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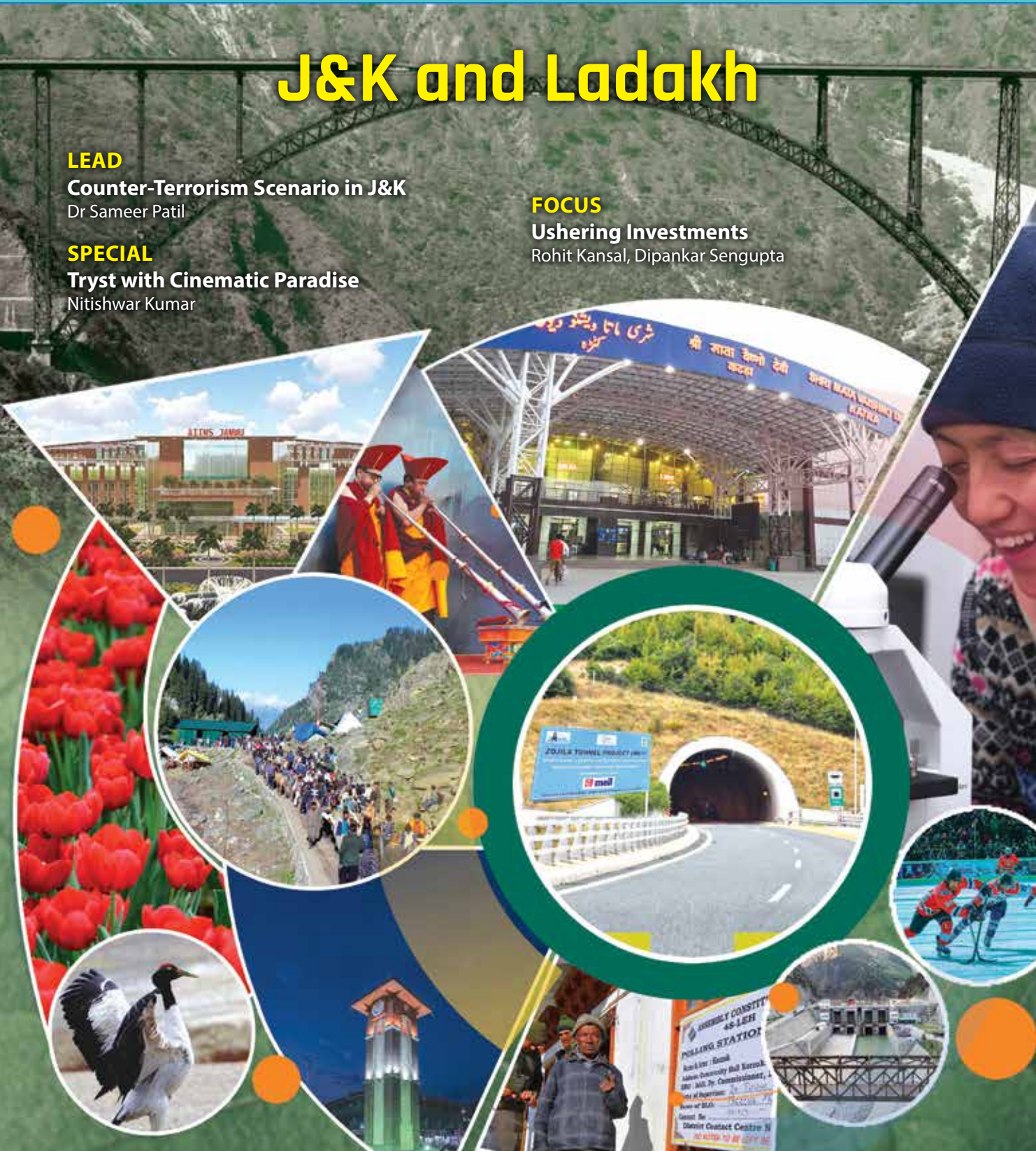
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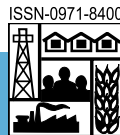


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The Land of Confluence

On 5 August 2019, when the Home Minister of India introduced two bills and two resolutions in the Parliament regarding Jammu & Kashmir, it was a landmark move to strengthen democracy in the region and making it ‘a true part of India in letter and spirit.’ This was seen as a gigantic step towards long-term development, enhancing socio-economic infrastructure, and bringing economic opportunities for the local populace in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh region. Though initially, in a teething phase, it was marked by uncertainty and restlessness among the locals, the region with the rest of the nation was certainly witnessing a history in making.

Believed to be a game-changer, this step, as the Prime Minister often says, was aimed to ‘embrace the land by embracing its people as one’s own.’ This was reflected in the action on the ground with focused intent and time-bound outcomes. To counter terrorism in J&K and re-establish peace in the region, the government is strategising and acting on a multi-pronged approach that includes nipping the cross-border terrorism in bud, foiling infiltration attempts, identifying and dealing with terrorist sympathisers, taking humanitarian measure, and pro-actively countering anti-India propaganda.

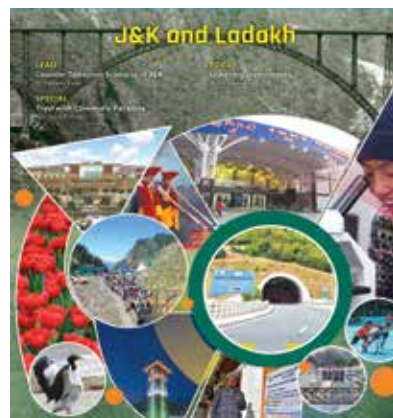
In the healthcare sector, AB-PMJAY SEHAT was introduced in 2020 to provide health insurance to all residents of Jammu and Kashmir. During the peak of Covid-19 pandemic, resilience of health care workers in the region was applauded internationally for the vaccination coverage even in the far-flung areas. To boost the health infrastructure in the region, AIIMS in Jammu and Awantipora are in pipeline along with seven new medical colleges. These Institutes of Higher Learning including IITs and AIIMS are expected to provide world-class opportunities to the local youth. Various skilling initiatives in the region are also equipping them to hone their skills and enhancing their employability while staying close to their homes.

Connectivity through all-weather roads, rail, ropeways, and tunnels is bridging the gaps that existed between the erstwhile three separate regions thus bringing people closer and adding to the tourist inflow in the region. This accessibility has further given a greater push to new investment opportunities. With this thrust on infrastructure, new industrial policy initiatives, and the end of constitutional uncertainty, investments are ushering in the sectors including industries, horticulture, and handicrafts ensuring employment opportunities and giving a fillip to young entrepreneurs.

The region is blessed with bountiful beauty and rich culture that continue to prosper. Shikaras and houseboats make their way through the pristine waters of the Dal, the Bahu Fort keeps gauging the waters of Tawi, and the confluence of Zaskar and Indus is mesmerising as ever. Converging a multitude of schools of thought, culture, and religious beliefs, the region, and its people, have contributed immensely to the culture, history, literature, and philosophy in India. Mysticism that propagated on this land in various time-periods, forms, and through myriad beliefs is imbibed in the milieu of art, aesthetics, and way of living in the region. This issue of Yojana is a way to revisit the land and its people in the light of the development that changed its history and geography. As the mystic Yogini, Lal Ded, summed it up profoundly, there exists a sublime constant in this ever-changing life, and beyond—

a'sii aa'sy ta a'sii aasav...

In time past, we were; / In time future, we shall be; / Throughout the ages, we have been.
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Counter-Terrorism Scenario in J&K

Dr Sameer Patil

The 5th of August 2022, marked three years since the Government of India revoked the special status of the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir and created two new Union Territories (UTs) of J&K and Ladakh.¹ This constitutional change was a watershed moment for the region, marking a break from the past to herald a new administrative and security approach to this strategically-important region. Several initiatives implemented by the J&K UT administration and security-establishment since then demonstrate that a change is afoot on the ground, which offers hope for a better future.

One of the most picturesque regions of India, the J&K UT, has been afflicted by the problem of cross-border terrorism, separatist violence and armed militancy for the last three decades. However, since the heydays of terrorist violence in the early 1990s, this militancy has transformed radically. Various internal and external dynamics have impacted it, like the driving role of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), evolution of Kashmir's separatist politics, influence of pan-Islamic terrorist groups, and the emergence of social media. Consequently, the militancy in J&K today represents a qualitatively different challenge to the security establishment than in 1989 when scores of Kashmiri youth crossed the Line of Control (LoC) to train in

Tricolor at the iconic Lal Chowk, Srinagar

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Pakistan-occupied J&K (PoJK) and joined the ranks of terrorist outfits or organisations.

Recent events like targeted killings of religious minorities, migrants, security forces personnel and civilians, have drawn attention to the evolving security situation in J&K. These developments give an impression of a region in the throes of violence and instability. However, the reality is otherwise.

Today, the Indian security establishment firmly controls the situation in J&K. It has kept up the pressure on militants through kinetic operations and denied them support from their ecosystem. It has achieved this by targeting the terrorist sympathisers, practising humanitarian gestures and proactively countering anti-India propaganda. These actions have considerably shrunk the manoeuvring space for the terrorists. Although there are some evolving and emerging challenges from the Counter-Terrorism (CT) perspective, security forces are confident of effectively tackling them.

Current Terrorism Outlook for the Region

A vital indicator of the improved security situation in Kashmir Valley is the residual strength of the terrorists operating in the region. This number stretched to thousands at the peak of militancy in the early 1990s. Today, circumstances have changed. Current terrorist strength in Kashmir stands at approximately 163, the lowest in decades (see Table 1).

Table 1: Terrorist Strength in Kashmir Valley

Region	Pakistani Terrorists	Local Terrorists	Total
North Kashmir	60	17	77
South Kashmir	18	68	86
Total	78	85	163

Source: Indian Army

They primarily belong to the three terrorist groups—Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and Hizbul Mujahideen (HM). Some are part of the local affiliates of pan-Islamic groups such as Al-Qaeda’s Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind, and Islamic State J&K. However, their

To counter this infiltration, security forces, in the last decade and a half, have raised a highly-effective three-tiered counter-infiltration grid. In addition, the security forces have deployed Anti Infiltration Obstacle System and strengthened surveillance.

numbers are marginal. Security forces note that, unlike the previous times, Pakistani terrorists have been reduced to guiding and motivating the local terrorists, who have taken charge of the militancy in the region.

South Kashmir remains the hotbed of militancy, with around 86 terrorists operating in the region. LeT and HM, in particular, have better reach, network and organisation here therefore, this region is the hub of their activities.

While north Kashmir, which has traditionally served as the entry point for Pakistani militants from the LoC, has remained relatively peaceful.

Tackling Cross-Border Militant Infiltration

Pakistan-based terrorist groups have used the mountainous terrain in north Kashmir to sneak into the Kashmir Valley. Pakistani security establishment actively supports them by bringing infiltrating terrorists right up to the LoC in army vehicles, monitoring the infiltration routes, giving covering fire while terrorists infiltrate, and supplying sophisticated communication equipment. Militants also enter from the south of Pir Panjal range (the Jammu-Samba-Kathua plains and the hilly Rajouri-Poonch area), sometimes through tunnels, like the one discovered in Samba district in 2012, which measured 400 metres.²

To counter this infiltration, security forces in the last one and half decades, have raised a highly-effective three-tiered counter-infiltration grid. In this, the Indian Army forms the first tier on the LoC, followed by the second tier of paramilitaries such as the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), and the third one of the J&K Police (JKP). In addition, the security forces have deployed Anti Infiltration Obstacle System (AIOS) fencing and strengthened surveillance through reconnaissance drones, night-vision equipment, and hand-held thermal imaging devices.³

These efforts combined have contributed to the infiltration levels going down significantly, as Table 2 shows, particularly the instances of successful infiltration. For example, in 2020 and 2021, the number of infiltration attempts went down to double digits— 62 and 58 respectively, with only 72 managing to successfully infiltrate together in those two years. In 2022, there had

Table 2: Cross-border Infiltration in J&K

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 [#]
Infiltration attempts	222	229	183	93	349	323	339	171	62	58	5
Successful infiltration	121	97	65	33	112	120	143	130	36	36	3

Source: Ministry of Home Affairs and Indian Army
 (#Figures for the period January–June, 2022)

been five infiltration attempts till June, in which three terrorists managed to infiltrate. Subsequently, security forces eliminated those terrorists in encounters.

Crackdown on Terrorist Groups and their Ecosystem

Meanwhile, security forces have kept up the pressure on the terrorist groups in the hinterland through several Counter-Insurgency (CI) operations. These have yielded significant success by eliminating the top militant leadership and disrupting their subversive plans. Thus, barring the February 2019 suicide attack on the CRPF convoy at Lethpora in Pulwama district, militants have been reduced to carrying out an intermittent campaign of targeted killings against soft targets. This random violence denotes their desperation and an attempt to stay relevant in Kashmir's changing security scenario. Army officials also point out that the sustained CI operations have forced once squabbling terrorist groups to join hands and operate together. This collaboration is unequivocally on the Pakistan ISI's advice.

A crucial part of the security crackdown is the punitive action against the subversive elements of the ecosystem that support the terrorists. It includes not just the network of the Over Ground Workers (OGWs) and terrorist sympathisers but also the cadres of Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI). This HM-linked religious organisation was openly engaged in secessionist activities for a long time. In February 2019, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) banned the JeI,

Security forces have also implemented several soft measures that the locals have appreciated. These include exercising maximum restraint, avoiding pellet guns and minimising collateral damage during the CI operations and protest demonstrations.

termining it an "unlawful association."⁴ Simultaneously, the government began removing those employees who abetted secessionist and militant activities.

In addition, security forces have targeted the OGWs who provide multiple services to the terrorists like recharging mobile phones, giving shelter and informing the terrorists about the security forces' movements. Since 2019, J&K Police has arrested more than 900 OGWs under the Public

Safety Act and Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

Table 3: Year-wise arrested Over Ground Workers

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022 [#]
Arrests	372	277	184	90

Source: Indian Army
(*Figures for the period January–June, 2022)

Countering terrorist finances has been another focus area for the security establishment. For this, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) has launched several investigations into the cases of terrorist financing.⁵ Besides, the MHA has set up a Terror Monitoring Group, comprising representatives of security (NIA, Central Bureau of Investigation, Intelligence Bureau and JKP) and financial agencies (Central Board of Direct Taxes, and Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs) to closely monitor terrorist financing cases.⁶ These steps have unearthed the nexus between ISI, Pakistan and PoJK-based terrorist masterminds and their associates in Kashmir for inciting separatist sentiments and militant violence. This crackdown has dramatically reduced the stone-pelting incidents which had once become a striking feature of unrest in Kashmir Valley. Pakistan had regularly showcased these stone-pelting incidents as an expression of anti-India and pro-freedom sentiments of Kashmiris.

Significantly, it is not just the hard measures which have characterised security forces' CT response. They have also implemented several soft measures that the locals have appreciated. These include exercising maximum restraint, avoiding pellet guns and minimising collateral damage during the CI operations and protest demonstrations. As a result, since August 2019, there have been no civilian casualties during the encounters or pellet gun injuries in protest demonstrations. Besides, top security officials have made an outreach to the families of active militants to request their kids to surrender. In one such outreach in September 2021, senior army and police officers interacted with 80 families of active militants in south Kashmir's Shopian, urging them to request their sons to shun the path of violence.⁷ These initiatives have deprived ISI and terrorist



masterminds of significant propaganda material.

A direct impact of these steps implemented by the security agencies is the improvement in the security situation in the valley. This has boosted the local tourism sector, with tourist arrivals hitting a new high: in the first half of 2022, more than 10 million tourists visited the region, making it the most successful tourist season in Kashmir's history.⁸

Evolving and Emerging CT Challenges

At the same time, the region faces new challenges as Pakistan-backed elements persist in their efforts to keep the pot boiling.

1. Radicalisation and Terrorist Recruitment:

While security forces have broadly controlled the situation, a major concern for them is the uptick in local terrorist recruitment, primarily from the four police districts of south Kashmir—Pulwama, Shopian, Kulgam, and Awantipora.

A significant contributor to this local recruitment is the radicalisation of the local youth, which has emerged as the most critical security challenge. Several factors aid the radicalisation process, including peer pressure, victimhood feelings and self-radicalisation enabled by the Salafi and Wahhabi propaganda. It is not a surprise that Kashmir Valley has seen a virtual doubling of the religious seminaries in the past few years. Furthermore, cyberspace, including the dark web and social media platforms, amplifies this religious propaganda, accelerating radicalisation.

It is not just the hard measures which have characterised security forces' CT response. They have also implemented several soft measures that the locals have appreciated. These include exercising maximum restraint, avoiding pellet guns and minimising collateral damage during the CI operations and protest demonstrations.

Countering this radicalisation process is a work in progress, and security forces have launched multiple initiatives to reverse the trend. For instance, the Indian Army's 'Sahi Raasta' initiative aims to bring the youth on the right track through national integration tours, sports training programmes and festivals, and skill development workshops. The JKP, too, implements a similar initiative.⁹

2. Hybrid terrorists and virtual terrorist outfits: With increased CI ops and neutralisation of many active militants, terrorist masterminds have

now changed their strategy to obfuscate their activities. To commit violence, they are now using terrorist sympathisers. Most of them have no criminal records and are therefore likely to escape police scrutiny. These 'hybrid terrorists' are the ones who are primarily responsible for the recent acts of targeted killings in and around Srinagar. In addition, security forces have noted the proliferation of virtual terrorist groups like the Jammu Kashmir Ghaznavi Force and The Resistance Front, which are nothing but front organisations for LeT and other terrorist outfits or organisations. In response, the JKP is strengthening its human and technical intelligence capabilities. This is proving helpful in apprehending these hybrid terrorists.

