



**Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) : VB - G RAM G**  
 (विकसित भारत - जी राम जी) Act, 2025  
**Self-Reliant India's Identity, Villages to Shine with Solar Power**  
 Solar Lighting Systems and Other Renewable Energy Infrastructure to Be Established in Rural Areas



## 'Enchanting Ladakh' strengthens 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat' at national platform: LG Ladakh

Visits 'Enchanting Ladakh' at Dilli Haat; interacts with artisans, entrepreneurs

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

**NEW DELHI:** The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, on Monday visited the 7th edition of 'Enchanting Ladakh', an exhibition-cum-sale, being held from February 1 to 15, at Dilli Haat, New Delhi. The event showcases Ladakh's rich cultural heritage and growing entrepreneurial spirit to a national audience.



LG Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta visiting a stall.

It is an annual event organised by the Department of Industries & Commerce, UT Ladakh, designed to provide a national platform for Ladakhi artisans and entrepreneurs. The Lieutenant Governor visited the Ladakh stalls and interacted with artisans, entrepreneurs, students, and members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs). He appreciated their efforts in promoting locally developed products and strengthening Ladakh's presence in national markets.

As part of the programme, products from 11 different brands developed under the 'Enterprising Ladakh' initiative were on display. The partici-

pants represented a wide cross-section of Ladakh's emerging entrepreneurial ecosystem, including students from colleges, universities and ITIs, young entrepreneurs, SHGs, and established business owners. The exhibition featured a diverse range of products such as 3D models, crocheted items, khataks, Ladakhi cookies, sheep-wool products, locally made cakes, sea buckthorn products, and traditional Zaskar ghee. These displays reflected the vast economic and creative potential of the region and provided participants with valuable exposure

to entrepreneurship and business management practices. Later, artists from Ladakh presented a vibrant cultural programme highlighting the region's unique traditions and artistic expressions, which drew appreciation from visitors at Dilli Haat. Speaking on the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor said that Ladakh's presence in the national capital symbolises the spirit of a confident and self-reliant India, as envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He remarked that the vibrant colours, craftsmanship, and dedication to dis-

play reflect Ladakh's rich cultural heritage and the determination of its people. Kavinder Gupta stated that the participants were not merely exhibiting products but were strengthening the spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat' by bringing Ladakh's traditions, skills, and entrepreneurship to a national platform. He said India's diversity is its strength, and such initiatives help connect regions, markets, and people. The Lieutenant Governor noted that every showcased product carried the values of tradition, dedication, and dignity of labour. He added that the artisans and entrepreneurs were not just selling goods but presenting Ladakh's story to the nation, describing them as ambassadors of Ladakh's culture and enterprise. Highlighting the importance of 'Vocal for Local', Kavinder Gupta said Ladakh's journey towards Atmanirbhar Bharat is being driven by local entrepreneurs,



## Priya Sethi slams NC Govt over pharmacist recruitment, demands immediate syllabus revision under PCI guidelines

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

**JAMMU:** BJP J&K Vice President Priya Sethi, accompanied by party spokesperson Dr. Pardeep Mahotra and senior leader Parmeesh Mahajan, addressed a press conference in Jammu highlighting the concerns of B.Pharm (Bachelor of Pharmacy) and D.Pharm (Diploma in Pharmacy) candidates regarding the alleged incorrect syllabus notified for the post of Junior Pharmacist under Advertisement No. 07/2025 issued by the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB). Priya Sethi said that pharmacy graduates and diploma holders from across the Union Territory have submitted a collective representation pointing out serious discrepancies in the recruitment process. She stated that the eligibility criteria for the Junior Pharmacist post clearly require D.Pharm and B.Pharm qualifications, which are regulated by the Pharmacy Council of India (PCI) under the Pharmacy Act, 1948. However, the syllabus notified later reportedly includes subjects related to nursing, OT technician, and medical assistant courses, which are not relevant to pharmacy education, she said. Sethi emphasized that candidates have repeatedly submitted representations to the concerned authorities seeking correction of the syllabus, but the issue remains unresolved, causing uncertainty among aspirants whose examination is scheduled for April 2026. She said that as per official



BJP J&K Vice President Priya Sethi talking to reporters.

