUZAIB ALTAF MIR
83	960350003	ZAHID HUSSAIN LONE
84	930160014	MOHAMMAD ZAHID MIR
85	900320004	S GURNEET SINGH
86	950160006	UMAIR HAMID
87	920210039	FARHAT AHMAD BHAT
88	970210003	SHAKIR AHMAD DAR
SIno.	Rollno	Name
89	920320003	AASIF AHMAD CHOPAN
90	920330019	MUSAIB AHMAD MALIK
91	950210001	UMMER RASOOL
92	940140015	RAMEES AHMAD PANJRA
93	900490002	UZAIR ASHRAF GANIE
94	920080036	ATHER MAJEED BHAT
95	920420004	ZAHOOOR AHMED DAR
96	900170055	RAKIF AHMAD NAJAR
97	950080021	ADIL AMIN BHAT
98	920300009	HILAL AHMAD DAR
99	920480005	FARAZ RAFI
100	930210010	ISHFAQ AHMAD CHOWAN
101	990310035	AAQIB AMIN RATHER
102	990090079	HASSNAIN RIZA JAN
103	920260004	SHAHID SALAM
104	920290008	JAVID AHMAD KHANDAY
105	970080021	SAJAHAT FAYAZ
106	930380031	FEROZ AHMAD PARRAY
107	930210002	MANZOOR AHMAD MIR
108	930300013	AADIL YOUSUF QAZI
109	930380002	MOHD ZAHID DINDA

110	940040008	ARIF AHMAD KHATANA
111	920370001	AZHAR MOHAMMAD
112	960190013	AAQIB AHMAD LONE
113	990100008	TOSEEF AHMED
114	930060024	REYAZ AHMAD BHAT
115	990330038	SHAHID HAMEED KHANDAY
116	920520022	AZHAR JAHANGIR MIR
117	980010105	SHAHID MUQTAR MALIK
118	960070023	ZEESHAN FAROOQ
119	960240044	NASEER AHMAD LONE
120	970060073	ZISHAN MUSHTAQ PALA
121	900380020	YASIR HUSSAIN
122	900100053	SAHIL MUSHTAQ
123	930230014	SHEIKH QALAB MOHAMMAD ABBAS
124	900460022	RAJA WASIM MANZOOR
125	900370030	NADEEM PARVEZ KHAN GOJAR
126	970010174	MOHMAD ISSAAQ MALIK
127	910110039	MOHD SHARIEF KHAN
128	900400019	SADAQAT MEHRAJ
129	950320006	ASIF FAYAZ
130	930260079	MUDASIR FAROOQ
131	970100020	HILAL AHMAD CHOPAN
132	970210018	MOHAMMAD AASIF RESHI
133	970180033	FEAZAN AHMAD LONE
134	940420014	TALIB HUSSAIN KHATANA
135	950120019	AAFRIDI YASEEN
136	900050058	ZAHID AHMAD SHEIKH
137	920020033	HARON AFZAL BAIGH
138	980130027	ADNAN AHMAD RESHI
139	900190085	HILAL HASSAN HAJAM
140	970010143	BASAT FAYAZ
141	900150020	NASIR ALAM KHAN
142	930040052	SAJAD AHMAD BABA
143	980150023	TANVEER AHMAD DEEDED
144	980110055	YAWAR AYOUB
145	990270330	TANVEER AHMED
146	900480029	JAVAI AHMAD FAMADA
147	920030043	IMTIYAZ AHMAD TELI
148	970060064	GURPALL SINGH
149	970280018	AMANDEEP SINGH
150	950080027	MUZAFAR AHMAD MALIK
151	900060090	ATHAR AMIN ITOO
152	900620070	TAWFEEQ UL ISLAM
153	900110076	ABRAR GULL
154	980150027	SUHAIL AHMAD GANAIE
155	970060072	RAYEES AHMAD WANI
156	970120028	IRFAN AHMAD AHANGER
157	900290016	UMER NABI BHAT
158	900600035	ZAKIR HUSSAIN RATHER
159	990320027	MOHD HASEEN GOJER
160	920420015	IMTIYAZ HUSSAIN WANI
161	950200014	SHAKIR AHMAD KUMAR
162	950030032	MIR SAQLAIN MANZOOR
163	930350080	IMRAN ALI BHAT
164	910070077	GULAM MUSTAFA LONE
165	960260023	PEERZADA FASIAL BASHIR
166	920070046	MUSHRAF MANZOOR
167	960240037	AAMIR JAMAL SOFI
168	990180038	SUHAIL AHMAD THOKER
169	910080019	PARVAIZ AHMAD LONE
170	930370038	YAWER NABI PATHAN
171	900380024	GOWHAR AHMAD BHAT
172	920410012	AAKASH FAYAZ
173	950020033	PEER KAMIL HILAL
174	930040040	MOHAMMAD AADIL MIR
175	950170016	SABOOR MUSHTAQ MALIK
176	900380023	FAIZAN NAZIR SHEIKH
177	900130050	RAYEES AHMAD KHAN
178	900230039	ADIL HUSSAIN PARRAY
179	920010029	SYED AMIR TARIQ
180	900500029	AURIF HUSSAIN WANI
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258	990220060	GOWHAR AYOUB
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421	990110307	BAZILA FATIMA