3. Pakistan's information warfare: Since August 2019, ISI's disinformation machinery has gone into overdrive on social media platforms with anti-India propaganda. With Pakistan's material and financial support to anti-India terrorist groups like LeT and JeM coming under the global scanner, the ISI has sought to project

Table 4: Local Terrorist Recruitment

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 [#]
Recruitment	19	31	63	83	86	128	210	117	178	142	74

Source: Indian Army
([#]Figures for the period January–June, 2022)

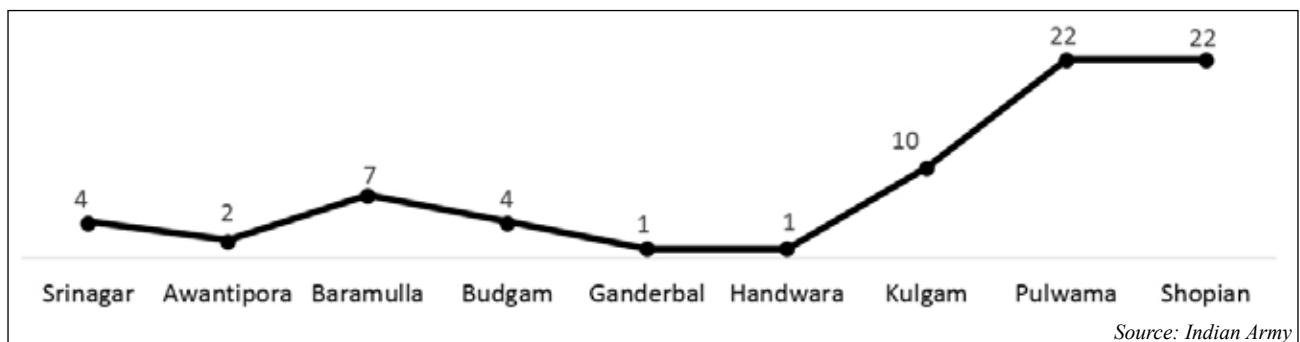


Figure 1: Kashmir Valley: Police District-wise Terrorist Recruitment in 2022

Kashmir's militancy as 'indigenous resistance.' In addition, it has sought to label India as a major human rights violator. This propaganda aims to draw attention to Kashmir and gain international sympathy.

This information warfare campaign by Pakistan is a significant challenge because it exploits any minor incident to create a narrative of falsehood against India and the security forces. This has the potential to undo the gains made post-August 2019. Countering these narratives will require a comprehensive national effort anchored in India's democratic credentials and calling out Pakistan's litany of lies. Army's Srinagar-based Chinar Corps is implementing a counter-response, but its efforts need national amplification.

It is clear that despite a flux in the regional security environment and Pakistan's attempts to stir trouble, Kashmir's security situation has remained remarkably calm and stable. The security forces have decisively turned the tables against Pakistan-sponsored cross-border terrorism and its proxies. To maintain this advantage, other government agencies will need to carry the baton forward to deliver better governance and establish the writ of the sovereign. □

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Ushering Investments

*Rohit Kansal
Dipankar Sengupta*

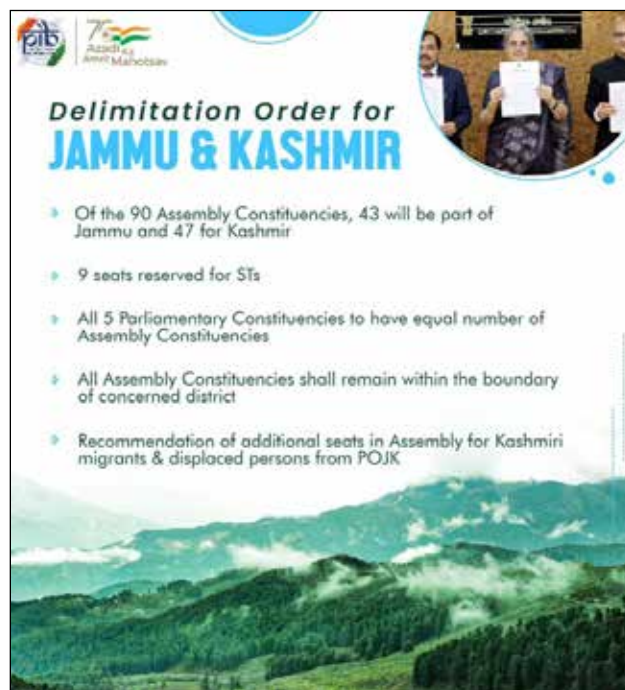
The Jammu and Kashmir Industrial Policy 2021-30 is the flagship policy with respect to investment and industrial growth in the UT. The New Industrial Development Scheme promises of a higher incentive for investment in remote areas that will help with balanced development while enabling J&K to leverage its land abundance in areas hitherto neglected. The Policy has a discernible core of investment, growth and employment. Considering the centrality of employment generation, the objectives of the Policy and the choice of industries focused upon are heavily labour-intensive in nature and where the products/services are high in value.

Three years ago, the Central Government through a series of legal measures extended “all provisions of the Constitution as amended from time to time” to the State of Jammu and Kashmir; it also reorganised the erstwhile State into two Union Territories, the Union Territory of Ladakh and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The long-term strategy was a branch and root transformation of the region and its economy that had so much promise and potential, and yet had comparatively delivered so little.

A look at the situation as it existed just before the reorganisation presented a dismal state of affairs. J&K government expenditure in 2018-19 was 57 per cent of the total gross state domestic product,— largely financed by the Central Government,— demonstrating an overwhelming dependence on the government and a weak private sector. (For neighbouring Himachal Pradesh, also a hill state with many similar characteristics, the corresponding figure is around 28 per cent). Further, of the total receipts of the (J&K) government, about 40 per cent came from the Centre. A massive government workforce (approximately 5 lakh employees) ensured that over a quarter of its total receipts were consumed by salaries and pensions. J&K’s per capita net state domestic product at Rs 94,000 was almost half of that of Himachal’s i.e., Rs 1,76,000; its road density was less than a fifth of Himachal’s and

unlike Himachal Pradesh, it was unable to leverage its huge hydropower potential.

This was clearly an unsustainable scenario and needed to be changed. Jammu and Kashmir would have to make the journey to transform itself to a stage where private enterprise and investment would



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lead its economy creating jobs and incomes. Thus, an appropriate economic strategy was necessary to make this transformation possible.

Framing Economic Policies

An appropriate economic policy for any region has to take into account both the advantages and disadvantages of that region and this is also true for the region of J&K. It has to be borne in mind that given its location and topography, the Union Territory suffers cost disadvantages primarily on account of transportation costs that will have to be reflected in the price of goods produced there. An appropriate strategy for such high-cost economies which should guide both investors as well as policymakers is to promote/go in for the production of goods and services of niche areas/segments where customers are willing to pay a premium amount which compensates for the disadvantages of high transportation costs. These could be products/services where the region has a natural strength due to natural endowments or products/services that have evolved with the application of traditional skills/local knowledge over a long period of time. J&K has both in ample measure that could serve as a springboard in its efforts to transform its economy.

When it comes to traditional products, the handicrafts produced in this region are of international renown. J&K also produces the bulk of the country's apple and is known for high-quality low volume products like walnut and saffron, etc. Its natural beauty supplemented by its 5 millennia-year history, unique handlooms and crafts and exquisite cuisine make it a favourite destination for millions of tourists. It has abundant hydropower resources, high-quality manpower, and some rare minerals too.

Now, it also has some of the most investor-friendly and inviting industrial policies, and the current combination of policies designed and adopted by the UT Government in conjunction with the Central Government takes into cognisance these natural strengths and constraints.

Attracting Investment

The Jammu and Kashmir Industrial Policy 2021-30 is the flagship policy with respect to investment and industrial growth in the UT. The New Industrial Development Scheme is not just the most attractive of its kind but also learns from the misses of the past. Its promise of a higher incentive for investment in remote areas will help

balanced development while enabling J&K to leverage its land abundance in areas hitherto neglected. The Policy has a discernible core that runs throughout the document i.e., investment, growth and employment. Considering the centrality of the objective of employment generation, the objectives of the Policy and the choice of industries focused upon are heavily labour-intensive in nature and where the products/services are high in value. These include both the UTs' traditional strengths e.g., tourism, handicrafts and horticulture as well as new sectors like IT, ITES, healthcare, etc. It also focuses on synergies with existing strengths like post-harvest management of Horticulture as well as Film Tourism as an add-on to Tourism.

Learning from experience, the Policy is also more discerning in extending financial support as compared to previous policies. Earlier policies were able to draw investment in industry in the erstwhile State due to generous subsidies and tax exemptions. But many of these investments of the past that happened largely due to financial incentives were not linked to J&K's natural strengths and therefore would not sustain once these financial sops were withdrawn. The new Policy by focusing on sectors that draw on the region's strengths attempts to avoid this pitfall. Indeed, where services are concerned and which comprises 53% of the region's economy, the Policy has an explicit Service Sector Positive List which will be eligible for benefits. They include Tourism, Film Tourism, Healthcare, Education and Skill Development, etc.

Subsequent Policy announcements and budgetary provisions have supplemented the core philosophy of the Industrial Policy. The aim of these announcements as well as the budgetary provisions has been to amplify and strengthen the intent of the Policy. It is well established that smart budgetary provisioning aligned with an appropriate policy can yield disproportionately high returns. This is why many of the provisions in this year's Budget have specifically sought to address the issue of attracting investment and introduce appropriate sector-specific provisions.

Tourism

While J&K has long been associated with tourism, it has surprisingly never figured among the top ten States/UTs when it came to tourist arrivals either in absolute numbers or as a proportion of its population. The current UT Budget by providing support and resources for the development of 75 new

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destinations, seeks to expand the region's tourism economy while bringing in more equity in this highly employment-elastic sector. Smart convergence with other public expenditures such as the culture department which seeks to revive traditional fairs and Sufi festivals, many of them in remote, lesser-known destinations or the J&K tourist village network scheme which incentivises local youth groups to promote rural tourism is expected to further add to this effort. Targeted public investment in roads and urban infrastructure is aimed at making the new locations more accessible and increasing the sustainable carrying capacity of these destinations. That this seems to be working is borne out by the figures—tourist inflow in J&K hit a 7-year high in November last year; 36,473 tourists visited the famed Tulip Garden in a single day i.e., 27 March, the highest ever so far. On 4 April this year, the Srinagar International Airport recorded the busiest day ever in history, with 15,014 people travelling on 90 flights in and out of Kashmir.

Horticulture

The Budget's accent on horticulture addresses both the productivity and the income issues of the sector. The thrust on cold storage capacity expansion, increase in productivity of apple through high-intensity orcharding, and support to high value and low volume agro-products like aromatic and cash crops and vegetables are all budget initiatives. When taken along with the GI-certification initiative for saffron and other crops which is already underway, the sector holds great promise. If productivity is increased to international standards, it can lead to the quadrupling of the size of

The handicrafts produced in this region are of international renown. J&K also produces the bulk of the country's apple and is known for high-quality low volume products like walnut and saffron, etc. Its natural beauty supplemented by its 5 millennia-year history, unique handlooms and crafts and exquisite cuisine make it a favourite destination for millions of tourists.

this sector and if supplemented by value addition to fruit (currently very low), it can significantly increase growth and employment.

Foreign Trade and Investment

An additional (and unique) strand of its strategy has been to seek leveraging of India's recent trade agreement— Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) with the UAE (another off-budget element of transformation) to seek markets, investments and tourists. Given the proximity and familiarity of UAE with J&K, the

Gulf Investment strategy seeks to build on these links and potentialities.

Impact on J&K Bound Investment

What has been the impact of all these policies on investors with respect to Jammu and Kashmir? Combined with the end of constitutional uncertainty in the region, a far better law and order situation, a massive thrust on infrastructure and a focused strategy for economic development, there has been a heightened interest in the region by investors and enthusiastic response to many of the policies.

Investors who shied away from the erstwhile State have now shown renewed interest in investing in the reconstituted Union Territory. The UT Government reported that it had received investment proposals worth around Rs 51,000 crores whose employment potential is approximately 2.37 lakhs. Given the total spending of the Industrial Policy is approximately 28,400 crores spread over 10 years, the potential investment being "crowded in" appears to be impressive by any standards. Moreover, the interest evinced in the region now extends to overseas investors, especially well-known names and brands in the UAE. Significantly, the areas in which interest has been shown and proposals received are largely in the list of positive sectors earmarked by the government in its Industrial Policy.

As we argue in the next section, this augurs well both for the region and investors.

Appropriate Investor Strategy

What should the private investor look for in Jammu and Kashmir before investing his money in the region? The obvious answer is to look at the profitability of his investment which would depend on how closely his business plan is linked to the natural, traditional and human capital endowments of the UT. A well-designed business venture runs on those lines will not depend on perpetual state subsidies for it to be profitable. The recent rush of



Jammu Haat is a unique market place to exhibit the richness of J&K's culture to connect, compete and collaborate with global market players.

tourism to J&K that broke records demonstrates how profitable this sector can be to investors. Thus, investment in this area especially in those areas which are yet unexplored can be very profitable. Startups in horticulture and post-harvest value addition can be potentially another profitable area. Investments in both areas leverage the natural endowments of the UT amplified with local knowledge and tradition and make it rewarding for the investor.

The investor can also choose to invest in many other promising areas, for example, in IT and ITES which can take advantage of the region's considerable local talent pool in an area where advances in ICT and Covid-19 have made work-from-home the norm. This too can be potentially very rewarding.

Another virgin sector for the region could be the services sector and especially the Education and Health and Holistic Wellness sectors.

But to invest in the region solely to take advantage of subsidies would be short-sighted and would not pay in the long run. A profitable strategy given the new economic regime in the region requires the investor to

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stay engaged with the region while investing here.

Towards a Bright Future

The aim of the government's economic strategy is to effect a transformation that will see a new J&K which will host an increasingly mobile India looking for world-class destinations to tour and explore. Its horticulture sector will develop to produce fruit and fruit products that can be compared with the best in the world. It will continue with increasing

strength to export to the world its handicrafts that are a product of millennia of experience and culture. It will eventually generate over one-third of India's hydropower. It also has the potential to host many of the IT, ITES, pharmaceutical, textile and electronics industries that it is uniquely positioned to attract. Its health, wellness and education ecosystem will be hopefully nonpareil in the country.

The strategy of the Government is so designed to make the above possible. Private investors would be well rewarded if they align their investment strategies accordingly and make their investments in the UT profitable. □

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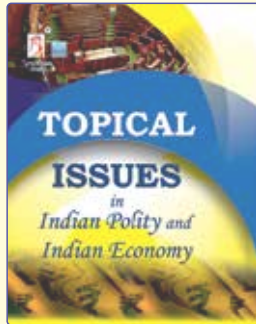
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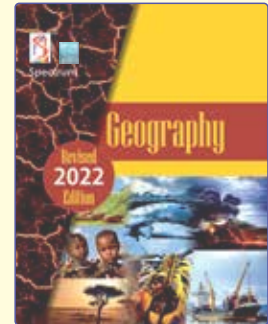
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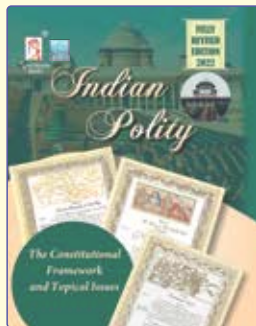
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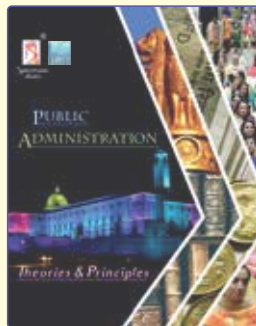
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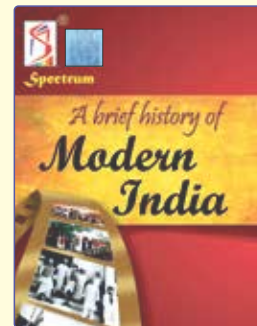
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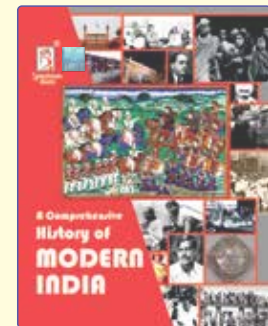
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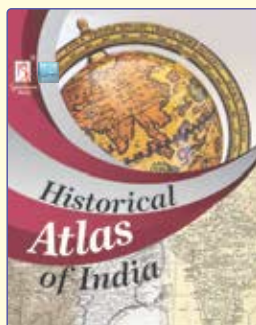
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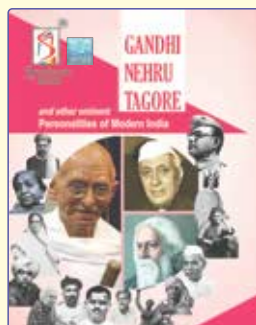
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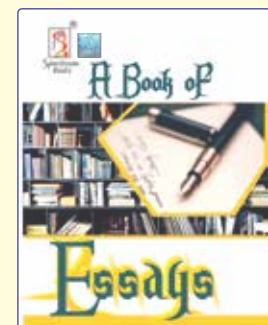
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Tryst with Cinematic Paradise

Nitishwar Kumar

The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir has had a unique and memorable tryst with films and filmmaking. Classics such as Kashmir Ki Kali, Jab Jab Phool Khile, Himalay Ki God Mein, Janwar stand testimony to this beautiful affair between cinema and the people of J&K. The Government of J&K has now formulated the 'Jammu and Kashmir Film Policy 2021' that offers the best in-country tangible and intangible incentives for film shooting, financial and other incentives, and support for creating and upgrading world-class infrastructure.

The author is an IAS and is presently the Chairman, Jammu Kashmir Film Development Council & Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor, J&K. Email: ps.rb-jk@nic.in

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umse acha kaun hai, Jai Jai Shiv Shankar, Noorie..., Kabhi kabhi mere dil mein khayal aata hai, Chali re chali re... Jiya re jiya re, Zindagi kuch to bata...Kitni khoobsoorat yeh

tasveer hai; All these songs have one thing in common—all were shot in the beautiful landscape of “Gar Firdaus bar-rue zamin ast...”.

Remarkably, the above list has now started adding new hits as the Government of J&K has taken up ‘Film Sector’ as a priority industry and has unveiled in August of 2021, the ‘Jammu and Kashmir Film Policy 2021’ – a comprehensive policy to address several objectives to make Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) the most sought-after filmmaking destination in India and a mainstream livelihood creation sector where artistic vibrancy shines through, tourism avenues expand and investment channels open into the UT.

