

BJP's youth wing stages anti-government protest in Jammu

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: Bharatiya Janata Yuva Moreha (BJYM) workers on Tuesday staged a protest here against Jammu and Kashmir government's decision to include Urdu as a compulsory subject in the recently notified Naib Tehsildar recruitment examination.

The BJYM workers led by state president Arun Prabhat held the protest at Kacchi Chawri, raising slogans against the "discriminatory and regionally" biased move and asserting the rights of Jammu's youth to fair and equal access to public employment. "This imposition of Urdu is a deliberate attempt to exclude deserving candidates from Jammu. Such regional discrimination will not be tolerated. We demand an immediate rollback," Prabhat said. He accused Omar Abdullah-



BJYM activists burning effigy during protest at Jammu on Tuesday.

led administration of introducing a policy that sidelines youth from the Jammu region.

"This move is discriminatory, unjustified, and violates the principles of equality, inclusivity, and regional fairness in public sector employment," the BJP youth leader said.

He said the Naib Tehsildar post is open to candidates from

all parts of Jammu and Kashmir but making Urdu a mandatory qualifying criterion disadvantages aspirants from the Jammu region - most of whom study in Hindi, Dogri, or English and do not have Urdu as their medium of instruction.

"This is not only exclusionary but also deprives capable candidates of a fair chance at govern-

ment employment. This decision amounts to linguistic imposition and systemic bias, and stands in violation of the Constitution of India, which guarantees equal opportunity in employment and freedom from language-based discrimination," he said.

Moreover, he said the role of a Naib Tehsildar demands effective

interaction with local populations. "In most parts of Jammu, the working language is not Urdu. Therefore, proficiency in regional languages such as Dogri, Hindi, or Punjabi is more relevant for governance at the grassroots level," he said.

The BJYM urged the Lt Governor and the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB) to reconsider this policy immediately.

"Urdu should be made optional, or candidates should be allowed to choose from a list of regional languages based on their domicile and preference," he said. Prabhat also appealed to civil society, legal experts, and political leaders to unite against this "unfair policy" and defend the constitutional rights of the youth of Jammu and Kashmir.

Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2025 LG visits Sonamarg; interacts with Market Association representatives, service providers



LG, Manoj Sinha interacting with Market Association representatives.

STATE TIMES NEWS
GANDERBAL: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday visited Sonamarg and interacted with the representatives of Sonamarg Market Association, Hoteliers, Ponywalas and other service providers for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra.

The members of the delegations put forth various important matters pertaining to the smooth conduct of the forthcoming annual yatra of Shri Amarnath Ji.

The Lieutenant Governor assured the delegations of due consideration and appropriate

redressal of the issues highlighted by them. He also reiterated the commitment of the Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board and J&K Administration for the welfare of all the stakeholders associated with the holy pilgrimage.

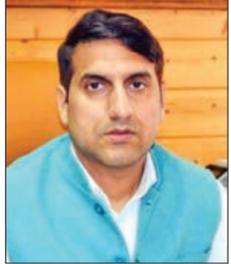
Secy RDD reviews draft 'J&K Rural Building Bye Laws, 2025'

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, on Tuesday chaired a crucial meeting to discuss the draft of the 'Jammu and Kashmir Building Permission (Rural Areas) Procedure, 2025', a first-of-its-kind framework designed to regulate the building activities across the rural areas governed by Halqa Panchayats.

The meeting was attended by Director RDD Kashmir, Shabir Hussain

Bhat, Director RDD Jammu, Mumtaz Ali, Director Panchayati Raj Sham Lal, Director Finance, Umar Khan, Joint Director Planning, Kamal Kumar Sharma, Superintending Engineer REW Kashmir, Aamir Ali, Superintending Engineer REW Jammu, Rajesh Kumar, Deputy Secretary, Tahir Ahmad Magray and others.

The Secretary emphasised that the new procedure has been anchored in a robust legal framework drawn from the J&K Panchayati Raj Act, 1989



and the Rules of 1996.

"Section 12 (2) (iv) of the Panchayati Raj Act empowers Halqa Panchayats to regulate the buildings, shops and entertainment houses while as

Rules 155 and 156 require mandatory approvals for construction, reconstruction or alterations'

The Secretary said that this framework brings a long-awaited legal and procedural clarity to the rural construction. "It ensures accountability and offers a citizen-friendly mechanism that truly empowers the grassroots," he added.

The new procedure applies to all Halqa Panchayat areas across Jammu and Kashmir, excluding areas under Municipal Corporation/Council/Committee,

Tourism Development Authority or other empowered authorities. It will come into force upon official notification by the government. The framework covers all types of construction activities including new constructions, extensions, alterations, reconstructions, changes in building use and reconstruction due to fire, collapse or demolition.

The Secretary emphasised that citizen convenience should remain paramount while maintaining regulatory standards.

During the deliberations,

the Secretary directed the officials to expedite work on the Online Building Permit System (OBPS) to ensure applications are processed digitally, transparently and efficiently. He stressed the importance of maintaining detailed records of all permissions granted besides creating a robust monitoring mechanism to track compliance.