assurances and PCI guidelines, the syllabus should strictly follow the PCI-approved curriculum for pharmacy courses, and any deviation from statutory norms creates injustice for thousands of qualified candidates. Quoting the concerns raised by the candidates, she added that the Pharmacy Council of India has also issued written directions recommending revision of the syllabus in accordance with PCI standards. Despite these instructions, the matter is reportedly pending due to administrative delays between departments, leaving candidates unable to prepare properly for the examination. Priya Sethi said the issue is not only related to employment opportunities but also concerns the quality of healthcare services, as recruitment based on an irrelevant syllabus may fail to assess the professional competence required for pharmacists responsible for safe medicine dispensing and patient care. Priya Sethi strongly criticized the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (NC) government, alleging that it has failed to take the concerns of pharmacy graduates seriously and is

doing injustice to the youth of the Union Territory. She said the government appears indifferent to the legitimate demands of candidates seeking correction of the syllabus and timely resolution of the issue. Sethi further alleged that instead of ensuring a fair and transparent recruitment process, the administration is attempting to favour "blue-eyed candidates" for posts, which, she said, undermines merit and damages the confidence of young job aspirants. She urged the Omar Abdullah-led NC government to act impartially, address the grievances of pharmacy candidates without delay, and ensure that recruitment procedures are conducted strictly on merit and in accordance with statutory guidelines. She urged the concerned authorities to immediately revise the syllabus in line with the Pharmacy Act, 1948, and PCI guidelines, and to provide adequate preparation time to candidates after the correction is made. She stated that timely intervention is necessary to ensure fairness, transparency, and adherence to statutory regulations in the recruitment process.

## JMC demolishes 100 unhygienic structures



**STATE TIMES NEWS**

**JAMMU:** The Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) on Monday carried out a large-scale demolition drive against unhygienic slum structures at various locations across Jammu city. The drive was conducted on the directions of the Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation, Dr. Devansh Yadav and was led by Deputy Commissioner (North), JMC, Sanjay Badyal along with the Enforcement Team of JMC. During the operation, unhygienic slum settlements lacking basic sanitation facilities were identified and removed from areas including near Jaggi Darbar, Paloura, Lower Roopnagar and Subhash Nagar. These settlements were posing a serious threat to public health, environmental hygiene and overall urban sanitation. Approximately 100 unhygienic structures were demolished during the drive. Officials informed that such unauthorized and unsanitary constructions not only violate municipal norms but also hamper the city's efforts to maintain cleanliness and public health standards, particularly under the Open Defecation Free (ODF) framework. The JMC officials stated that similar demolition and enforcement drives would continue in other parts of Jammu city to curb the mushrooming of unhygienic structures and to ensure strict compliance with sanitation regulations. Reiterating its commitment towards building a clean, healthy and ODF-compliant Jammu, the JMC has appealed to the general public to extend full cooperation and adhere to sanitation norms for the collective well-being of the city.

## DIPR organises workshop on 'Cyber Security'

**STATE TIMES NEWS**

**JAMMU:** A one-day workshop was organized on Monday by the Department of Information and Public Relations at the auditorium, Media Complex, Jammu under the guidance of Director Information Nitish Rajora. The workshop was conducted by the renowned cyber security expert Er. Neeraj Dubey.



DIPR officials with cyber security expert Er. Neeraj Dubey.

The session aimed to raise awareness about growing online threats and equip participants with practical strategies to protect their personal and professional data. The workshop covered key topics including cyber threats, safe internet practices, password security, phishing awareness, digital safety, social media privacy, and emerging risks in the digital world. Through real-life case studies and interactive discussions, participants gained valuable insights into how cyber criminals operate and how individuals can safeguard themselves against

fraud, dial 1930, the national toll-free cybercrime helpline," says Er. Neeraj Dubey. The participants actively engaged in hands-on activities and received guidance on recognizing suspicious links, securing devices, and responding to cyber incidents. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from students of MAM College Jammu and officials of DIPR, who appreciated the expert guidance shared during the session. JD Headquarter Zahoor Ahmed Raina, JD Jammu Deepak Dubey along with other officers attended the workshop.

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# Extending 'Tatkal Passport' facility too to J&K origin persons will also shed any misconceptions about returning peace & stability in J&K

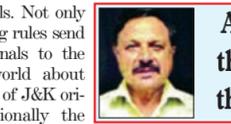
As promised in Election Manifesto hope Omar Sahib must have already taken up with GOI need for Eased Passport Verification & Issue

**DAYA SAGAR**

Governments all these years have been claiming for their having worked relentlessly (of course they have been working too) for socio economic development of the subjects of J&K and for undoing the nefarious designs of the 'foreign' powers & their supporters from within J&K as well. There is no doubt about the efforts made & some successes achieved, no doubt some more may be needed. One thing could be surely said that nobody should (and no one does) totally dismiss the positive status reports being regularly placed in the public domain as regards the status of return of peace & stability in J&K particularly over last two decades. But it has to be also admitted that there is utmost need for the civil society too for supporting the administration by working on ground, for mediating the undue social & emotional controversies generated over the years, as also is the need for the political cadres to shed their political plans that target only vote bank game plans. Government too need to take regular reviews/steps to wipe out any bit of otherwise impressions that may be radiating from some of the existing security related government policies / orders. For which actions like prioritizing self sponsored return of Kashmiri valley migrants & reviewing the over stretched security related policies like procedures / rules/conditions related to issue & renewal