The Policy was launched after extensive stakeholder consultations led at the apex level by the Hon’ble Lieutenant Governor and with special inputs received from the nuanced film fraternity and their ecosystem in Mumbai, Hyderabad, Madras, and Kolkata. This was coupled with an exhaustive study of film policies across

the Indian States and globally so that current and relevant best practices from the industry today could be mapped and a unique formulation of policy vision, objectives, roadmaps, and incentives are chalked out for J&K’s Film Policy. With this Policy, J&K is now witnessing a surge in big-budget movies with veteran actors, directors, and stalwarts in the movie production and music industry as front-runners in shooting in the Union Territory. The industry is appreciating the support offered via the Policy and the Single Window Cell.

The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir has had a unique and memorable tryst with films and filmmaking. The film industry has always desired to capture the pristine landscapes of snow-clad mountains, breath-taking valleys, and picturesque springs and imbibe the rich heritage, vibrant cuisines, beautiful traditions, and soulful folk music of the land. The locals in turn have always been great hosts and keen embracers of the needs of the industry. Classics such as *Kashmir Ki Kali*, *Jab Jab Phool Khile*, *Himalaya Ki God Mein*, *Janwar* etc., stand testimony to this beautiful affair between cinema and the people of J&K. The story of this tryst is however quite filmy in itself. Like a movie interval, this rendezvous of films in





the region was forced to undergo a compelled hiatus with guns and thorny roses taking over. The villainy of conflict of violence overpowered for some time but eventually, like any good old Hindi blockbuster movie, the power of love triumphed as if the ‘Zanjeer’ is being swiftly unshackled and the lovers are being reunited!

Nonpareil Offerings under the Policy

The J&K Film Policy is a comprehensive and extensively drafted policy with over 12 Clauses to strategically revive the film industry and make J&K the most sought-after unique world-class filmmaking destination in India. It comes with a financial outlay of Rs 100 crores every Financial Year for 5 years, until 2026.

Encompassing unmatched subsidy packages for films shot in the UT, starting at a cap of up to Rs 1 crore subsidy offered for the first film to be shot in UT to up to Rs 2 crore subsidy for the third film to be shot in UT, there are even subsidies for new categories such as OTT Films and web series, films shot on patriotic themes and ‘Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat’, and special incentives for utilisation of local artistic talent from J&K in films.

The Policy offers the best-in-country, tangible and intangible incentives for film shooting, financial and other incentives, and support for creating and upgrading world-class infrastructure such as developing Film Cities, Studios, multiplexes, etc. Some other offerings include the development of a Single Window Cell to offer

information on locations, available talent, and equipment and an integrated portal for administrative efficiency and assistance for easing out procedures for filmmaking in the J&K and in granting permission for film shoots within defined timelines. The Policy also mandates the setting up of a dedicated Jammu and Kashmir Film Development Council at the apex level of J&K Government to execute the objectives under the policy in mission mode.

Setting up of a visionary J&K Film Development Council and development of the Single Window Cell to one of the fastest processing times for Film Shoot Applications in the country.

A dedicated J&K Film Development Council has been set up at the Apex Level, which functions as a separate vertical and acts as a distinct agency to achieve the objectives of the Film Policy. The J&K Film Development Council is a high-powered Committee headed by the Principal Secretary to the Hon’ble Lieutenant Governor, Jammu and Kashmir as Chairman and comprises other senior officers and eminent personalities.

As outlined in the Policy, a dedicated Single Window Cell was also set up in record time to handhold interested film enthusiasts to shoot films in the UT. An integrated portal was developed to act as a single-point resource, hosting a location compendium, talent directory featuring interested local artists, equipment directory, and also to facilitate permissions for film shoots and availing of subsidy under the Policy in a time-bound efficient manner. As of today, over 125+ applications for shooting films were received since the launch of the Policy on 5 August 2021, on the portal. Out of them, over 122 applications were successfully processed and granted permission to shoot. The successful applications were processed in a record average time of 4-5 working days, which is one of the fastest times for processing Film Shoot Applications in the country. This is in stark contrast to the earlier received average application

numbers of just 1-2 per month with an average processing time of 20-25 days.

Way Forward

A Film City in the Making

To build best-in-class nationally competitive infrastructure and to holistically develop the film ecosystem in J&K, the Government of Jammu and Kashmir is in the works to support the setting up of an all-round Film City with offerings such as music studios, skilling institutes, backlots, and sets, equipment warehouses, accommodation facilities, etc. This will be a one-of-a-kind infrastructure uniquely positioned to

The film industry has always desired to capture the pristine landscapes of snow-clad mountains, breath-taking valleys, and picturesque springs and imbibe the rich heritage, vibrant cuisines, beautiful traditions, and soulful folk music of the land. The locals in turn have always been great hosts and keen embracers of the needs of the industry.

the requirements of the Filming sector in the UT and will position it as one of the most ideal and sought-after filmmaking locations in India.

Annual Film Festival

The Film Policy aspires to establish the J&K Film Festival as an annual calendar event every year to allow the filmmaking community to exchange ideas, showcase their work, and be part of building a celebratory narrative of films in J&K. Through the festival, an objective will also be to disseminate information about the art, culture, history, heritage, livelihood, and glorious traditions of the Jammu & Kashmir to the world.

J&K Film Awards

The Government of J&K intends to bring in a system of awarding films and filmmakers. An indicative list of awards may include categories such as— Awards of Excellence for J&K Films, Films Promoting Jammu & Kashmir as a Destination, etc.

Restoration & Preservation of J&K Films

Work to set up Jammu & Kashmir Film Archives in the Directorate of Information and Public Relations is already ongoing. This will enable the Government to not only maintain a record of the acclaimed work but also create a database of the film industry going forward. Existing archives (if any, both analog and digital), as identified by the committee to be of archival value, will be restored in a mission mode. Producers will be encouraged to deposit a copy of their film and publicity material with the archives moving forward.

FAM Trips

Familiarisation trips are being planned by the government for potential investors, filmmakers, decision-

J&K Film Policy 2021 has the potential to emerge as a change maker for the film ecosystem in the valley and India and serve as a uniquely-framed policy with its thrust given to local film talent, film infrastructure, and sustainable service economy.

makers, regional producers, or other relevant stakeholders to encourage and incentivise investments in this sector.

Development of Shooting Places

The J&K Film Development Council is in the process of identifying, cataloging, and developing promising potential shooting locations that have aesthetic and cinematic appeal. These locations will be developed in synergy with the Tourism Department and private investors.

With the setting up of a dedicated J&K Film Development Council, these aspirations have been taken up in mission mode to streamline the film industry and its allied sectors, and to bring in the necessary investments and stakeholders to rejuvenate the industry and love for films and filmmaking in general among the public of Jammu and Kashmir.

In addition, a notably unique flagship programme, 'Redefining the Paradise' was also jointly conceptualised by the Mission Youth Initiative of J&K and the J&K Film Development Council for promoting local talent, film-friendly shooting locations, and harnessing the potential of tourist villages in J&K. Significantly, the programme facilitates promoting the shooting of songs and movies in the selected villages through systematic assistance. Any such initiative is to be incentivised by way of financial assistance up to the tune of Rs 10 lakh as support for promoting both the scenic beauty and local talent in tune with J&K Film Policy. The programme also offers financial incentives to local youth groups for initiatives that promote rural tourism optimally to generate jobs, and income and promote new destinations. Further, the initiative will also facilitate inter-departmental coordination for prioritising the promotion of silver screening in Jammu & Kashmir.

This Policy has the potential to emerge as a change maker for the film ecosystem in the valley and India and serve as a uniquely-framed policy with its thrust given to local film talent, film infrastructure, and sustainable service economy.

Jammu and Kashmir Film Policy 2021 not only sets the vision for the creation of a vibrant world-class Film Ecosystem in the UT but also epitomises the legendary tryst that existed between Jammu and Kashmir and films and resets it in motion once again, making it creatively reverberate across the globe through both tangible and intangible mediums. □



A still from the movie 'Kashmir ki Kali'

Towards Ease of Living

Since the introduction of constitutional reforms with regards to J&K in August 2019, the government has been focused on bringing about wide-ranging reforms to substantially improve governance and enhance ease of living for the people of the region at an unprecedented pace.

- Banihal Qazigund Road Tunnel, built at a cost of over Rs 3100 crore is operational. The 8.45 km long tunnel would reduce the road distance between Banihal and Qazigund by 16 km, and reduce journey time by around one and a half hour. The tunnel would help establish an all-weather connection between Jammu & Kashmir, and bring the two regions closer.
- A 500 KW solar power plant at Palli was inaugurated by the Prime Minister which will make it the country's first Panchayat to become carbon neutral.
- Srinagar's long-awaited Ram Bagh flyover was opened.
- Ongoing Road & Transport Projects:
 - Baramulla-Gulmarg: NH-701A in Union Territory of J&K; upgradation of the existing carriageway; total length 43 km; awarded cost Rs 85 crores to improve riding quality of NH for tourist to visit Gulmarg.
 - Vailoo-Donipawa (P-VI): NH-244 in the Anantnag district of J&K; construction and upgradation (2L+PS) of the road; total length 28 km; awarded cost Rs 158 crores to provide connectivity to Kokernag and Vailoo.
 - Donipawa-Ashajipra (P-VII): NH-244, joining with NH-44 in the District of Anantnag; construction of a new bypass (2L+PS); total length 8.5 Km; awarded cost Rs 57 Crores to bypass the Anantnag district.
 - Four lane Ring Road around Srinagar (42 km): Rs 2948.72 crores allotted for decongestion of Srinagar city.
- Various initiatives have been taken to streamline Amarnathji Yatra for the devotees.
- Jammu Ropeway has been completed and Phase-II of Jammu Ropeway from Mahamaya to Bagh-e-Bahu section has also been commissioned.
- Under the Central Sector Scheme 'PRASHAD', the construction of the tourist interpretation centre at Dargah Hazratbal has been completed.
- A New Central Sector Scheme has been notified on 19 February 2021, for the industrial development of the UT of J&K, with an outlay of Rs 28,400 crore, which is likely to employ over 4.5 lakh people while boosting

the industrial development of J&K.

- J&K has been declared Open Defecation Free (ODF) under Swachh Bharat Mission.
- A 100 per cent saturation has been achieved in 17 individual beneficiary centric schemes, including Saubhagya, Ujala, Ujjwala, and Indradhanush schemes.
- During the year 2020-21, 1,289 road construction works were completed at a cost of Rs 1,638 crores. The construction work of 14,500 km of roads has been completed so far under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, which has connected about 2,000 places.
- An international flight from Srinagar to Sharjah has been started on 23 October 2021. In addition, night flights from Jammu and Srinagar have also been started.
- The scope of the High-Density Plantation Scheme for apple has been expanded to include mango, litchi, cherry, walnut, etc. Kashmiri saffron has been given the Geographical-Indication (GI) tag.
- Under fast-track recruitment, 26,330 posts have been identified in various departments in the UT of J&K and taken up for recruitment. Presently, selection process has been completed with respect to 11,324 posts.

A total of 1,41,815 new works/projects have been taken up under various sectors/schemes in the UT of J&K since 2019. Funds amounting to Rs 27,274.00 crore have been provided for completion of these works/projects. The project construction and procurement activities are creating significant employment opportunities for skilled as well as unskilled labourers, engineers, transporters and small businesses in addition to those engaged in supply of material, equipment and tools in the private sector. It is estimated that this investment has generated employment of about 1,169 lakh man days in the UT of J&K. Besides connectivity and power infrastructure projects, status of progress in other sectors is as under:

- i. **PMDP-2015:** The progress of projects being implemented in the UT of J&K under the Prime Minister's Development Package-2015 has been accelerated. 53 projects pertaining to 15 Ministries are being implemented at a cost of Rs 58,477 crore in various sectors such as Roads, Power, Health, Education, Tourism, Agriculture, Skill Development etc., out of which 25 projects have been completed/substantially completed.
- ii. **Languishing Projects:** Under languishing projects programme, 1,193 projects worth Rs 1,984 crores were

Table 1: Status of Infrastructure in the UT of J&K Connectivity & Power

Particulars	Status prior to 2019	Present Status
1. Connectivity		
Road length	39,345 kms	41,141 kms
% of Blacktop roads	66%	74%
Average Macadamisation of roads	6.54 kms per day	20.68 kms per day
Scheme for repair of potholes	No	Pothole free road programme taken up. Target for 2021-22 is to make 5,900 kms of effective road length pothole free (4,600 kms achieved)
PMGSY road length achieved in a year PMGSY rank at national level	1,622 kms. 12 th Rank	2,127 kms 4 th Rank
Srinagar-Jammu National Highway Average layover for trucks Passenger travelling time	24-72 hrs 7-12 hrs	Less than 12 hrs 5.50 hrs
Jammu-Doda travelling time	5.50 hrs	3.50 hrs
Jammu-Kishtwar travelling time	7.50 hrs	5.00 hrs
1,315 meter long railway bridge over River Chenab to provide train connectivity to Kashmir		Target date for completion September 2022
Other Achievements		a. Four National Highway projects being completed during 2022 b. Execution of Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway being taken-up. c. Under Bharatmala, 10 new road/tunnel projects agreed by Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.
Particulars	Status prior to 2019	Present Status
2. Power		
Hydro Power (Capacity generated)	3,505 MW	In about next 5 years, 21 hydro power projects will be developed with aggregate capacity of 5,186 MW. The major hydro power projects include Pakaldul, Kiru, Kwar, Uri (Stage-II), Dulhasti (Stage-II), Sawalkote, Kirthai-II and Rattle.
Transmission System		
Transformation Capacity	8,234 MVA	10,264 MVA
Line length of 220 KV	804 Ckms	1,220 Ckms
Line length of 132 KV	1,955 Ckms	2,265 Ckms
Distribution System		
Transformation Capacity	12,745 MVA	16,574 MVA
HT Line length	41,204 Ckms	45,101 Ckms
LT Line length	79,754 Ckms	96,017 Ckms (Ckm -Circuit kilometres)
Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme		New scheme “Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme” (RDSS) and projects worth Rs 11,767 crore approved to reduce AT&C losses and ensure 24x7 power availability.

completed, including 5 projects which were incomplete for more than 20 years, 15 projects for more than 15 years and 165 projects for more than 10 years.

iii. **Health:** Two new AIIMS, 7 new Medical Colleges, two Cancer Institutes and 15 Nursing Colleges have been taken up/operationalised recently. Intake Capacity of 854 seats was added which includes 600 MBBS, 50 PG Courses, 26 BDS, 38 MDS, and 140 DNB.

iv. **Jal Jeevan Mission:** Household tap water connections have increased from 5.75 lakh households (31%) to 10.55 lakh households (57%). Two Districts (Srinagar and Ganderbal) have been made Har Ghar Jal Districts. All rural schools, Anganwadi centres and health

institutions are provided with tap water connections.

v. **Irrigation and Flood Control:** Three major irrigation projects viz Main Ravi Canal (Rs 62 crore), third stage of Tral Lift Irrigation Scheme (Rs 45 crore) and Comprehensive Flood Management Plan of River Jhelum & its Tributaries–Phase-I costing Rs 399.29 crore have been completed.

vi. **Education:** Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Jammu and Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu have been made functional. The number of Government Degree Colleges/Engineering Colleges has increased from 96 to 147. □

Source: PIB

Sustainable Tourism

*Avinash Mishra
Madhubanti Dutta*

India is one of the most ecologically diversified nations, with landscapes that include majestic mountains, oceans, alluring deserts, and rich forests. One such gem is the high-altitude desert of Ladakh, commonly referred to as the 'moon land', which is found in the northernmost-remotest location of India. It is known for some of the most elegant and ancient monasteries located against a magical landscape of high-altitude mountains and cold desert plains. Ladakh by virtue of its location and remoteness is an extremely ecologically sensitive location, which reaps profit from its tourism industry.



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Tourism has gained extensive recognition as an important industry in the district of Ladakh in view of its potential for the creation of employment opportunities and generation of income on a vast scale. The tourism sector has a direct impact on the socio-economic sector of the district. Many others working in related industries like transportation, lodging, catering, cottage industry, etc., find opportunities to work in the tourism business. But, unfortunately, this is followed by a major strain on the natural resources of the sensitive ecosystem.

To gear it up, the extreme climate change impacts are also putting lives here at great risk. The glaciers are melting more rapidly, and snowfall has decreased dramatically over the past two decades. Rainfall has also become incredibly irregular. Flash floods due to cloud bursts in the Leh-Ladakh region are also casting doubt on Ladakh's long-term sustainability. The Ladakh Government has undertaken the task of waste management with the goal to safeguard the environment, lower carbon emissions, and maintain the Himalayan ecosystem.

The Central Government is working towards making Ladakh a tourist destination with a focus on aspects of adventure, culture, and responsible tourism. There are seven projects worth Rs 594 crores sanctioned for J&K and Ladakh under Swadesh Darshan and PRASHAD Schemes, under the Ministry of Tourism.¹ This will make Ladakh a high-value, low-impact tourism destination that fosters sustainable and inclusive growth for the local community. It has to be borne in mind that tourism should be sustainable in nature with minimised negative impact on the local ecology and population through regulated and monitored tourism. Through the promotion of tourism in Ladakh, the aim is to create employment for the locals and promote Ladakh's culture and products to tourists from India and the rest of the world. It is imperative that Ladakh's tourism industry be developed holistically, with a focus on new development opportunities, connectivity, infrastructure, and sustainable and community-based growth. Opportunities and challenges are immense which are in the form of adventure tourism in Leh, homestay tourism's potential to unlock new areas, and its role in empowering the local community, specifically women, to mention a few.²

Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh are the three distinct regions. The potential for tourism from both domestic and foreign visitors is



Bhand Pather, a popular art form from Kashmir

enormous in all the three regions. Its effects are apparent in the service sector industries such as transportation, hospitality, horticulture, handicrafts, and small-scale manufacturing. Kashmir is frequently referred to as "paradise on earth" and has long been a major tourist destination. Because of its abundance of natural beauty, it is also known as the "Switzerland of the East." Its snow-capped mountains, rivers, and freshwater lakes provide visitors with plenty of chances for hiking, rafting, skiing, and mountaineering.