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Dated 01/09/25

Sd/-Reyaz Ahmad Malik (JKAS)
Controller of Examinations JKSSB

Pandit Colleague's Wedding At Migrant Camp

Syed Majid Gilani

It was January 2024 when a colourful wedding invitation card reached me from my young colleague, Ravi. Along with the card, came a phone call, where Ravi warmly extended the invitation not only to me but also to another colleague, Mushtaq Ahmed.

Neither Mushtaq nor I had ever attended a Kashmiri Pandit wedding before. This was our first chance, and the thought of witnessing their traditions closely filled us with eagerness. On a day, we left early in the morning for Nowgam railway station in Srinagar. At that time, the train service was available only up to Banihal. The journey through green fields, apple orchards, and vast paddy lands carried us forward with quiet excitement.

At Banihal, like other passengers, we stepped down and walked to the nearby bus stand. The place was vibrant with the usual calls of buses, cabs, and tempo travellers looking for passengers. We boarded a Tavera cab and continued our journey towards Jammu.

At Nagrota, on the national highway, Ravi's cousin Rajiv was already waiting to receive us. Ravi had thoughtfully arranged everything to ensure our comfort. From there, we were taken to the TRT Migrant Camp at Nagrota.

It was my first ever visit to such

a camp. My mind instantly travelled back in time. I was in ninth grade when Kashmiri Pandits had to migrate from the valley. An entire community was uprooted overnight. Thousands of families left behind their homes, lands, orchards and cattle. What they carried with them were only the clothes on their bodies and their hard-earned educational certificates. Standing there now, in a migrant camp that bore witness to that painful history, but for the purpose of attending a wedding, filled me with mixed emotions — sorrow for what was lost, yet gratitude for the resilience that kept their culture alive.

The warmth of Ravi's family, however, dissolved the heaviness of those thoughts. His parents received us with genuine affection. In the Janj Ghar inside the camp, we were served noon chai with snacks. The familiar taste of that salty tea brought back a sense of belonging, reminding me of our deeply shared cultural roots. As the ceremonies unfolded, I noticed how closely our customs resembled one another. The wanwun, the gyawun, the rituals, and even the saffron-flavoured kehwa — all carried the fragrance of a common heritage. There were only a few small differences; otherwise, everything felt strikingly the same.