of passports to persons of J&K origin could be mentioned here for sending positive messages to outside world worth that windows open to the separatist / anti India influences are shutting. It would be worthwhile mentioning here that among the present policies that unduly reflect to outside world that J&K is 'still seriously' disturbed 'state' of India could be quoted the policy / rules regarding receiving & processing the applications for grant of new passport / of passport / for obtaining any other facility related to passport like additional pages as are applicable to the persons of J&K origin. The Pass Port Seva PPS Division, Ministry of External Affairs GoI 'Tatkaal Advisory says 'Tatkaal facility is not available for Persons of J&K origin including minors (below 18 years) & Persons of J&K origin residing outside Nagaland; and Persons of J&K origin including minors (below 18 years). Tatkaal facility (even for renewal of passport or even obtaining additional pages) not being there to the persons of J&K origin staying in India or abroad not being there for the persons of J&K origin even in 2025 sends very otherwise impressions to outside world as regards the civic environment / peace/ normalcy/ separatist activities that could be there inspite of the fact that the internal environment in J&K is very much of harmony where the separatist influences / environment have been otherwise pushed

to the walls. Not only the existing rules send wrong signals to the outside world about the people of J&K origin additionally the procedural delays too often cause lot of inconvenience & harassment to many. So the need is not only for extending TATKAAL facility to the persons of J&K origin as is for others in India by payment of extra fee (which should surely be extended immediately) but need is also there to review and amend some other features as well so as to simplify the procedures worth making the process of granting passport or passport related services like renewal as also requirements like providing additional pages (when due to frequent travel no space for stamping etc is left but with passport still valid) faster and trouble free as the case may be to persons of J&K origin. Repeat, so strangely the 'Tatkaal' facility is not available even for renewal of a passport even where no adverse observations are there in the records of foreign office or for even additional pages so such extent of non availability of 'Tatkaal' puts J&K people to inconvenience but also sends negative message to outside world that 'J&K' is not in peace. A widely travelling / frequent traveller of J&K origin in case requires additional pages with in the validity period of passport still not only the pro-



A Look through the Mist

cedure as far issue of a new passport / renewal of passport is followed but even the tatkaal facility is not available in such cases for J&K (here too one has to apply like a new passport for which routine physical police verification is done and the passport copy that is issued is only for the remaining period in some cases (question here is in case all process is to be followed as for new passport why not issue the new copy with full period of 10 yrs or so). Imagine the inconvenience caused to even a common citizen other than J&K also where undue time is lost more particularly with the style of bureaucratic procedure that 'we' are living in case of requirements other than issue of new passport. People could be very easily found running here and there for making enquiries about the verifications and in very very rare case the report may move from one office to another office in 1 to 2 days and in general cases people may be seen quoting that there reports have taken even a week to 10 days or even more to move from one office to another. There is no time limit mentioned for receipt of police verification report from the district police authorities after the reference is made by the Passport Seva Kendra which is not fair and there should be a limit mentioned (may be 4 weeks max in routine) for issue of passport in case report is not

received within that time. The offices / hands the reports have to move do result in more time consumption even if the the staff working there works in normal manner and there enough scope in reducing the number of hands the report exchanges before reaching PSK. Recently one my relations / friends has told me that he submitted renewal application in a consulate abroad around 27 Sept 2025 and has received the Passport around 11th Jan 2026. May be it was due to such like problems the people of J&K origin have been facing that the National Conference manifesto for 2024 elections to Legislative Assembly of J&K UT on page 11..... under the caption 'RESTORING NORMALCY' had said (i) Eased Passport Verification: Ensure that passport verification procedures are simplified, removing hurdles and making it easier for people to obtain passports. And it is NC lead government in UT of J&K lead by Omar Abdullah now (Jan 2026) for last more than 13 months now but what the J&K Government had done is not known. So Omar Government also has opportunity & moral duty to must meet the election promise by getting (i) the Tatkaal facility also extended to persons of J&K origin (ii) getting the process for renewal of passport & or particularly procedure for issue of additional pages simplified (iii) to ensure that the police verification

channels are minimized/ the work load on the Police / CID offices is reduced by modifications like limiting the quarry only for referring to the District Police SP and designating the Distt Police SSP as competent officer for sending the clearance to Passport Officer direct. No doubt after physical police verification the Passport Seva Kendra issues passport in a couple days by post, (iv) to allow the Passport Officer to issue without police verification additional page copy in case original is finished within validity period, if there is no adverse entry on existing passport (v) for renewal of passport with no adverse remarks fix the time limit for verification as only 15 days max and ofcourse keeping the 'Tatkaal' facility there on fee basis with condition of post police verification. No doubt it would bring sanctity to election manifesto promises. The services would have been delivered much earlier. Union Government has also opined that over last 10 years J&K has moved steps ahead on the path of peace & stability so Omar Sahib must impress upon GOI to get the passport process simplified for residents of J&K origin which will also undo any misconceptions about fairness of civil environment in J&K with the outside world.

(The writer is a Sr Journalist & a known analyst of J&K affairs)