There is a plethora of products that can be purchased in Jammu and Kashmir. Each district has a lot to offer to the visitors, including abundant natural resources, adventure tourism (such as river rafting and mountain climbing), numerous trekking routes, pilgrimage tourism, wildlife tourism, heritage tourism, ethnic food festivals, and cultural events, handicrafts, etc.

However, the unprecedented increase in tourism has led to "over-tourism" in this location, which has an immediate negative impact on natural resources, cultural legacy, and quality of life. This awareness has sparked an increase in discussion on sustainable tourism around the world. In view of the fact that the dynamic forces driving tourism frequently have unavoidable negative effects if

There is a plethora of products that can be purchased in Jammu and Kashmir. Each district in the UT has a lot to offer to the visitors, including abundant natural resources, adventure tourism, numerous trekking routes, pilgrimage tourism, wildlife tourism, heritage tourism, ethnic food festivals, and cultural events, handicrafts, etc.

poorly managed, "over-tourism" is being viewed as a potential risk. In a sustainable framework, there should be a balance between the economic, environmental, and socio-cultural consequences of tourism.

According to UNWTO, sustainable tourism should:

a. Make the best use of environmental resources, which are crucial to tourism development, while maintaining crucial ecological processes and aiding in the preservation of natural heritage and biodiversity;

- b. Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, preserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and promote intercultural understanding and tolerance.
- c. Ensure long-term economic viability, distributing socio-economic advantages to all stakeholders in a balanced way, including chances for permanent employment and income generation, social services for host communities, and aiding in the reduction of poverty.

The unprecedented increase in tourism has led to “overtourism” in this location, which has an immediate negative impact on natural resources, cultural legacy, and quality of life.

The tourism industry in places like Ladakh depends on presenting an image of a pristine natural place, but most visitors in these regions show little regard for the sensitive ecosystem and cultural sensitivities of the region. Each year, they generate tonnes of waste, endangering the environment and human health as well as ruining the beauty of the place. Presently, the strategy should be the reduction in significant risk of pollution and environmental degradation, and develop tourism based on carrying capacity.



A majority of tourists visiting the region come here for pilgrimage to Amarnath Ji Shrine and Mata Vaishno Devi.

The potential of high-end tourism and wildlife conservation is yet to be harnessed through a scientific understanding and efficient planning. Ladakh's landscape is predominantly represented by pastures/grasslands that are home to ethnic communities relying on animal husbandry produces. Hence, these pasturelands reflect a complex of natural, social and cultural landscapes. However, without a proper understanding of the delicate interlinkages of different landscape components, the rapid

The potential of high-end tourism and wildlife conservation is yet to be harnessed through a scientific understanding and efficient planning. Ladakh landscape is predominantly represented by pastures/grasslands that are home to ethnic communities relying on animal husbandry produces.

development of tourism may affect these unique grassland ecosystems of Ladakh.

It is crucial to consider the sustainability prospects for tourism growth in these regions of the Ladakh's landscape. Threats to the socio-cultural heritage, intensive use of finite resources, and negative externalities, as elsewhere, could have other detrimental effects, such as the replacement of conventional environmentally friendly and aesthetically pleasing architecture





Ladakh's landscape is predominantly represented by pastures/ grasslands that are home to ethnic communities relying on animal husbandry produces.

with inappropriate, resource-intensive, and hazardous constructions, poorly designed roads and other related infrastructure, inadequate solid waste management, increased air pollution, declining water sources, and the loss of biological diversity. Therefore, focusing only on attracting more visitors cannot be the basis for sustainable tourism development, especially when the region's carrying capacity is constrained. The focus of tourist development may be on the quality of the tourism and equity in tourism income across the various stakeholders, including the local communities, given

the characteristics of uniqueness and sensitivity of the Ladakh region.³

J&K and Ladakh must strive hard to develop into an Eco Tourism hotspot because uncontrolled tourism contributes to the ecological imbalance brought on by climate change. Eco Tourism is ethical travel to unspoiled areas that protects the environment, promotes community development, and educates both locals and visitors. The UT may take inspiration from Bhutan,⁴ which has pledged to “absorb more carbon than we release and to be a net sink for global greenhouse gases,” as well as other tourist hotspots. For example, limiting the number of visitors, constructing high-end eco-lodges that are environmentally friendly, and reducing illegal poaching of exotic wildlife might all be part of strict rules and guidelines for how development and tourism in these areas should proceed. By making these balanced efforts towards sustainability, we can maintain the beauty of these places, by protecting the natural environment and ecology. □

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Education & Skilling

Padma Angmo

Ladakh is a region unique by virtue of its location, topography, culture, history, and natural heritage. The difficult geographical terrain, freezing winters extending to nearly one-third of the year, remote villages, and sparse population spread over a large area, lack of adequate infrastructural support and scarcity of qualified human resource has posed challenges for smooth roll-out of any development initiative in Ladakh. It is essential that youth are made the catalyst in the growth story through education, skill development, innovation, and entrepreneurship.



With Ladakh becoming a Union Territory in 2019, abundant opportunities opened up for this region blessed with unique natural resources, pristine environment and amiable population. The influx of funds from the Union Government and efforts of leadership at the centre and UT-level offer the Ladakh Administration the opportunity to draw a unique development model in this peaceful and ruggedly beautiful region.

Youth play the most crucial role in any development model that the administration plans to chalk out. It is, therefore, crucial to equip the youth of Ladakh with the requisite skills and capacity to take forward the region and showcase a model that may be emulated. The population in Ladakh for 2019-20 in the age group 18-23 is 36,588.¹ While the current enrolment in the colleges (including Polytechnic Colleges) and universities in Ladakh stands at around 3,938, around a similar number are enrolled in Higher Educational Institutes outside the UT. Interestingly, it has been observed that the local youth studying outside Ladakh often come back sooner or later and take up either Government jobs or engage in Tourism and related industries. While on one hand, this puts some stress on the limited job market in Ladakh which has a small industry presence, educated youth returning to Ladakh also bring with them experience, ideas and enterprise which can help the region explore avenues beyond the usual.

The administration in the past two and half years have been focused on tapping this demographic dividend and

building the capacity of the youth of Ladakh so that they actively contribute to sustainable growth in the region.

Quality Education and Enabling Infrastructure

The first focus has been on offering quality higher education in Ladakh. The University of Ladakh (UoL) was established in 2019 as a cluster University comprising 6 constituent colleges located at Leh, Kargil, Nubra, Zaskar, Khaltsi and Drass. Since then the courses offered in the University have now expanded to 22 Departments that also include specialised subjects like Forensic Science, Police Administration and Bachelor of Physical Education. Sixteen MoUs have been signed by the UoL with other institutes to promote student exchange programmes, faculty development, collaboration on research and capacity building, etc. These include the University of Delhi, the Danish Consortium for Academic Craftsmanship, Wadia



Strengthening and expanding skilling ecosystem in Ladakh

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LSDM partnered with the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, to conduct the first-ever Voice Artist training for the youth of Ladakh.

Institute of Himalayan Geology, and National Forensic Sciences University among others. The two campuses of the University are expanding with new faculty blocks, Laboratory Blocks, Sports infrastructure, Auditorium, and staff quarters.

The infrastructure in the constituent colleges has also been strengthened to cater to growing student strength and the quality of education is also being improved through Faculty Development programmes, students exchange programmes and visiting faculty. The infrastructure for the colleges at Nubra and Zaskar comprised of two blocks constructed by the Higher Education Department of the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir. The two colleges of Khaltsi and Drass had no infrastructure as they were the most recently established colleges. The Ladakh administration took up the task of improving the infrastructure of these constituent colleges. With only the college at Leh having a 24-seater Girls Hostel, the first focus was on setting up hostels for Boys and Girls in all the colleges. Under the Special Development Package announced by the Government of India for the new UT of Ladakh, infrastructure projects of around Rs 200 crore has been sanctioned for the colleges in the year 2021-22 which includes hostels, libraries, multi-purpose Hall besides landscaping and sports grounds, and construction has started at the sites. All new construction is solar passive in keeping with the carbon neutral vision for Ladakh besides being accessible to students with disabilities. The year 2022-23 has been declared by the

administration as the Year for Persons with Disabilities.

The enrolment in the colleges and universities has seen a sharp rise in the past two years, to an extent that a branch of the Government College Kargil had to be set up in Sankoo in 2022 to decongest the Kargil campus and cater to the growing demand in Sakoo sub-division. This campus saw enrolment of 51 students in the first year. The administration has now proposed setting up a new College in Sankoo to cater to the students of this sub-division.

Sindhu Central University was announced by the Prime Minister in Lok Sabha in 2021. The University is coming up at Khaltsi on a land measuring 110 acres. The University aims to cater to students from across the country and abroad and shall nurture peer learning for the youth of Ladakh.

Local youth studying outside Ladakh often come back sooner or later and take up either Government jobs or engage in Tourism and related industries. While on one hand, this puts some stress on the limited job market in Ladakh which has a small industry presence, educated youth returning to Ladakh also bring with them experience, ideas and enterprise which can help the region explore avenues beyond the usual.

Scholarships

To encourage merit and industriousness among students, Ladakh administration launched the Rewa (Ladakhi word meaning expectation) Scheme in 2021 to give financial assistance of upto Rs 1 lakh to meritorious students of Class X and XII, irrespective of their family income. The financial assistance is given to enable students to take up coaching for national-level examinations like NEET, JEE, UG CLAT and NDA. Around 30 students of Class X and 35 students of Class XII from each district shall be given the scholarship this year.

Under the Rewa Scheme, all those qualifying preliminary examinations of exams like Civil Services, Engineering

Services and Forest Services are also given financial assistance upto Rs 1.54 lakh for taking up coaching for the Mains of these competitive examinations. Two students qualifying for preliminary exams of the Civil Services Exams of 2021 have been given the scholarship.

About 9,363² students in Ladakh availed of scholarships under the Post-matric Scholarship Scheme of the Ministry of Minority Affairs (MoMA) and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) in the year 2021-22. Besides this, 347 students from Ladakh availed of scholarship under the Prime Minister Special Scholarship Scheme, which is specifically for students of Ladakh and J&K studying in recognised institutes outside the two UTs and includes the reimbursement of tuition fee besides the maintenance allowance of upto Rs 1 lakh per annum.

Collaboration with Indian Institutes of Technology

For the first time ever, the students of Ladakh have got an opportunity to intern with and pursue a postgraduate course in M.Tech at the premier Institute of the country, the Indian Institute of Technology, as part of the collaboration between the Higher Education Department, UT Ladakh and the consortium of IITs.

The programme aims to promote innovation and entrepreneurship focused on the local ecosystem and skill development of youth for enhancing employment opportunities. This includes the internship of two months for 30 students from Ladakh and the longer internship of six months for 15 students at IITs of Delhi, Bombay and Kanpur. The students are given a consolidated stipend of Rs 15,000 for a short internship and Rs 50,000 for a longer internship with the Institute fee and hostel charges being borne by the Ladakh Administration.

Sponsored M.Tech programme is also part of the collaboration with the IITs under which 12 Engineering Graduates from Ladakh can pursue the M.Tech programme

The enrolment in the colleges and universities has seen a sharp rise in the past two years, to an extent that a branch of the Government College Kargil had to be set up in Sankoo in 2022 to decongest the Kargil campus and cater to the growing demand in Sakoo sub-division.

in these 3 IITs every year. A monthly stipend of Rs 25,000 shall be given to the student pursuing the M.Tech and the entire fee and hostel charges shall be borne by the Ladakh Administration.

The programmes at the IITs will not only give the students a valuable experience but will also help them explore different opportunities, build their entrepreneurial skills, and create new paths for research and development. The programme was

launched in June 2022 and is conceived for a period of five years.

For increasing technical education opportunities for students in Ladakh, an engineering college is proposed to be set up in Kargil. In order to ensure that the proposed college offers quality technical education, the IITs have been roped in to design the curriculum and propose the infrastructure, organisational structure and human resource requirements.

Skilling Ladakh

Skilling and vocational education is an integral part of the National Education Policy 2020 and steps are being taken to strengthen and expand the skilling ecosystem in Ladakh.

Ladakh has two Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) besides the two Polytechnic Colleges, one in each district. ITIs have been shaping craftsmen to meet the existing as well as future skilled manpower needs. They impart training in 14 trades including Fashion Design & Technology, Information & Communication Technology System Management, Computer Operator & Programming Assistant, Carpentry, Electrician, and Plumbing among others.

To strengthen the infrastructure of the two ITIs, new workshop buildings are coming up with state-of-the-art equipment. Industrial tie-ups have been taken up to upgrade the workshops. Heating has been provided in the classroom and workshop in ITIs in view of sub-zero temperature in the region during winters. Infrastructure development projects including new workshops, classrooms, multipurpose halls, libraries, master plan and landscaping of the institutes at an estimated cost of Rs 15 crore has been sanctioned and work has commenced on these projects.

Acknowledging that to improve the quality of training at the ITIs, it's imperative to improve the quality of Instructors, therefore a slew of measures were taken up quickly as the first step in this direction. This included increasing the remuneration of guest faculty to 2.5 times the existing remuneration, faculty development programmes and the Training of Trainers programme. Two new trades in



Students of ITI Kargil demonstrating their skills

Horticulture and Floriculture have been introduced to explore new avenues in keeping with the requirements of the region and aspirations of the students. Collaboration with the industry has been taken up to build synergy between the supply and demand of skilled manpower.

To further strengthen and expand the skilling ecosystem in Ladakh in tune with the National Skill India Mission, Ladakh Skill Development Mission (LSDM) was set up in 2021 to formulate and steer the skill development programmes under the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana and other skill development programmes of various Ministries. First-ever Kaushal Mela was organised in March-April 2021 to expose youth to opportunities in skilling and subsequent employment opportunities. A Self-Employment Fair and Apprenticeship Mela were organised in the two districts in March 2022.

LSDM partnered with the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune, to conduct the first-ever Voice Artist training for the youth of Ladakh. Around 20 young aspiring voice artists were trained at All India Radio studios. FTII also conducted short online training courses in Screenplay Writing, Acting and Smartphone filmmaking which were free of cost for Schedule Tribe participants of Ladakh.

Foreseeing the potential demand for skilled manpower in the Beauty and Wellness sector as the Television and Film Industry is expected to grow in Ladakh, short-term training in Assistant Hair Dresser & Stylist was conducted by LSDM in collaboration with the Beauty & Wellness Sector Skill Council.

A database is being created for the skill demand, and skill availability bringing in the industry, Training Institutes, Training partners, and the youth together on a single platform.

Apprenticeship

Under the Apprenticeship Act, all establishments having a workforce of 30 or more are mandated to undertake Apprenticeship Programmes and engage apprentices. The effective implementation of the Act in Ladakh has been taken up from June this year with the issue of an order. The requisite awareness among the establishments, mainly the

For the first time ever, the students of Ladakh have got an opportunity to intern with and pursue a postgraduate course in M.Tech at the premier Institute of the country, the Indian Institute of Technology, as part of the collaboration between the Higher Education Department, UT Ladakh and the consortium of IITs.

local Industry is planned followed by the awareness campaign among youth, especially in colleges and universities.

Apprenticeship acts as a bridge course for fresh graduates and puts the responsibility on the industry to extend on-the-job training to fresh pass-outs of colleges and ITIs. Students can avail of apprenticeship to gain skills of their choice and at the same time earn while they learn. The year 2022-23 being the first year, a conservative target is set for Leh and Kargil. The target for subsequent years shall be set based on the progress and response

from the youth to this new intervention in the region.

Entrepreneurial Education

Entrepreneurial education needs to be built into the education which is also emphasised in the National Education Policy 2020. A comprehensive project is being planned to introduce entrepreneurship as a credit-based subject in Higher Educational Institutions and also in ITIs.

The Department of Industries has also taken up a number of initiatives like setting up the Ladakh Incubation Centre, training in leather goods, exploring the export market for fruits, handloom and handicrafts, MoU with NIFT (National Institute of Fashion Technology), Craft documentation and branding activities in association with National Institute of Design (NID), linking with the Ministry of Commerce for buyer

and seller facilitation, arrangement of Vanijya Saptah, Entrepreneurship Development Conclave, collaboration with Khadi and Village Industries Commission for capacity building of Pashmina weavers and creation of 'Brand Ladakh' have been some of the notable steps taken.