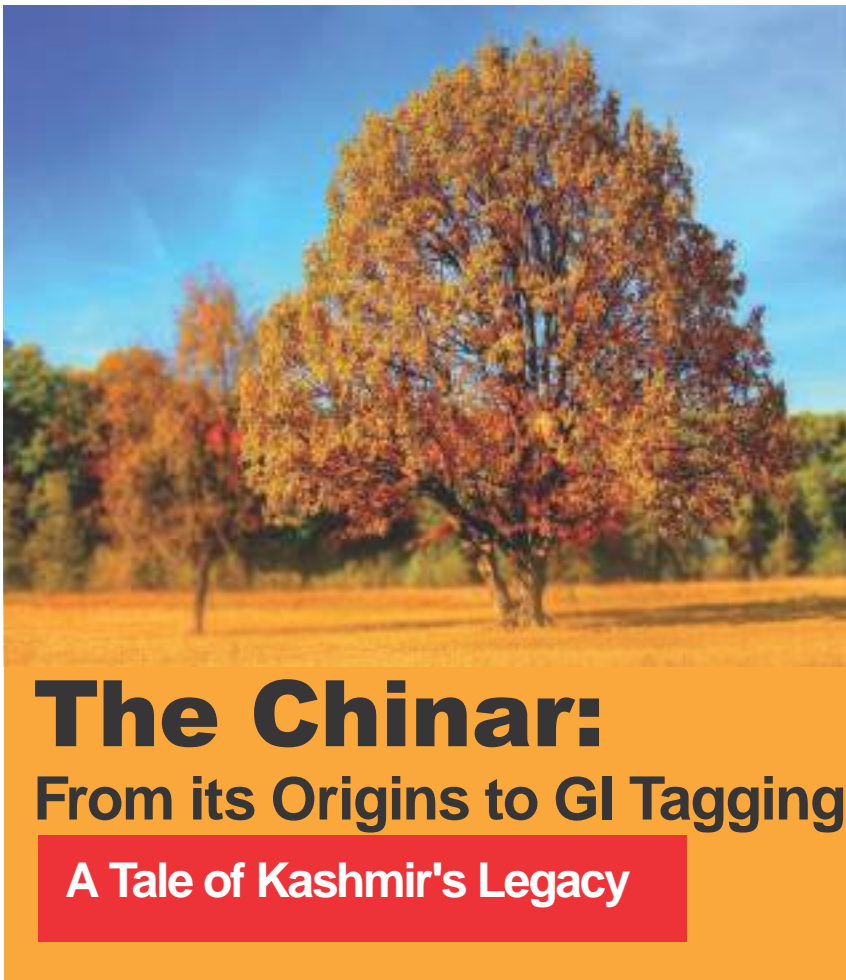
The main function took place at Eden Farm, a spacious marriage hall nearby. Ravi himself guided us to the large kitchen, where traditional cooks from

Kishtwar were preparing the feast. The menu was purely vegetarian — nadru yakhni, chuk wangan, chaman tamatar, dum aloo, haakh, and several other delicacies. Alongside, there were stalls for aloo paratha, papads, champ, gol gappa, sweets like gulab jamun and pastries, salads, soups, and chutneys. The aroma that filled the air was enough to lift spirits and gladden hearts.

In the afternoon, the matamaal ceremony was observed, where maternal relatives were received with respect and warmth. The Kashur gyawun singers, accompanied by a full orchestra from Srinagar, created an enchanting atmosphere. Their melodious voices reminded me once again that our language, culture, and traditions are threads woven from the same fabric.

When the celebrations drew to a close and we prepared to leave, a silent thought lingered in my heart: how incomplete the valley Kashmir feels without its Pandit population, and how beautiful it would be if one day they return to their homeland — not as guests, but with dignity, peace, and permanence. Their presence is not just part of Kashmir's history; it is part of its soul.

Syed Majid Gilani is a government officer by profession and a storyteller by passion. He writes about family values, moral wisdom, pain, real-life memories, and emotions. He can be reached at syedmajid6676@gmail.com



The Chinar:

From its Origins to GI Tagging

A Tale of Kashmir's Legacy

Shireen Naman

A few months back, I walked through a lush, green park in the heart of Srinagar, the scent of autumn hanging in the air. The scene before me could have been plucked from any moment in time, yet the sight of an ancient Chinar tree, its branches stretching towards the sky like arms rose in prayer, felt timeless. A soft breeze swirled around, rustling the tree's iconic leaves, and for a moment, I could almost hear it speaking. Not in words, but in the whispers of those who had lived under its shade for centuries—the poets, the kings, the revolutionaries, and the families who had found shelter beneath its canopy. With every rustle of its

leaves, I could feel the weight of its history, its resilience, and its quiet promise to endure.

This wasn't just a tree—it was the living soul of Kashmir. The Chinar was more than a natural monument; it was a silent witness to the region's ever-changing tides. As I stood there, I reflected on how far we had come from the days when these trees were planted by Mughal emperors, and how, in the face of modern challenges, the Chinar's future now rested in our hands. Would it continue to thrive, a symbol of resilience for the coming generations? Or would it fade into the shadows of history? That thought echoed in my mind as I began to trace the journey of the Chinar—from its origins to its current battle for conservation

through GI tagging.

A Silent Observer

The Chinar tree is not just a part of the landscape of Kashmir; it is woven into the fabric of its history. Known as *Platanus orientalis*, the Chinar has stood in Kashmir for centuries, promoted in this region by the Mughal emperors. Its large, broad leaves and unique bark made it a symbol of majesty and resilience—qualities that mirrored the empire itself. Over time, the tree became more than a decorative element; it was a marker of culture, a reminder of the intertwining of nature and history.