Looking Ahead

Ladakh can offer a unique development model which is carbon neutral and this can be achieved only through the active participation of all the stakeholders, the most important of which are the citizens. For this, it is essential that youth are made the catalyst in the growth story through education, skill development, innovation and entrepreneurship. □

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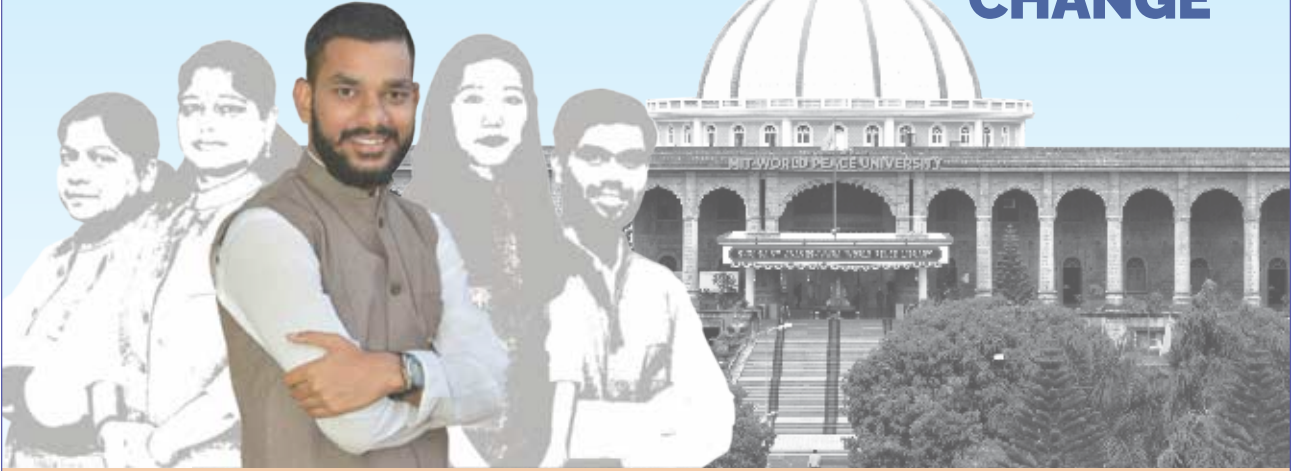
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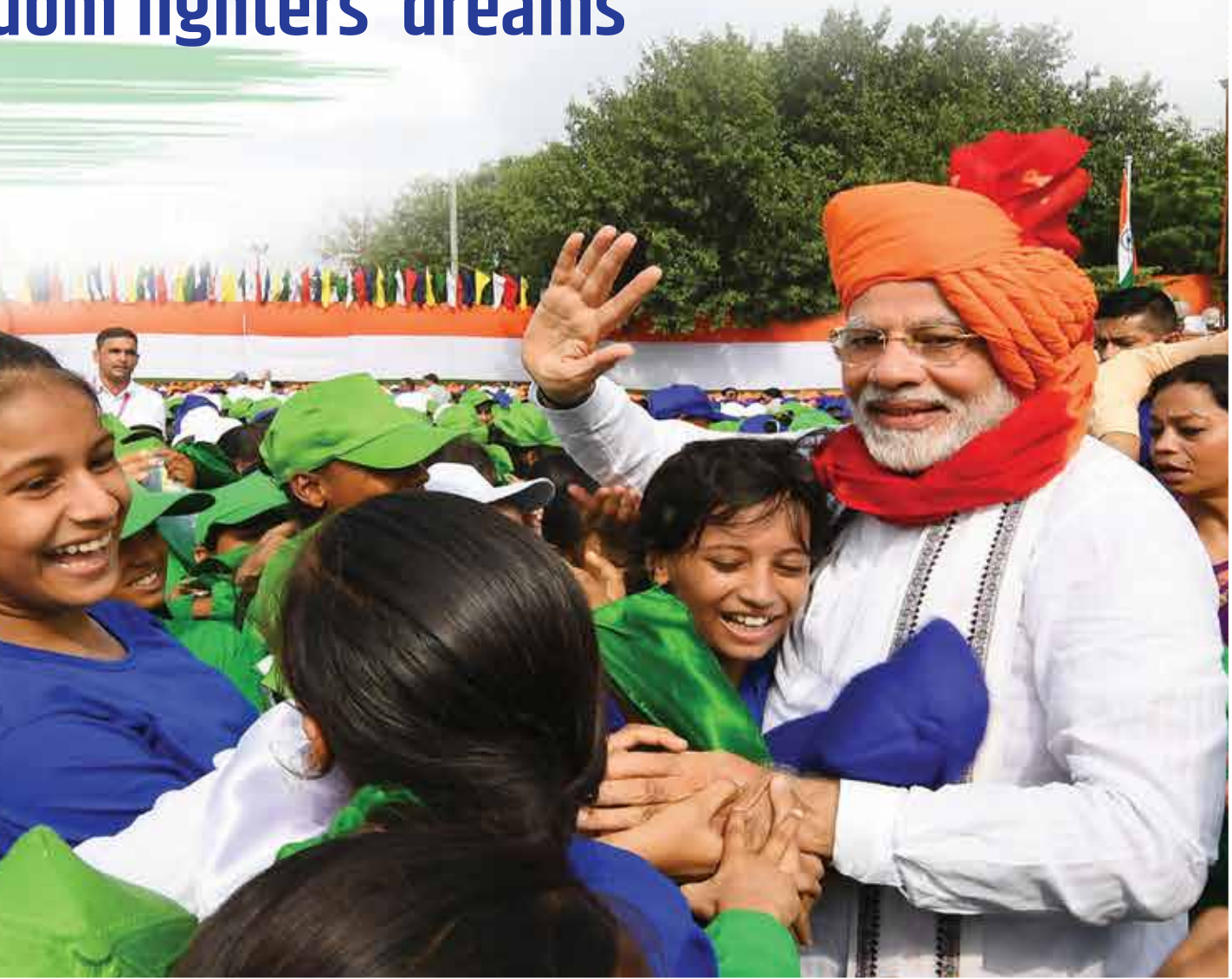
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Bridging the Digital Divide

*Ishfaq Majid
Dr Y Vijaya Lakshmi*

Digital technologies undoubtedly have the potential to expand the scope and reach of education. During Covid-19 pandemic, when educational institutions were shut down abruptly all over the world, it is digital technologies that emerged as an inescapable solution to ensure continuity of education by utilising various technological tools. In Jammu and Kashmir, the Government implemented various digital initiatives to ensure continuity of education. These digital initiatives not only helped in the continuity of education but also ensured effective and efficient management of the teaching-learning process.

The school education in Jammu and Kashmir is spread over 200 educational zones with 200 Zonal Resource Centres and 800 Cluster Educational Zones. The UT has 14171 Primary Schools, 6665 Upper Primary Schools, 1194 High Schools, 597 Higher Secondary Schools, two Sainik Schools, 22 District Institutes of Education, two regional Institutes of Education, and 97 KGBVs.¹ In 2020, due to the pandemic, the education system all over the world was forced to shut down abruptly. In the same manner, the schools in J&K were also closed and the face-to-face mode of teaching was shifted to online mode. The closure of educational institutions urged the Government to take up various digital initiatives in school education for continuity of education.

For ensuring that children continue their education during the pandemic, a project named “Directorate of School Education Jammu Home Classes” was started by ‘the Directorate of School Education Department Jammu’. A Google form was developed and shared with the faculties to invite them to contribute to the home classes. Various digital applications like Google Meet, Zoom, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Telegram were used to implement the digital initiatives. To expedite the process of teaching and learning, the department started a dedicated YouTube channel “DSE Jammu Home Classes” (<https://youtube.com/channel/UCarOjNDaNAAdKvGccDHZOXqA>), and

various WhatsApp groups. The department had created 25606 WhatsApp groups for E-learning and 10270 government schools, 436331 students, and 41113 teachers were linked. The department had taken 74.19 lakh, online classes, till July, 2020 from classes 1st–12th where 7000 videos were created. The subject experts, teachers, and students were part of the WhatsApp groups. The video lectures were recorded and telecast through local cable networks and radio stations. The “DSEJ’s Home Assignment” actively engaged the students during the pandemic. The students were given assignments weekly and around 10 lakh children were covered.

In addition to this, the Government also took various initiatives in J&K during Covid-19. These initiatives are:



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SARAL Android App: SARAL (Students Accessible Resource and Learning Application) is an App developed by the IT wing of the Directorate of School Education Jammu. The Android App has been developed on the concept of “All-in-One.” It connects students to e-content, which is available on various educational portals like DIKSHA, e-Pathshala, Swayam, e-VidyaDaan, and Swayam Prabha. It also provides students access to locally developed e-content, live classes, activities, and

online assessments. The e-content was developed by various well-trained subject experts. It also provides access to textbooks prepared by the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE). The App is available on the Google Play store under the name “SARAL DSEJ Online Education.” It contains a section on Ministry of Education (MoE) initiatives where links to all major initiatives launched by MOE, the Government of India are available and can carry out assessments as well.

School Tracking & Monitoring System “Aadharshila”: Aadharshila is a web-based system designed by the Directorate of School Education, Jammu. The system is designed to digitise all the government schools in the Jammu division. The web-based system monitors and keeps track of infrastructure, teachers, and their expertise in teaching. The web portal contains information about students of all the government schools. This information helps to derive various inferences like “teacher-student ratio, category-wise student details, scholarship details, students without Aadhaar details, etc.,” which helps in proper planning and taking broader policy decisions. The web-based system keeps school-wise records of all interventions funded under state and district sectors. The web address of the portal is www.schedujammu.nic.in/aadharshila.

Samadhan: Samadhan is an online grievance redressal system that aims at increasing transparency and improving the delivery mechanism, especially in school education. The system is designed by DSE and developed by National Informatics Centre (NIC). The platform can be used by parents, students, and teachers to submit their grievances to the system. The submitted complaints will be assigned to the concerned authority for redressal. As per the latest records, the portal has received 1034 grievances out of which 669 were resolved and 319 are in progress.

J&K Education Hub: J&K Education Hub is a web-based system that is used to host the academic digital content developed by teachers of government schools. The excellent content is chosen to be sent to

Aadharshila is a web-based system designed by the Directorate of School Education Jammu. The system is designed to digitise all the government schools in the Jammu division.

The web-based system monitors and keeps track of infrastructure, teachers, and their expertise in teaching.

National level portals like DIKSHA. This web-based system is a single platform for all digital initiatives of the School Education Department, Jammu Division. The portal was started to make online/distance education easy and simple. Students and teachers can access all digital resources from this single portal. The Directorate organises all online webinars, meetings, and workshops through this hub. The portal has a special section that highlights the achievements of teachers and students.

e-Office at Directorate of School Education, Jammu

The e-office at the directorate was started to streamline the office working system with regard to transparency. The e-office is a digital system developed by NIC to make the office paperless. The system was adopted to increase accountability and efficiency in view of the digitisation of files. The movement of files at the directorate is being performed on a digital platform which helps in keeping the track of the status of a file. The status can be checked with a single click. The initiative aimed to make official work transparent and to provide the latest status of any file in a more systematic manner. The Directorate has the vision to implement this initiative in all subordinate offices.

System for Management of Private Schools

It is a web-based system that is being used in the management of private schools. It caters to all private schools irrespective of Boards like JKBOSE, CBSE, or ICSE. The system has a provision to grant online registration and upgradation permission to private schools. The initiative is under development and is expected to complete soon.^{1,2}

Under the digital initiatives, the DSE Jammu celebrated “Digital J&K Week” from 25-31 July 2022, to highlight various IT initiatives undertaken by the government in making J&K digital.³

The Government of Jammu and Kashmir is taking path-breaking digital initiatives to boost the education system and to bring greater transparency to it. These transformational initiatives in the education sector have been undertaken with the aid of information and communication technology to ease the life of students and to make teaching and learning effective. □

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In keeping with fourteen biennial conferences over the past 28 years, the **Fifteenth Biennial Conference on Entrepreneurship** continues to be an established forum for researchers, educators and practitioners to share their ideas and research results with other researchers and thinkers in the field, exchange feedback and hone their own research pursuits. Whereas researchers are invited to contribute papers and reports that bear upon and enfold the field of entrepreneurship theory and practice, some indicative themes are:

- Entrepreneurship Theory
- Entrepreneurship Policy
- Entrepreneurship Education & Capacity Building
- Functional Areas of Entrepreneurship
- Manifestations of Entrepreneurship
- Entrepreneurship Context
- MSME Entrepreneurship

In addition to this, there will be special invited address (by eminent academicians) and symposiums (on various themes). There will be special opportunity for doctoral students (in the Doctoral colloquium) to discuss about their research with senior academicians as well.

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- Submission of the full paper by **November 25, 2022**. [Full paper should not be more than 5000 words, typed double space, APA style of referencing, refer guidelines available on conference website]
- Decision on Acceptance of Extended Abstract will be made by **October 14, 2022**.
- Decisions on Acceptance of Full Papers will be made by **December 16, 2022**.
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Fostering MSMEs and Artisans

Sameera Saurabh

Small scale industries are very important for economic growth and promotion of equitable development. They make up a large part of the region's economy. These units manufacture food products, beverages, machinery, plastic goods, chemicals, drugs, paper products, silk, brick and tiles, cement and automobile equipments. The sector is a nursery of entrepreneurship, often driven by individual creativity and innovation. Besides the growth potential of the sector and its critical role in employment generation.

With a multitude of people, different regions and their traditions, the UT is a home to numerous commendable arts and crafts. Kashmir is known for its handicrafts throughout the world. Its carpets, silks, shawls, basketry, pottery, copper and silverware, papier-mâché, and walnut wood are most sought after. The cottage handicrafts industry provides direct and gainful employment to around 340,000 artisans. A new plan for global cooperation has been launched with Germany, one of the biggest patrons of Kashmiri handicraft, as the focus. These global initiatives are likely to be expanded to other countries in Europe.

Kashmir's traditional handloom weaving has since centuries, developed a name for itself across the world. Apart from designs found specifically in the area, the raw materials are also produced within the region be it pashmina, silk or wool. Traditional handloom weaving has been a major source of employment for a significant part of the workforce.

After the abrogation of Article 370 in Kashmir, the government, so far, has signed 456 MoUs amounting to Rs 23,156 crores with potential investors.

Current Status of MSMEs

The MSMEs in J&K are involved in diverse range of manufacturing and service activities. Currently, 1,26,387



Knitting, embroidery, basic cutting and tailoring session at Jammu

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MSMEs have registered themselves on Udyam registration portal. Most of MSMEs in J&K work in the following domains:

- Manufacturing: Food processing, Steel fabrication, Packaging water, Cardboard manufacturing, Furniture-based industry, Handicrafts & Handlooms based Units, Cricket Bat manufacturing.
- Services: CA Stores, Hotelier Industry, Tour and travel based industry, Tourism related service.

The major industrial estates of the valley have been developed with the use of Micro & Small Enterprises-Cluster Development Programme (MSE-CDP) Scheme of Ministry of MSME, with total project cost of approximately 46 crores. Currently, two industrial estates are being developed with a project cost of around Rs 22 crores in Udhampur District and the largest industrial estate of J&K at Pulwama.

SFURTI (Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries) clusters are also working in J&K, recently Hon'ble LG of the UT inaugurated two clusters in Budgam and Anantnag District. MSME Ministry also supports innovation and has established one business incubation centre at NIT Srinagar through MSME Innovative Scheme. Currently, two innovative ideas have been fostered and financially supported with 21 lakhs for prototype formation.

J&K Khadi and Village Industries Board (KVIB) is establishing and nurturing an entrepreneurial ecosystem under micro and village industries sector across the UT. KVIB artisans produce customer-savvy products and foster a strong rural community spirit by establishing a sustainable and dynamic village and traditional industries sector. KVIB helps in improving design and productivity



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of khadi and village industries sector.

The Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), a central sector scheme, is implemented in the region on war footing by Khadi and Village Industries Commission where the government subsidy is routed through the identified banks for eventual distribution to the beneficiaries/entrepreneurs in their bank accounts.

Implementation of MSME Schemes

MSE–Cluster Development Programme

The objective of the Scheme is to improve the technology skills, quality and market access, etc., through infrastructural facilities in the new/existing clusters of MSEs besides sustainable technology for the clusters.

ESDP–Entrepreneurship Skill Development Programme

To motivate young persons representing different sections of the society including SC/ST/women, physically handicapped, ex-servicemen and Below Poverty Line (BPL) persons to consider self-employment or entrepreneurship as one of the career options. (Table 1)

Table 1

Implementation	Remarks
The ESDP Programme is being implemented across districts of J&K and Ladakh.	Remote border villages are now being covered under this programme during this Financial Year.

BPMS—Procurement and Marketing Support Scheme

The objective of the Scheme is to enhance the marketability of products and services.

1. To promote new market access initiatives, create awareness and educate the MSMEs.
2. To create more awareness about trade fairs, digital advertising, e-marketing, GST, and GeM portal.

MSME Sustainable (ZED) Certification Scheme

The Scheme envisages promotion of Zero Defect and Zero Effect (ZED) manufacturing amongst MSME and ZED assessment for their certification to encourage and enable MSMEs for manufacturing of quality products by using latest technology and tools with least effect on the environment.

An initiative to encourage and enable MSMEs adopt Zero Defect Zero Effect solutions for attaining maximum Quality while ensuring Minimum Impact on Environment. (Table 2)

Table 2

Implementation	Remarks
The MSMEs from J&K and Laddakh as Registered under revised ZED Scheme.	141 Number of units are already registered in the portal under the Scheme

Udyam Registration

The government has organised a system to facilitate the registration of MSMEs. A permanent registration number will be given after registration. (Table 3)

Table 3

Implementation	Remarks
In order to create awareness about Udyam registration weekly online training were conducted by MSME-DO J&K.	Total Udyam Registrations: 126387 Nos. 4 special drive awareness programmes for Udyam registrations have been organised in this financial year.

Technology Centre at Samba (J&K)

A technology centre is being set up at Industrial Estate, Samba (J&K). Land is already in the possession of this Ministry and further processing is underway.

National SC-ST Hub in Leh (Ladakh)

National Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Hub (NSSH) Scheme, an initiative of the Ministry of MSME, Government of India, was launched in 2016 by the Prime Minister. The Scheme aims at capacity enhancement of SC/ST entrepreneurs and promoting “entrepreneurship culture” amongst the SC/ST population. The Scheme is empowering the SC/ST population to participate in public procurement process and fulfill the mandated target of 4% procurement from SC/ST enterprises under Public Procurement Policy by the Ministries, Departments and CPSEs. This Scheme is being implemented by NSIC.

Since inception of the Scheme, several interventions/sub-schemes have been introduced under NSSH in consultation with various stakeholders for capacity building and market linkage of the SC-ST entrepreneurs.

As a region with unique features and a strategic location, speedy development needs an integrated approach. The development of potential sectors such as horticulture, handloom and handicrafts, biotechnology, tourism and information technology will have strong inter-linkages with the rest of the sectors. □

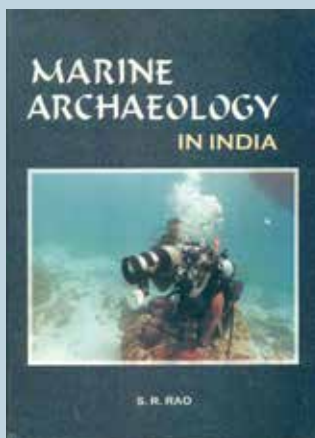
MARINE ARCHAEOLOGY IN INDIA

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The Indian subcontinent with its 6500 km long coastline, 200 ports, and a rich hinterland connected by major rivers has played a vital role in the Indian Ocean trade by connecting the East and the West throughout its 5000-year-long history of shipping and maritime trade. It was a pioneer in ship and dockyard building even during the days of the Indus Valley (Harappa) civilisation proved by the discovery of a massive brick-built tidal dock with a warehouse at the Harappan port of Lothal in the Gulf of Cambay in 2300 B.C. By 1600 B.C., it could provide docking facilities in the seaport of Dwarka by modifying a ridge suitably to anchor large ships in the harbour. Simultaneously, with this advancement in nautical engineering, the mariners of Dwarka could improve on the earlier stone anchors.

During the long history of shipping, various nations of the world have lost thousands of ships and the sea has



swallowed scores of ports as a result of cyclones, coastal erosion, and sea level rise. Each ship lost and port submerged is an epitome of the society that built it, and is a treasure house of knowledge and therefore deserves to be discovered and preserve this heritage of man through systematic excavation.

In 1981, India established the Marine Archaeology Centre for exploring shipwrecks and submerged ports such as Dwarka, Poompuhar, and Somnath. The present publication, Marine Archaeology in India, gives a detailed account of the exploration of India’s Underwater Cultural Heritage during the last decade and a half, highlighting the problems faced by the pioneers in the field, and the excavation techniques followed and the results achieved. □

YOJANA ISSUE IN NOVEMBER 2022: INDIAN MARITIME

Blooming Business of Lavender

Dr. Sumeet Gairola

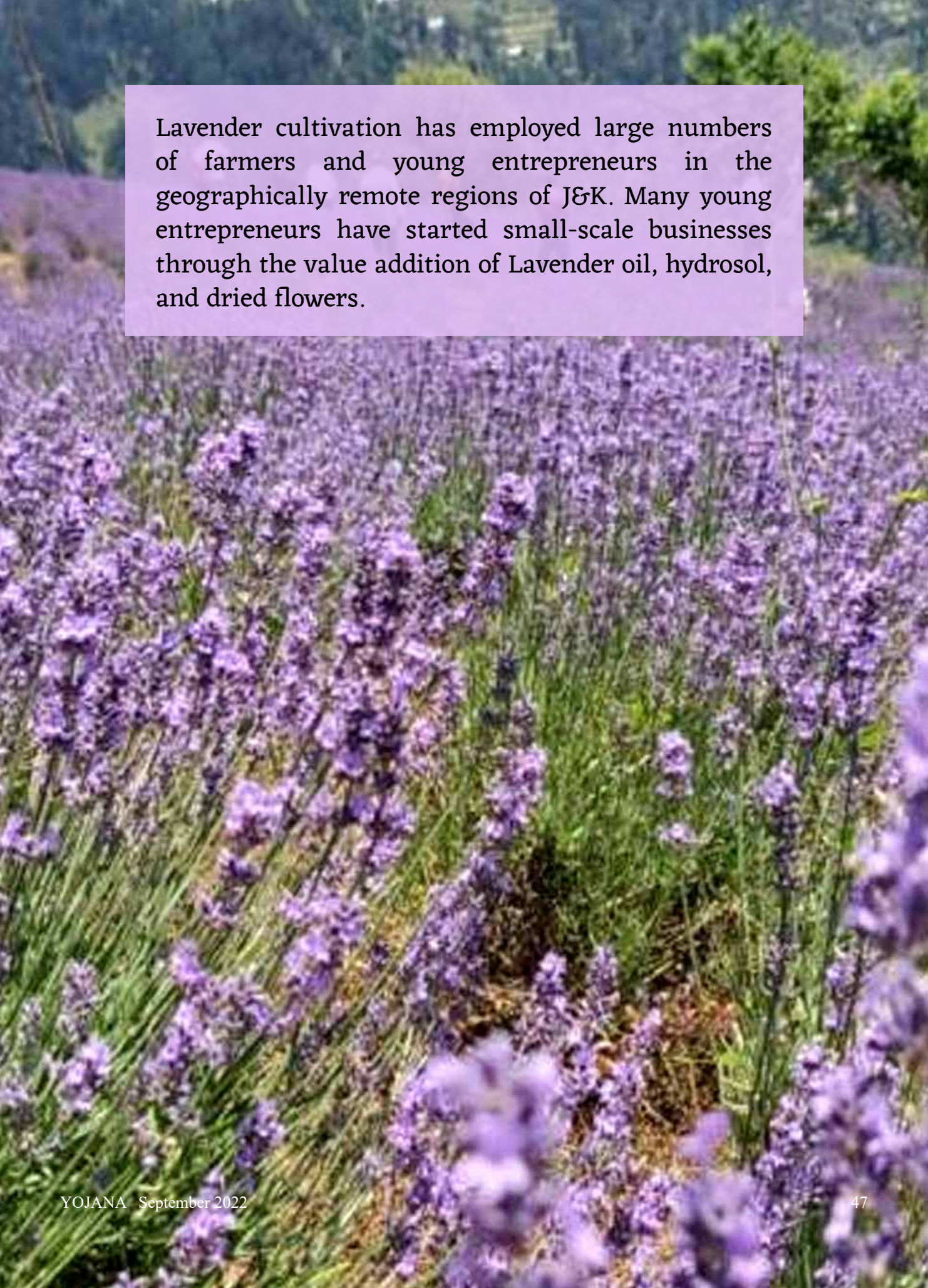
Lavandula angustifolia Mill. or “True Lavender,” is a small, non-hardy perennial evergreen subshrub commercially cultivated in many parts of the world, mainly for its essential oil, obtained by the hydro-distillation of its attractive flowering spikes. Lavender is commercially one of the best-known essential oil-bearing plants grown for essential oil and dry flowers.

Over many decades of scientific interventions, the CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine, Jammu (CSIR-IIIM) has developed its elite variety (RRL-12) and agrotechnology. The variety of lavender is highly suitable for cultivation in the rainfed regions of the temperate regions of India, including Kashmir valley and temperate regions of the Jammu division.

Under CSIR Aroma Mission, CSIR-IIIM Jammu introduced lavender to the farmers of different districts of J&K like Doda, Ramban, Kishtwar, Kathua, Udhampur, Rajouri, Pulwama, Anantnag, Kupwara, and Bandipora. Under CSIR Aroma Mission, CSIR-IIIM, Jammu provided free Quality Planting Material (QPM) and an end-to-end technology package for cultivation, processing, value addition, and marketing of the lavender crop to the farmers. CSIR-IIIM installed 50 distillation units (45 fixed and five mobile) at different locations across J&K under CSIR Aroma Mission to support farmers in processing their produce.

Lavender cultivation has employed large numbers of farmers and young entrepreneurs in the geographically remote regions of J&K. A new industry around lavender cultivation has developed in the region. More than 1000 farming families in the J&K are currently cultivating lavender on more than 300 acres in different parts of J&K. Each lavender farmer employs at least five other people to cultivate it. This has given employment to more than 5000 farming families in the region. Women are primarily employed in the lavender fields for harvesting and processing of flowers. This has increased the income of women in the region. Nursery of >20 lakh lavender plants worth more than one crore developed by women in different villages of

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Lavender cultivation has employed large numbers of farmers and young entrepreneurs in the geographically remote regions of J&K. Many young entrepreneurs have started small-scale businesses through the value addition of Lavender oil, hydrosol, and dried flowers.

Table 1: Entrepreneurship Development through Purple Revolution in the Jammu Region.

Type of Entrepreneurs	Number
Lavender Quality Planting Material Nursery Generation	35
Product development/ value addition	5
Essential oil distillation/ Distillation unit operation	10
Total	50

Doda District, J&K in 2022. Many young entrepreneurs have started small-scale businesses through the value addition of lavender oil, hydrosol, and flowers. CSIR-IIIM conducted many skills development programmes under CSIR Aroma Mission and trained more than 2500 farmers and young entrepreneurs from J&K on the cultivation, processing, value addition, and marketing (Table 1).

Lavender oil produced in J&K has a market price of around Rs 10,000/- per kg in the Indian market. Dry lavender flowers fetch a price between Rs 1000 to Rs 1500. Many small and marginal maize farmers in the temperate regions of the Jammu Division have successfully adopted lavender, who used to get an annual income of around Rs 2,500/- per Kanal (one hectare= 20 Kanal). Lavender oil production in the area varies between 40-60 litres per hectare per year, with an average of around 50 litres per hectare per year. The net annual income of lavender farmers has increased many folds from around Rs 40,000/- to Rs 60,000/- per hectare to between Rs 3,50,000/- to Rs 6,00,000/- per hectare. Farmers of the Doda district produced 300, 500, 800, and 1200 litres of Lavender oil in 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022, respectively (Figure 2). They earned more than Rs 5 crore between 2018-2022 by selling dry flowers, QPM of lavender, and lavender oil. The current production of lavender oil in the region is at the inception stage. The production of lavender



Women are primarily employed in the lavender fields for harvesting and processing of flowers

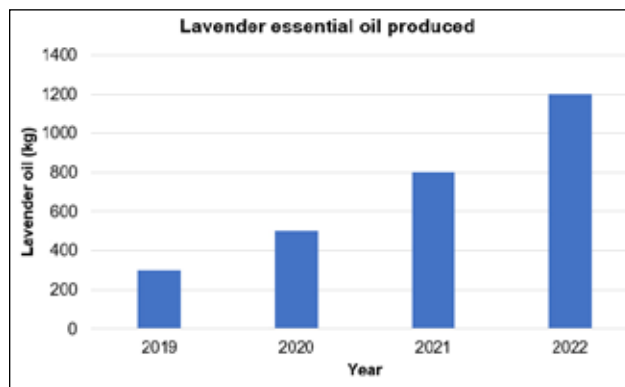


Figure 1: Quantities of Lavender oil produced in District Doda

oil is expected to increase manifold in the coming years. The production of lavender oil in J&K will help import substitution and save foreign reserves. Besides, there is an excellent scope for exporting lavender oil as it has good global demand.

The successful end-to-end technology transfer on the cultivation of lavender to the farmers of J&K by CSIR-IIIM, Jammu under Aroma Mission has been widely covered nationally and internationally by print and electronic media. CSIR-IIIM, Jammu, received the CSIR award for S&T innovations for rural development (CAIRD-2020) for Purple Revolution in Jammu & Kashmir: Rural Development through Lavender Cultivation in J&K.

A Lavender Festival 2022 was organised at Baderwah, Doda District, J&K, for the first time on 25 and 26 May 2022, in which more than 250 participants from industry, academia, and farmers participated. Twenty-five Progressive Lavender farmers and Startups were also felicitated on this occasion. CSIR Aroma Mission aims to make India a hub of opportunities in the domain of aroma products by developing and disseminating aroma-related S&T to reach end users/clients of CSIR; farmers, industry and society, leading to the creation of business opportunities, rural development and life-quality improvement, attain self-sufficiency in the production of a majority of essential oils used by the domestic aroma industry and reduce foreign exchange drain due to imports and help in transforming India's image from the producer of raw material to an exporter of finished, value-added products of consistent quality and efficacy.

The Aroma Mission is attracting Startups and agriculturists from across the country, and during Phase-I, CSIR helped cultivate 6000 hectares of land and covered 46 Aspirational Districts across the country. More than 44,000 persons have been trained and several crores of farmers' revenue generated. In Phase-II of the Mission, it is proposed to engage over 45,000 skilled human resources with the aim of benefitting more than 75,000 farming families across the country. □



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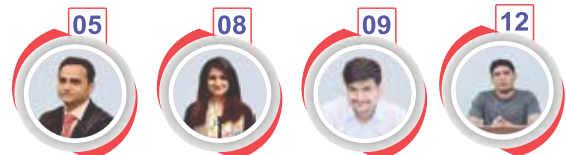
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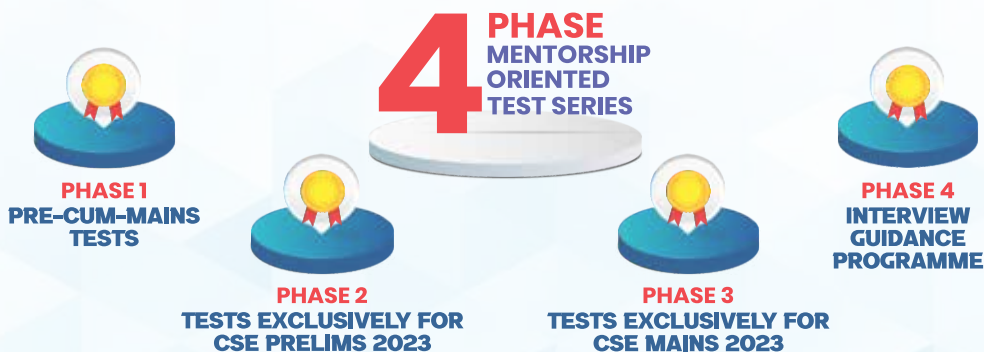
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Universal Health Coverage in J&K

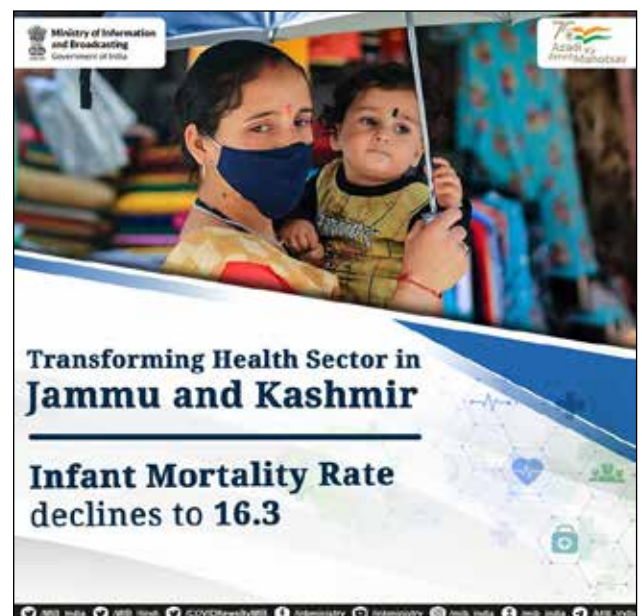
Yasin M Choudhary

The Ayushman Bharat-Health and Wellness Centre programme (AB-HWC) of NHM, which includes the establishment of Health and Wellness Centres (HWC) is the biggest intervention in strengthening primary-level healthcare in recent years, by moving from selective primary health care to Comprehensive Primary Health Care (CPHC) to achieve universal health coverage. The UT of J&K is among the forerunners in achieving its target of converting all the Sub-Centres (SCs) and Primary Health Centres (PHC) to HWCs. This is crucial in community engagement and improving the demand for health care services in the region.

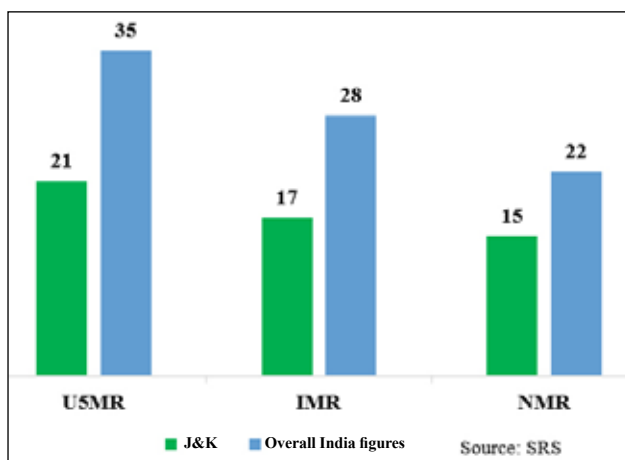
In the post-pandemic period, the age-old adage “prevention is better than cure,” is more applicable today than ever before. The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG-3) reiterates the importance of promotion and prevention by introducing the concept of ‘Good Health and Well-Being’ of individuals as a major plank of Community Health Processes. Universal Health Coverage (UHC), SDG target 3.8, a strategic priority of the World Health Organization (WHO), builds on the same to provide blanket assurance of an end-to-end range of essential health services, from health promotion to prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and palliative care, to people across all regions, age groups, social and income groups, by enabling access to health services they need.¹ Let us appreciate the keyword here - ‘Access’.

In spite of ‘Health’ being listed as a State Subject in the 7th Schedule of the Indian Constitution, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) still invests a lot of resources in the State systems. It focuses on establishing a strong community-based healthcare system strengthening in the form of the erstwhile RCH-1 in 1997, and subsequently through the massive National Health Mission (NHM), which has led to the creation of a robust grass-root level cadre of health workers including the ASHAs (Accredited Social Health Activists), who were recently acclaimed internationally by the WHO for their outstanding contribution towards protecting and promoting health. As with other States in the country such as UT of J&K, NHM has supported approximately 13,500 ASHA

workers network, to connect the community with the health system for primary health care services, intending to give doorstep uninterrupted delivery of service to the community and bridging the ‘access’ gap. Adding to them is the equally expansive network of ANMs (Auxiliary Nurse Midwives) and other field health staff to support and have an all-encompassing coverage system. The response of the populace across the UT of J&K, towards community-based interventions, has been overall positive, which is evident by a look at the gargantuan mass of legacy data present in the Health Management Information System (HMIS) and



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RCH Portal. These portals have ensured sustained monitoring and evaluation of fieldwork, along with giving us an idea of the sheer volume of services that have been delivered till now and continues to be provided, which has, in turn, resulted in improved health outcomes for the UT of J&K and reduced Infant Mortality Rate to 17 and Neonatal Mortality Rate to 15, which are far below the national average.²

Indicator (NFHS5)	J&K (%)	Overall India (%)
Mothers who had at least 4 antenatal care visits	80.9	58.1
Institutional births-	92.4	88.6
Births attended by skilled health personnel	95.1	89.4
Children aged 12-23 months fully immunised	86.2	76.4

Source: MoHFW

There is ample evidence across countries showing-partnerships between community and health are needed to achieve and sustain positive health outcomes, which is apparent in the UT of J&K with the huge progress made in RCH.³

Health facilities	Required as per IPHS norms	In position RHS 2020
District Hospital		21
Community Health Centre	83	77
Primary Health Centre-Rural	333	923
Primary Health Centre-Urban	80	49
Sub Health Centre	2042	2470
Medical Colleges and Hospitals		9

Source: MoHFW

The better part of the modern Indian healthcare policy structure has addressed healthcare access as a supply-side concern, particularly infrastructural. Hence, in some parts of the country such as J&K UT, there is a fair amount of public health infrastructure penetration, which is even over and above the IPHS norms.⁴

AB-HWC of NHM, which includes the establishment of Health and Wellness Centres (HWC) has been a flagship programme of Government of India and is hands down the biggest intervention in strengthening primary level healthcare in recent years, by moving from selective primary health care to CPHC to achieve Universal Health Coverage.⁴ UT of J&K is among the forerunners in achieving its target of converting all the Sub-Centres (SCs) and Primary Health Centres (PHC) to HWCs.⁵

HWC Operational	Target Dec 2022	Current status (HWC portal)
HWC- SHC	1770	1415
HWC-PHC	923	543
HWC-UPHC	49	44
Total	2742	2002

Source: MoHFW

At SHC-HWC, a new cadre of health workers, a Community Health Officer (CHO) or a Mid-Level Health Provider (MLHP), is being introduced which as the name suggests, was a novel creation for instituting a functionary between a paramedic and a full-scale medical officer, who would be able to do non-prescriptive population-based screenings for limited diseases, thereby improving community outreach, clinical management and Continuum of Care (CoC). AB-HWC has introduced the Population Enrollment and Community Based Assessment Checklist (CBAC) form which is possibly the most primal but concrete individualised health record till now. The UT has taken a step ahead and is working on digitising the Population Enrollment, CBAC form, screening, diagnosis and treatment provided at different levels of care into the NCD App and hence generating a mountain of data.