A particularly notable location where some of the oldest Chinar trees were found is the Arts Emporium in Srinagar. Nestled in this cultural hub, these ancient Chinars have stood as silent witnesses to the changing tides of history. The space around them was once alive with artists, traders and poets, all drawn to the area by the beauty and grandeur of these majestic trees. The Arts Emporium itself, with its rich history in the arts and craftsmanship, has been a gathering place for creative minds, and the Chinars have been its guardians. These trees, some centuries old, are living relics of a past that continues to breathe in the heart of the city.

The Symbolism of Strength and Resilience

What makes the Chinar so significant is its symbolism. To the Kashmiri people, the Chinar represents more than just a tree—it is a symbol of endurance. Its leaves turn gold and red in the autumn, a reminder of the fleeting nature of life, yet the tree stands tall and strong through the harsh winters, unyielding to the biting cold. This resilience mirrors the spirit of the

people of Kashmir, who have weathered countless storms over the centuries.

The Chinar's significance goes beyond its symbolism for the region's physical resilience; it is a metaphor for the enduring culture of Kashmir itself. The tree bears witness to both the beauty and the struggle of this land. Its growth and survival through the changing seasons reflect the cyclical nature of life—rebirth, growth, decay, and renewal. The Chinar speaks of history's ebb and flow and the resilience of the land and its people.

The Voice of the Land

Kashmiri poets and writers have long been inspired by the Chinar. The tree has found its way into countless verses, each poet finding new ways to express the emotions, aspirations, and pain of the region through its imagery. The Chinar's sweeping branches have served as the perfect metaphor for the longing for freedom, the melancholy of lost love, and the hope for a brighter future.

As the poet Agha Shahid Ali wrote, "The Chinar, though ancient, has learned the language of the winds—speaking not with words, but with the rustling of its leaves." The Chinar is a poet's tree, one that conveys emotion not in sentences, but in the silence of nature.

From Mughal Gardens to GI Tagging

The Chinar's story is deeply tied to the Mughal influence on Kashmir. It was Emperor Akbar who is believed to have introduced the Chinar to the region, envisioning it as a part of the landscape in his grand gardens. The tree quickly became an

iconic feature of these gardens, representing both the imperial grandeur and the natural beauty of the land.

Today, the Chinar is more than just a symbol; it is a core part of the region's identity. As the valley faces increasing threats from climate change, urbanization, and environmental degradation, efforts to preserve this iconic tree have gained momentum. One of the most significant steps in ensuring its future is the push for a Geographical Indication (GI) tag for the Chinar trees of Kashmir.

A GI tag would recognize the Chinar not just as a symbol of Kashmir, but as a unique and irreplaceable part of the region's cultural and ecological heritage. This legal protection would prevent unauthorized harvesting of Chinar trees and help ensure that they continue to thrive for generations to come.

The move to grant a GI tag to the Chinar is part of a broader initiative to preserve the unique heritage of Kashmir. The Chinar's association with the region's culture, history, and environment makes it deserving of this protection. This effort aims to protect not only the trees but also the identity of the region and the communities that depend on them.

A Cultural Connector

Underneath the broad canopy of the Chinar, the people of Kashmir have gathered for centuries. The tree has been a silent witness to countless stories—the laughter of children playing, the wisdom shared by elders and the quiet moments of contemplation. For many, the Chinar is a cultural connector, bringing people together across generations.

In the heart of Srinagar, where the Chinar trees line the streets and parks, you will find families, poets, and artists drawn to the shade of these magnificent trees. They speak of the past, share stories of the land and pass down traditions that have been shaped under the tree's outstretched arms.

A Call for Preservation

The Chinar tree faces many challenges today. Climate change, deforestation, and the encroachment of urban development threaten its survival. However, the GI tagging movement is a glimmer of hope. This initiative, if successful, will ensure that the Chinar's legacy is preserved not just for the people of Kashmir, but for the entire world. By protecting these trees, we are preserving a living monument to Kashmir's culture and history.

Listening to Wisdom

As I sit beneath the Chinar today, the rustling of its leaves still speaks to me. It speaks of a time when Kashmir was at the crossroads of empires, a time when its culture was shaped by poets and kings and a time when its people were united under the shade of this great tree. It speaks of endurance, resilience and the need for preservation in an ever-changing world.