However, before we overload our societies with excessive 'Supply' side resources it is crucial that we analyse the 'Demand' angle. Sociological studies lay down the concept of the 'Aspirational Level' of individuals and communities in determining the trajectory of societal development evolution. An educated and well-informed community will be better aware of the living scenario that they need and would hence have a higher 'aspiration' to better health standards resulting in them engaging more successfully with the 'supply' side resources. On the other hand, a less aware community would have a lower 'aspirational' level and hence won't be able to access and consume the health care resources provided to them even if

it is at their doorstep. Hence, ensuring the existence of ‘Demand’ among communities is critical to guaranteeing uptake and proper consumption of resources, schemes and facilities. The path-breaking example of Jan Swasthya Sahyog (JSS), Ganyari, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh— the fountainhead of community-based primary care interventions in India, shows us that this ‘Demand’ is largely based on literary and awareness levels in the community. A simple example— if a community is, for some reason, opposed to vaccination, then even if we flood the area with abundant stock of vaccines and vaccinators, it would still not result in inoculations. However, the step towards establishing HWCs in the UT of J&K is crucial in the community engagement and improving the demand for health care services, and are piggy-backing the ASHAs, VHNSCs, VHSND, support groups, and newly established JAS to do so.

Moving up the ladder, we have overcrowded Secondary and Tertiary Points of Care (PoC), which are struggling with a heavy footfall of patients, around 40% of which are routine OPD cases which otherwise can be very well dealt with at the Primary level. The reasons behind the discrepancy in many regions are poor referral linkages, poorly functioning government primary care facilities and also patients bypassing the lower level of care for getting more perfect treatment at the big city hospital even if they have to stand in long OPD counter queues for hours at end.⁶ There is an obvious economic repercussion here. Imagine a poor rural labourer who has to give up a day’s wage work to visit the big city hospital, who otherwise can get simple ailments diagnosed closer to home. The other fallout is that most of the patients then end up limiting their treatment courses to the few city visits they make without bothering about any follow-up in

The case of early detection closer to home is being made possible in the UT of J&K, by ensuring population-based screenings being done at HWCs for majorly Non-Communicable Diabetes and Common Cancers and evolving towards screening for an expanded range of diseases including Ophthalmic care, ENT care, Elderly care, and Palliative care.

between. Even with a follow-up visit, they might not see the same doctor in the tertiary care government hospital and if they do see the same doctor, it is after a year, with the doctor not likely remembering the medical history from the last visit, and the patient starting his treatment from scratch with the probability of receiving same OPD treatment as earlier. In absence of digitised health records, most patients lug around incoherent bulky paper records, containing everything from old prescriptions to test results, which many times are hard to use. Also, with less consultation time per patient, the

patient gets merely offered a symptomatic treatment course, compromising the quality of care. In view of the lack of a primary care gatekeeping and referral model, patients with chronic illness are unaware of the secondary or tertiary care hospital to approach. Also, with a lack of robust referral and individual guidance mechanisms, the illiterate rural patient is not able to navigate to the crowded big city hospital and feels utterly lost, uncomfortable and unwanted. This is in line with Oscar Lewis’s famous ‘Culture of Poverty’ theory which states that the poor and the marginalised are generally suspicious of institutions and that factor is seemingly a reason why the rural poor don’t manage to partake in the benefits of services given by public institutions.

The end result is that many patients are undiagnosed or drop out of a successful continued follow-up process or don’t finish their treatment cycle properly and instead choose or are forced to live with the disease. This throws up a particularly dire situation for patients with undetected long-term illnesses like kidney diseases, cancers requiring chemotherapy, lifelong immunological disorders, blood disorders etc., if they drop out of the treatment.

Hence, arises the case for decongesting tertiary and secondary care and strengthening primary healthcare closer to the community with a strong referral and follow-up system. This is further augmented by the fact that by providing closer-to-home treatment, we can detect and treat diseases more quickly than allowing them to fester and hence throught to tertiary care in panic later on. Imagine a scenario, where all patients with a high risk of developing diabetics in a community are detected early on and put on the wellness track through a strengthened primary care system, then likely there would be much fewer patients with full-blown diabetic complications, who crowd the tertiary care.

The next logical question that arises is that with a strengthened primary level infrastructure, where is the missing gap here? What are we doing after screening our population? CoC model envisions two things– extending access to next-level services at the village level or assisted referral and linking back to his home/community across times of care. The former includes ensuring access to critical care, free diagnostics and drugs in a guaranteed manner, while the latter ensures continuity of care to improve the quality of care.⁷ The case of early detection closer to home is being made possible in the UT of J&K, by ensuring population-based screenings being done at HWCs for majorly Non-Communicable Diabetes and Common Cancers and evolving towards screening for an expanded range of diseases including Ophthalmic care, ENT care, Elderly care, and Palliative care. Imagine a poor elderly person in a remote rural area, ignorantly taking an arduous trip to the big city hospital for a musculoskeletal

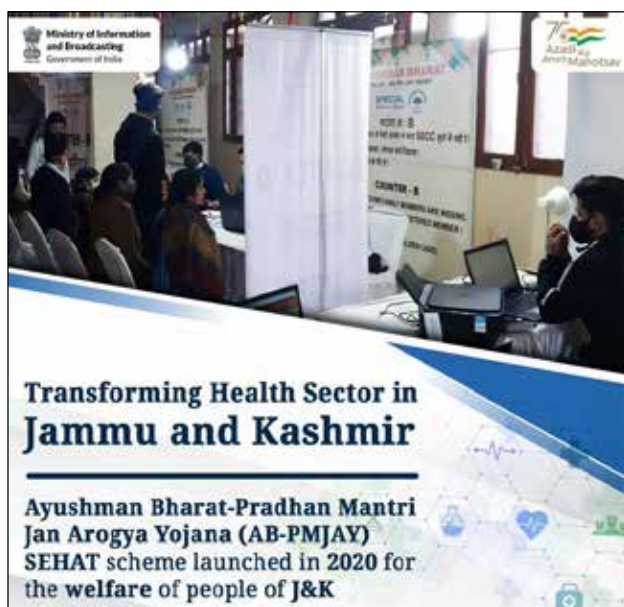
J&K, with the aim to cover its entire population with healthcare services without any financial hardship, is among few States/UTs in India to have a universalised Scheme AB-PMJAY SEHAT which is a top-up to ensure complete end-to-end coverage of their populations.

issue that can be easily screened in advance at his village Health and Wellness Centre before it worsens or which can be easily dealt with by a CHO/MLHP. Our State-level health systems do push citizens detected out of population-based screenings into IPD care but because there is a lack of integration between the levels of care in a disparate movement of patients from primary level to higher levels. To be fair, in a way, the AB-HWC is strengthening primary health care, evolving to build robust referral and

follow-up systems to ensure CoC approach.

The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM), may single-handedly be the most ambitious health sector intervention of the decade. If data is the new oil, then health data is the new gold, as no other form of data is more valuable or special than a person's individual health record. ABDM's sophisticated service architecture aims to record every health consultation, be it OPD or IPD or even a lab test result, as a transaction between recognised entities (an ABHA ID– Ayushman Bharat Health Account, holding patient, an HPR– Healthcare Professionals Registry, registered doctor in an HFR registered hospital) and in that process build up individualised Electronic Medical Records (EMR) that can be accessed by the patient through the PHR (Patient Health Record) App. The Aadhaar-enabled patient consent-based system is built to ensure that a person's past health records are not shared or divulged without his consent. Under the ABDM, the UT is on an uphill task of digitising and linking with ABHA ID and HPR, the record of an individual as soon as he/she enters the SHC/PHC/CHC/DH, which includes screening, diagnosis, investigations, treatment, drug dispensing, etc., through the Information Management Systems. Also, releasing the importance of data speaking at different platforms and available at each level of care, integration of the systems has been a vital piece that the UT is constantly working on.

Let us go back to the examples of the bewildered patient who is lugging around bulky paper health records, the ABDM Digilocker-based EMR aims to resolve that. However, in all fairness, with the digital divide still running strong, it remains to be seen whether the illiterate labourer would be able to understand and engage with the digital record. The other aspect is the big question of tiding over the huge expenses incurred in IPD treatment – a challenge which our country finally managed to resolve significantly in recent years. The Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, (AB-PMJAY) which seeks to provide free IPD expenses coverage for BPL patients throughout the country with an annual wallet cover of Rs 5 lakh, is a landmark disruption in things. J&K, with the aim to cover





its entire population with health care services without any financial hardship, is among few States/UTs in India to have a universalised Scheme AB-PMJAY SEHAT (Social, Endeavour for Health and Telemedicine), which is a top-up to ensure complete end-to-end coverage of their populations.

In conclusion, in the UT of J&K, AB-HWC, AB-PMJAY and ABDM put together are rapidly changing the face of

primary, secondary and tertiary care access, economically and digitally. Decongesting bigger hospitals from routine OPD burden by strengthening primary healthcare while ensuring CoC-driven access to free IPD for deserving citizens should be the underlying principle of our health systems. As India looks forward to an era of improved and modernised healthcare system, it is imperative that we face the challenges. □

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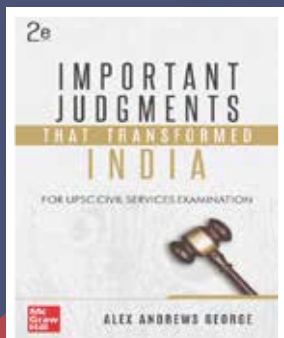
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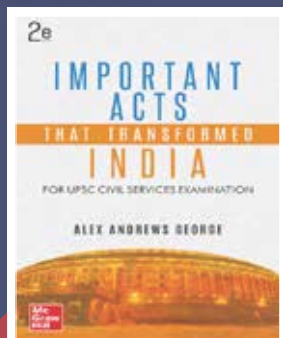
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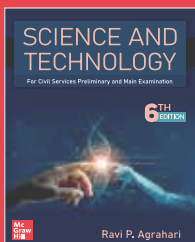
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Where Sky is not the Limit

Dr Vinay Kumar

Space science, encompasses a wide range of fields, including meteorology, geology, lunar, solar, planetary science, astronomy, and astrophysics. Through advanced research, J&K and Ladakh region has shown tremendous scope in the field of space science and technology.

To understand space science and its applications, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has set up many institutes in various parts of the country. J&K is one of the regions which has an advanced space research centre namely Satish Dhawan Centre for Space Sciences (SDCSS) at the Central University of Jammu, established under the collaboration between ISRO and the Central University of Jammu (CUJ).

SDCSS establishment at CUJ is a landmark achievement for the J&K being the in northern India. The Centre will help in tapping the potential of space applications for the region and provide an opportunity for the youth to contribute to the field of space science as well as to the nation. The area of space applications is of particular interest to J&K and the larger Himalayan region as its economy and habitations are affected by vegetation cover, forest area, snow, landslides, avalanches, ground water, cloud cover, atmospheric conditions, etc., which can be easily monitored from space through remote sensing. The remote sensing and GIS lab at the Centre is helpful to evaluate the status and forecasting of air pollutants, and particulate matter, identifying temperature inversions and their correlation with atmospheric stability, and mesoscale modeling of weather events of J&K using mesoscale atmospheric models and 3D-Var data assimilation techniques. Considering the

recurring natural calamities in the region, the requirement of strengthening ground-based observational capabilities of this region for weather and atmospheric research is also of utmost importance. The setting up of this Centre will take care of the emerging Geospatial and Space Technology requirements for the development of the J&K region.

SDCSS at CUJ will have facilities for Geospatial Data analysis that will help in the sustainable use of natural resources and planning land-use patterns. It will have ground-based observations for Atmospheric Studies, a research lab for astrophysics, Atmospheric Sensing, and Glacier Studies Lab for better use of the large quantity of water stored in the form of seasonal snow, ice, and glaciers in the rivers of North India. Apart from this, Disaster Management Centre will also be set up here that would be able to take up research in the J&K area on different disasters like floods, landslides, forest fires, drought, and climate change. The Centre is also playing a key role to explore the multifarious implications of bioaerosols on climate and ecosystem health in the nearby region of Jammu and Kashmir.

The area of space applications is of particular interest to J&K and the larger Himalayan region as its economy and habitations are affected by vegetation cover, forest area, snow, landslides, avalanches, ground water, cloud cover, atmospheric conditions, etc., which can be easily monitored from space through remote sensing.



SDCSS is the first-of-its-kind institute set up in Jammu and Kashmir. The Centre offers an enormous array of new ways to pursue education in the field of space science. The educated people of J&K with special needs supported by assistive technology will have greater employment opportunities. □

The author is an Associate Professor, Central University of Jammu. Email: vinay.phy@cujammu.ac.in

Hanle Space Observatory



The Indian Astronomical Observatory (IAO) located at Hanle near Leh in Ladakh is becoming one of the most promising observatory sites globally, according to a recent study. This is due to its advantages of more clear nights, minimal light pollution, background aerosol concentration, extremely dry atmospheric condition, uninterrupted by rains.

Astronomers are constantly searching for ideal locations around the world to build their next big telescope based on local meteorological data collected over many years. Such studies are crucial in planning for future observatories and the prediction of how they will vary with time.

Researchers from India and their collaborators carried out a detailed study of the night-time cloud cover fraction over eight high altitude observatories, including three in India, namely IAO in Hanle, Merak (Ladakh), and Devasthal (Nainital).

Digpa-ratsa Ri, Hanle, was chosen as the prospective site for a National Observatory after a study of meteorological conditions over the Indian subcontinent, a study of topographic maps of high-altitude areas in the Himalayan and trans-Himalayan regions, and a simultaneous reconnaissance survey of

six candidate sites in September 1993. Further, visits were made by scientists and engineers of the Institute in January and June, 1994. The permanent site survey camp was established at the edge of Nilamkhul Plain, due north of Digpa-ratsa Ri in December 1994. Detailed characterisation of the site began in January 1995 and has continued till date.

The highest peak in Digpa-ratsa Ri is at an altitude of 4517 metres, and has been named Mount Saraswati. The surrounding Nilamkhul Plain is at an altitude of 4240 metres above mean sea level (msl). The range measures 2 km east-west and 1 km north-south with the top providing about half square km of flat area. The peak contains a few rocky mounds which have been levelled by a few metres. The location of the 2-metre Himalayan Chandra Telescope (HCT) is to the east of the peak at an altitude of 4500 metres above msl.

After examining several years of data of various astro-climatological parameters, IIA installed the 2-metre aperture Himalayan Chandra Telescope (HCT) at IAO, Hanle, in 2000. Thereafter, due to the uniqueness of this site, several astronomical telescopes operating at optical and infrared wavebands have been installed at Hanle by several institutes in the country. □

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Kashmir: Poetry and Mysticism

Dr Namrata Chaturvedi

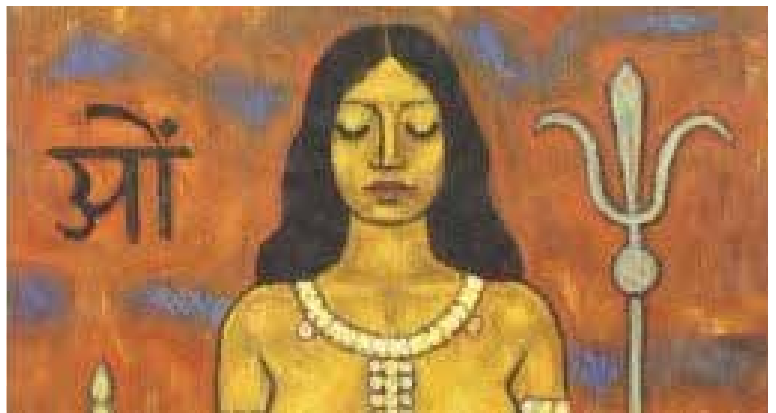
The cultural history of Kashmir is enriched with the contributions of saints, philosophers, masters, teachers and poets. Women stand prominently in their compositions in verse by blending spiritual wisdom and the aesthetics of everyday domesticity. From Buddhism through Shaivism and Sufism, Kashmir's literary and cultural landscape has enriched the corpus of mysticism and literature in India.

In the evolution and development of literary criticism, metaphysics and poetics in Sanskrit, Kashmir holds a remarkable place as being the birthplace or residence of several prominent literary critics, theoreticians, philosophers and commentators. In this list are included names such as Panini, Chandracharya, Bharata, Kshemendra, Abhinavagupta, Vasugupta, Somananda, Somadeva, Bilhana, Kalhana, Patanjali, Anandavardhana and many others who have made momentous contributions to the history of knowledge in language, literature, history and philosophy in India. Panini's *Astadhyayi* is the basis of Sanskrit grammar while Bharata's *Natyashastra* is the foundational text for theorising on dramaturgy. The poetic theories of *aucitya*, *guna*, *riti* and *dhvani* are the contributions of Kashmir to Indian poetics, encompassing all the major schools of thought about literature and aesthetics. The fourth Buddhist Council was held in Kashmir and Asvaghosa and other Buddhist scholars were present at this historic council. From Buddhism through Shaivism and Sufism, Kashmir's literary and cultural landscape has enriched the corpus of mysticism and literature in India.

The great philosopher Abhinavagupta lived in Kashmir in the eleventh century and his name has become inseparable from the philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism. This system of philosophy espouses the concepts of *abhas-vad* (intuition) and *pratyabhijna* (recognition). Abhinavagupta not only theorised on them but also incorporated them into aesthetics, adding the ninth *rasa*, *shanta rasa* to the typology of eight *rasas*

enumerated by Bharata in *Natyashastra*. His compositions include *Tantraloka*, *Abhinavabharati* and commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita* titled *Gitartha Samgraha*. His *Parmarthasara* consists of 105 verses on the teachings of Kashmir Shaivism that have been preserved and disseminated by Swami Lakshmanjoo in the twentieth century through his numerous books including *Shiva Sutras*, *Vijñana Bhairava*, *the Light on Tantra in Kashmir Shaivism* as well as lectures recorded and shared by his disciples in the digital format through videos. After his passing on, his disciple Prabha Devi is carrying on the task of preserving and writing about the knowledge tradition of Kashmir Shaivism. Yogini Sharika Devi was a close disciple of Swami Lakshmanjoo. Neerja Mattoo has edited the book *Sharika Devi: A Yogini of Kashmir* (2013), which features articles and reminiscences about her life and wisdom.

In the history of spiritual initiation and expression, we mostly hear of enlightened men as gurus, saints, mentors or masters for their disciples, whether men or women. When



Lal Ded, the patron saint of Kashmir

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we reflect on the history of mysticism in Kashmir, we are struck by the oral lore and narratives about the initiation of a renowned male disciple by his guru-mother. This disciple came to be called Nund Rishi, and his mentor and adopted mother was Lal Ded who is also known as the patron saint of Kashmir. In the fourteenth century, there was a robust spiritual environment wherein saint-poets such as Lal Ded flourished and composed *vaakhs* (four-line stanzas). Oral lore states that she adopted, even suckled a young boy who later became her disciple and successor. His birth name was Sheikh Noor-ud-din Noorani and he became a master in the *rishi* or *reshut parampara* of Kashmir wherein his mystical thought blended the values of Kashmir Shaivism and Sufism. He composed four-to six-line poems known as *shrukhs* in Kashmiri and is also credited with translating the Holy Quran into Kashmiri. In the *rishi* tradition of mysticism that he popularised in Kashmir, an outstanding feature is the pronounced presence of women disciples who were clear and eloquent in their convictions. His mother was among the earliest of his disciples, reminding us of Gotami and Buddha's teachings. Her name was Sodur Mauj and she became a widow early on. Not much research has been conducted on her later spiritual initiation and life. His wife, Zai Ded was also initiated into mystical learning by him. His first well-known disciple is Sham Bibi, a woman, who, it is said, had such an intense spiritual calling that she even turned away from her marriage procession and fell at his feet to make him accept her in his order. In his mystical tradition, we also hear about Bahat Bibi and Dahat Bibi, perhaps birth sisters or maybe *guru behen* (spiritual sisters). Oral

In the history of spiritual initiation and expression, we mostly hear of enlightened men as gurus, saints, mentors or masters for their disciples, whether men or women. When we reflect on the history of mysticism in Kashmir, we are struck by the oral lore and narratives about the initiation of a renowned male disciple by his guru-mother.

lore maintains that their awakening was through debate and discourse that they held with their master. It is evident that both of them believed in dialogue and conviction, showcasing for us the design of women's spiritual lives as not necessarily being spontaneous only but born out of considered dialogue and reason too. It is believed that Dahat Bibi was a participant at the historical theological meeting between Hazrat Mir Muhammad Hamadani and Nund Rishi wherein she spoke eloquently on his behalf. She also defended her position and agency as a woman mystic by arguing that the divine

doesn't differentiate between men and women seekers. Another renowned disciple was Shang Bibi who converted from a life of dancing and vanity to a life of mystical seeking. Her grave lies adjacent to her master's tomb at Charar-e-Sharief. There was another disciple by the name of Shang Bibi the Second who it is said that despite having suffered from illness and permanent physical disability rode on leopards and lived an ascetic life in the forests.

The tradition of great women saints and mentors is preserved in the verses and dargahs in Kashmir. Near Srinagar, at Kralpora, lies the shrine of Bibi Baria. She was the daughter-in-law of Mir Sayyid Ali Hamadani, the Sufi saint who is believed to have brought Sufism to Kashmir. At her shrine, only women are allowed inside the sanctum sanctorum, a unique and rare feature at dargahs in India. Twenty kilometres away from Srinagar lies the village of Haripora Harwan to which belonged the saint Mukht Ded. Local oral history holds that she was married at a young age and the early death of her husband and two of her siblings opened the way for her grief to be transmuted into love and devotion. She started visiting the shrines of saints and immersed herself in meditation and contemplation of the divine. She was revered by the local residents and was sought after for healing and guidance. She held spiritual discourses with Sayyid Mirak Shah Kashani and Peer Yaseen Sahab, among others. These men are known to have testified to her spiritual purity and the high level of her refinement that they sought her grace and company frequently. These anecdotes and narratives about women saints are only the tip of the iceberg of women's contribution to mysticism in Kashmir that awaits further engagement and exploration.

In contemporary Kashmiri poetry, Bimla Raina has preserved the tradition of the singing of Lal-Ded's *vaakhs*. Chandra Dassi also composes *vaakhs* and they are sung and



The tradition of great women saints and mentors is preserved in the verses and dargahs in Kashmir.

performed. Santosh Nandan's bhajans and mystical poems are popular in Kashmir. Mohini Koul 'Mohana' is making a remarkable contribution to the preservation of culture by composing marriage songs and spiritual poetry in Kashmiri. Sunita Raina Pandit began her poetic journey by composing a Krishna bhajan and is now composing *ghazals* in Kashmiri and stands out as a female ghazal composer in that tradition. It is interesting to note that the first all-women Sufi band was formed in 2015 in the region. They call themselves 'Yemberzal' and are dedicated to preserving *Sufiana mausiqi*, the tradition of Sufi music and Kashmiri classical music. The members of the band sing the poems of mystics including Lal Ded, Habba Khatoon, Ghulam Hassan Ghamgeen and Sheikh-ul-Alam.

In her gentle tribute to the women saint poets of Kashmir, Neerja Mattoo has written *The Mystic and the Lyric: Four Women Poets from Kashmir* (2019) wherein she has contextualised the poetry of Lal Ded, Habba Khatoon, Rupa Bhawani and Arnimal. In a panel discussion about this book, Professor Shafi Shauq drew our attention to the fact that these four women poets represent four different time periods in the history of mysticism in Kashmir and focussed research is yet to be conducted on the historiography and the role of women in the mystic traditions of Kashmir. The author tells us that there is a significant difference in the verses of Lal Ded and Rupa Bhawani pertaining to the vocabulary and accessibility of their compositions. While Lal Ded employs everyday poetics in disseminating the highest spiritual truths that she has realised, Rupa Bhawani, who takes inspiration from Lal Ded, chooses classical languages like Persian and Sanskrit and esoteric words, understandable only by the initiated. This brings another dimension to women's spiritual writings, reminding us of the complexities and layers in experiences, utterances and dissemination of spiritual wisdom by women which is unfortunately generalised as spontaneous, uncritical and simple. The verses of Habba Khatoon and Arnimal are centred on grief, with loss and sadness becoming metaphors for the absence of real meaning in the phenomenal world.

Consider these lines by Habba Khatoon that find a place in popular culture even today.

*Roshay madno cholhoma...
Walay vasiye gaswai hyee-yai,
Yus mari su katu yeeyai
Praaraan tahenzei zyeeyai
Walo myani pooshay madno...*

*Wal weis gaswai abas,
Duniya neendri te khwabas
Kus weni dedi tai babas,
Walo myani roshay madno*

Upset with me, my lover has left...

Let us go, my friend, to gather jasmine,
Once dead, none can enjoy life;
I hanker for your prosperity, Love,
Come, O Come, my flowery Cupid...

Let us go, my friend, to fetch water;
The world is fast asleep, love;
I yearn for a response from you,
Come, come my upset lover.

There is a beautiful account of how a daughter-in-law became a secret scribe for her mother-in-law's utterances which were in the form of *vaakhs*, and preserved them for posterity. This is about the poetry of Riche Ded and the preserver of her literary output was Danawati, her daughter-in-law. These *vaakhs* are reflective, meditative and like Lal Ded's *vaakhs*, they throw light on the human condition. They were published posthumously by her son. I quote her *vaakh* below as a closing point for our brief overview of the richness and density of mystical poetry in Kashmir:

*Aatmaa anubhav chhu divaan diva gyaan,
Avay aatma gyaanik chhi saari anugraagi:
Aatma gyaan chhu mukhti hund nishaan,
Su aastan yogi, bhogi, raagi yaa tyaagi.*

Self-realisation results in recognition of God,
That is why the wise strive to know themselves:
Self-knowledge is the symbol of salvation for all,
Be it a Yogi, sensualist, lover or anchorite. □

Endnotes

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Dogri Literature

Rajeshwar Singh 'Raju'

Dogras are well known as warriors and for their miniature pahari paintings all over the world. Historical references show that the word 'Duggar' is derived from 'Durgar' and the most primitive mention of it is found in Chamba copperplates of 11th century A.D. It refers to the community inhabiting the region between the Ravi and Chenab rivers. It is believed that by the 19th century when British came to these parts, the entire mountainous and sub-mountainous region between Sutlej and Chenab rivers was called 'Duggar' and its inhabitants 'Dogras.'

The earliest mention of the mother tongue of Dogras, Dogri is found in 1317 A.D. in an enumeration of Indian languages made by Amir Khusro. In this list, 'Duggar Bhasha' has been mentioned right after a reference to the language spoken in Delhi. If we cast a look at the Dogri literature, then like all other works of literature, it can be divided into two categories, i.e., folk literature and written literature. It is imperative to add here that much before written literature, Dogri literature like all other regional works of literature existed in the oral form.

In folk literature, we find folk tales, songs, idioms, proverbs, riddles, ballads, *Karaks*, *Bhakhs*, *Bars*, etc., that make it quite rich and representative of Duggar life. It is universal as the contents therein are universal. It talks about different rituals, traditions, nature, and local deities. The folk literature that existed orally with the generations carrying it forward to next generations as a part of their traditional heritage has been registered now in written form also. Researchers are doing extensive research and preserving it.

On the other hand, we find references to written literature during 16th and 17th-century historical sagas and *Khandkavyas*. Maharaja Ranbir Singh also got translations of Sanskrit books done to develop Dogri prose for common use. Frederic Drew, a scholar and traveller who lived in the state from 1862 to 1872, gives an account in his work of Maharaja's Royal *Darbar* in which all documents were in Dogri. However, the written Dogri literature may be divided into pre-1940 and post-1940.

Shivanath, in the 'History of Dogri literature' published by Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi in 1976, writes that Dogri writing before 1940 was a lesser explored field. The early specimens of Dogri writing are to be found in rock and temple inscriptions, copper-plate inscriptions, rhapsodies in praise of kings and their genealogical tables, title deeds, *samads*, agreements, letters, etc. They were mostly found in Takri script in Duggar till the beginning of the 20th century.

But Takri is no more in use now however we still find it inscribed on community utensils in some remote areas. With the passage of time, this old script has almost vanished and Devanagri script was adopted by Dogri writers that gave a boost to the language to flourish.

Dogri literature is very rich as it is abundant with different genres. Whether it is poetry or prose, we find



Bahu Fort, Jammu

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classical contributions by writers. Dogri poetry rose from the rich tradition of folk songs from the 16th to 18th centuries, owing to royal patronage. The significant poets of that period include Manakchand, Gambhir Rai, and Devi Ditta. This tradition of traditional singer-poet combination continued with Maya Das and Raghubir Das in the late 18th century. In the early 19th century, there were poets like Ganga Ram and Lakhu whose traditions were carried forward during 20th century by Ramdhan, Sant Ram Shastri, Mehta Mathura Das, Hakam Jatt, Mulraj Mehta, Baba Kanshi Ram, Kavi Dattu and Hardutt. But it was Dinu Bhai Pant's works published in 1944 which may be recognised as an advent of modern-day poetry.

In its initial stage when Dogri was looking for respect and space from its own, Dogri poets played a revolutionary role. Soon, Dogri poets became the heartthrob of the masses and literary meetings were attended in huge numbers that inspired many to pen down their feelings in their mother tongue and eventually they emerged as celebrated writers. In short stories, we have 'Pehla Phull' written by Bhagwat Prasad Sathe as the first book published in 1947 followed by 'Sui Dhaga' by Lalita Mehta in 1957.

Theatre plays have always played a significant role in not only spreading awareness of society but have been a part and parcel of literature also. It started with 'Bawa Jitto' that was staged at Tikkri in 1948. Thereafter, the tremendous response from the public boosted the morale of the team and it became a regular feature. Another play that

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helped the movement was 'Sarpanch.'

Dogri literature cannot be discussed without the contributions of some towering personalities, and of them is a man widely known as 'Pitamaha of Dogri' and some remember him as 'Bharatendu Harishchandra of Dogri' also, Padma Shri awardee, Professor Ram Nath Shastri. He led the movement for winning gratitude and honour for his mother tongue Dogri with all grace and convinced those established writers

penning down their creative works in other languages like Hindi and Urdu to realise their moral responsibilities towards their own language and traditions. He inspired them to write in Dogri and enrich their own language and literature. With such efforts, the language started regaining admiration.

*Hindi Sadhi Daadi Ae
Te Dogri Sadhi Maa,
Daadi Thar Daadi
Te Maa Thar Maa.*

This verse by Pandit Dinu Bhai Pant emphasises the importance and relevance of the language.

After the abrogation of Article 370, Dogri became one of the five official languages along with English, Hindi, Urdu, and Kashmiri.

In modern times, creative writers have been contributing to Dogri literature in different genres. Whether it is novels, short stories, poetry, essays, or plays, Dogri writers have been able to cast a spell on the masses, and their translated works in other languages have taken their writings to a broader canvas. □

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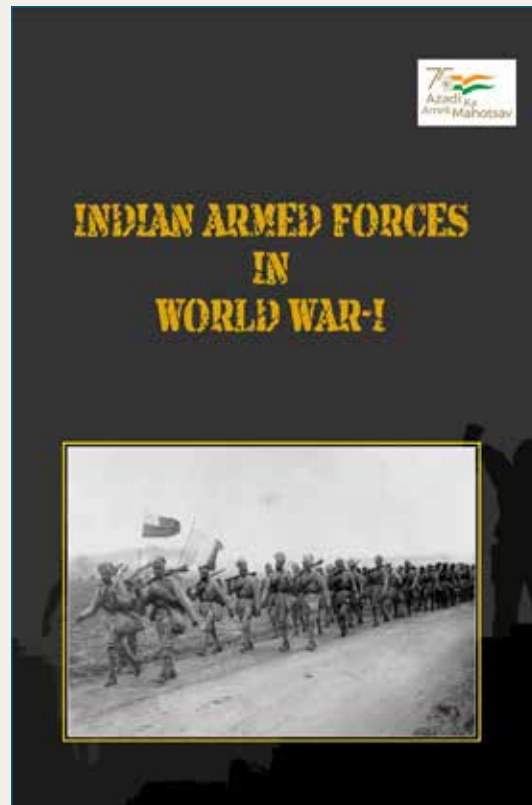
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Indian Armed Forces in World War-I

Language: English

Price: Rs 700



The book Indian Armed Forces in World War-I, brought out by Publications Division with the Ministry of Defence, is primarily based on the facts and figures culled out from the official records such as Regimental histories, War Diaries of the Units and higher formations of the Indian Armed Forces, maintained by the India Office Library, London, the National Archives of India, Delhi and the records preserved in various States' Archives. It attempts to present a holistic picture of the role of the Indian Armed Forces during the war.

The World War I, in which thirty countries participated and sixty-five million men witnessed the action, the very estimate of casualties is heart-rending. It claimed lives of more than eight million, more than twenty million were wounded and more than ten million became prisoners of war, all totalling to over thirty-eight million. India joined the War as a British colony. In the autumn of 1914, thousands of Indian soldiers set sail for Europe, Egypt, and East Africa to fight a War on behalf of their colonial masters. It was a War that they knew little about— yet over the next five years, 74,000 of them died fighting. In the hundred years since, much has been written to

recount the War, yet the role played by Indian soldiers has at best received a passing mention in most of these accounts. The regimental histories do record the deeds of the participating units but compilation of a consolidated account focusing on the role of Indian army in the War has been delayed by more than a century. For this reason, not many Indians are aware of the fact that

more than a million of their ancestors have fought in France, Egypt, Aden, Suez Canal, Gallipoli, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Salonika, Persia, etc. This is an attempt to commemorate and to distill the events of War so as to leave behind a lesson and a legacy for the coming generations.

The book contains well-documented accounts of all aspects of WW-I related to Indian contribution. Photographs are interspersed with the text to illustrate visuals of the time period. In order to understand and analyse the contents more clearly, maps of the areas of operations and appendices have also been included. The memorials and cemeteries spread all over the world bear testimony of the sacrifices made by the Indian soldiers. Further, more than ten thousand Indian soldiers earned gallantry awards during the War. □



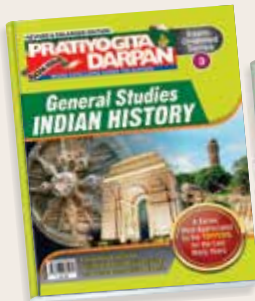
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CSE, 2019 (4th Rank)

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—Ajay Kumar
Bihar Civil Services Exam., 2018
(13th Rank)

PD extra issues especially its Indian Economy issue is an excellent guide for General Studies.

—Himanshu Kafaltia
Uttarakhand Civil Services Exam., 2016
(1st Rank)

I mostly enjoyed reading Economy special of P.D. and found it useful in mains also for data and statistics.

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