The Chinar may be silent, but it has much to say. It speaks not in words, but in the wisdom of the ages. And as we listen, we are reminded that the stories of the Chinar are the stories of Kashmir—of a land that has endured, a culture that has thrived, and a future that must be protected.

Using Social Media for Mother Tongue Revival

A Welcome Effort



In the quiet village of Dardpora Khaitangan in Baramulla district, a young man Asif Iqbal Bhat is on a mission to protect and promote the Kashmiri language. He believes that language is more than just words—it is the soul of a culture. Asif, known on social media as ‘Keashur Parun’, is using digital platforms to encourage people to speak, learn, and love Kashmiri language. His work is gaining attention, especially among the youth, who are unfortunately drifting away from their mother

tongue.

Kashmiri language was once widely spoken across the J&K, connecting generations through stories, songs, and poetry. But today, the language is on decline. Many young people prefer speaking Urdu, English, or Hindi, believing these languages offer better career opportunities. Asif sees this as a serious problem. “We often forget that our mother tongue is not just a way to talk to each other; it carries our identity, our history, and our traditions,” he says.

Experts say modernization, ur-

banization and the rise of global languages have pushed Kashmiri language to the background. Schools and colleges do not focus much on teaching Kashmiri, and many parents do not encourage their children to speak their mother tongue at home. This has led to a slow but steady disappearance of Kashmiri from everyday conversations.

“As fewer people speak Kashmiri, fewer people will be able to read and write it,” Asif warns. “If this continues, we might lose not just a language but a deep and rich cultural heritage.”

Asif finds motivation in the great poets, saints, and scholars of Kashmir. He looks up to legends like Hazrat Sheikh-ul-Alam, Shams Faqeer, Syed Mirak Shah Kashani, Wahab Khar, Mahmood Gami, Lale Ded and Rasul Mir.

These figures contributed immensely to Kashmiri literature and philosophy. Their poems, sayings and teachings are filled with wisdom, spirituality and love for the Kashmiri way of life. “I am emotionally moved by their words,” says Asif. “They remind me that Kashmiri is not just a language. It is a way of life.”

Asif believes that if people reconnect with these great thinkers, they will understand the importance of preserving their mother tongue.

In today’s digital age, social media plays a big role in spreading awareness. Asif has taken advantage of this by creating an Instagram account ‘Keashur Parun’. Through this platform, he shares content that makes Kashmiri interesting and fun to learn.

Kashmiri riddles and proverbs reflect the wisdom of past generations and keep old say-



alive. Asif educates his followers about the rich history of Kashmir and its language through historical facts, poetry and literature. He shares works of Kashmiri poets, explaining their meanings in simplest words.

By making the content engaging, Asif has managed to attract a large audience. Many young Kashmiris follow his page to reconnect with their roots.

"I want to make Kashmiri fun and accessible," he says, "If we can speak English fluently, why not Kashmiri? It is our own language."

Asif faces many challenges in his efforts. One of the biggest problems is that Kashmiri is not widely taught in schools. Parents often encourage their children to learn other languages that are seen as more useful for jobs and studies.

"As kids, we are taught that success comes from speaking English or Urdu. While these languages are important, ig-

norning Kashmiri is a mistake," says Asif.

Another challenge is the lack of books and resources in Kashmiri. Unlike other regional languages that have a strong literary presence, Kashmiri does not have enough modern books, newspapers, or digital content to keep the younger generation involved.

However, Asif remains hopeful. He believes that with the right efforts, Kashmiri can be saved from fading away.

To keep the language alive, Asif suggests simple steps. Parents should talk to their children in their mother tongue. Use Kashmiri on social media and instead of writing only in English or Urdu, people should post in Kashmiri too. More books should be written and published in Kashmiri to keep the language relevant. Schools should include Kashmiri in their curriculum as an important subject.

"As long as we use Kashmiri in

our daily lives, it will survive," he says.

Asif's work is already inspiring many. Several young Kashmiris have started creating content in Kashmiri on social media. Artists, writers, and musicians are also showing interest in reviving the language.

Recently, there have been campaigns and workshops encouraging people to speak Kashmiri. The government and cultural organizations are also taking steps to promote the language. "Saving a language is not just one person's job," says Asif.

Asif's journey is a reminder that language is a crucial part of identity. Losing it means losing a part of history, culture, and tradition.

Through his work, he hopes to bring Kashmiri back into everyday conversations. "Our ancestors left us a beautiful language. We must pass it on to future generations," he added.



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