Aijaz Asad said, once notified, all officials will adhere to the 30-day cycle for processing applications, 15 days for internal review, 10 days for decision-making and 5 days for

communicating outcomes. "This framework is not merely regulatory, it is transformational. It restores people's trust, strengthens Panchayati Raj and brings a structured, rule-based approach to rural development," maintaining the Secretary.

The Secretary instructed all the concerned officers that the Competent Authority should refer to comprehensive technical guidelines when activities are not specifically covered in the J&K Rural Building Bye Laws. He outlined a hierarchical reference

framework to ensure consistent and comprehensive decision-making across all rural construction projects.

He specified that officers should refer to the requisite documents in a sequential order. These included J&K Unified Building Bye Laws 2021 or Model Building Bye Laws of MoHUA, GOI New Delhi. Guidelines National Policy for Persons with Disabilities, 2006, Guidelines for the provisions of Facilities in the buildings for Person with disabilities and ECBC Code for Energy Conservation Building.

Dr Jitendra addresses UN Conference, pushes for 'global ocean pact'

STATE TIMES NEWS
FRANCE: India called for urgent global action on ocean health at the Third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) in Nice, with Union Minister of Earth Sciences (Independent Charge), Dr. Jitendra Singh pushing for "global ocean pact" and unveiling major strides in deep-sea exploration, marine plastic clean-up, and sustainable fisheries.

Representing India, Dr. Jitendra Singh highlighted progress on the Deep Ocean Mission's upcoming manned submersible, a nationwide single-use plastic ban, and over \$80 billion worth of Blue Economy projects. India also backed the swift ratification of the BBNJ Agreement, advocated for a legally binding Global Plastics Treaty, and launched the 'SAHAV' digital ocean data portal, underscoring its growing leadership in global marine governance.

Addressing the conference, which is co-hosted by France and Costa Rica under the theme "Accelerating Action and Mobilizing All Actors to Conserve and Sustainably Use the Ocean," Dr. Jitendra Singh reaffirmed India's commitment to Sustainable Development Goal 14: Life Below Water. He outlined how India's initiatives are aimed at reversing ocean degradation through science, innovation, and inclusive partnerships.

A key highlight was the progress on the Deep Ocean Mission's 'Samudrayaan' project, which is expected to deploy India's first manned submersible by 2026. The project aims to explore ocean depths up to 6,000 meters and is seen as a major leap in India's scientific capability.

Dr. Jitendra Singh also spoke of expanding India's Marine Protected Areas, which now cover 6.6% of the Exclusive Economic Zone, contributing to global biodiversity goals.

On marine pollution, the Minister pointed to tangible outcomes from the 'Swachh Sagar, Surakshit Sagar' campaign, which has cleaned over 1,000 km of India's coastline and removed more than 50,000 tonnes of plastic waste since 2022. The draft marine litter policy has been prepared, and India continues to support negotiations on a Global Plastics Treaty aimed at a legally binding international framework.

India's Blue Economy efforts, led by the Sagarmala Programme and the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada

Yojana (PMMSY), were also showcased. Over 600 port-led infrastructure projects worth \$80 billion have been operationalised, and investments of \$2.5 billion have gone into modernising the fisheries sector. The government reported a 10% rise in fish production and the creation of over 1,000 fish farmer producer organisations since the last UN Ocean Conference in 2022.

Emphasising climate resilience, Dr. Jitendra Singh noted the restoration of over 10,000 hectares of mangroves and the implementation of shoreline management plans using nature-based solutions. India has also integrated ocean-based climate actions into its Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement.

India's growing role in global ocean governance was evident through its co-leadership in 'Blue Talks' with France and Costa Rica, and its active participation in high-level events such as the India-Norway side session on Marine Spatial Planning. The launch of the 'SAHAV' portal during the conference further adds to its credentials in promoting transparent, science-based ocean management.

Calling for a robust 'Nice Ocean Action Plan', Dr. Jitendra Singh urged the international community to invest in innovation, ratify the BBNJ Agreement,

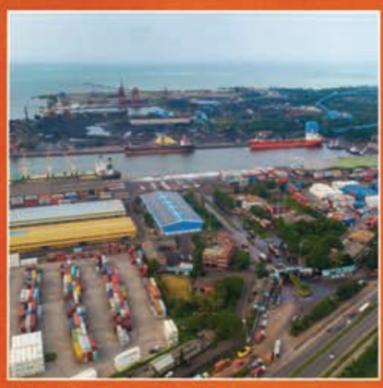
and finalise the plastics treaty.

"The ocean is our shared heritage and responsibility," he said, expressing India's readiness to work with all stakeholders-governments, private sector, civil society, and indigenous communities-to ensure a sustainable ocean future.

The Indian delegation's participation at UNOC3 signals a clear message: India is positioning itself not just as a coastal nation but as a proactive player in shaping global ocean policy.



TURNING MILES INTO MILESTONES

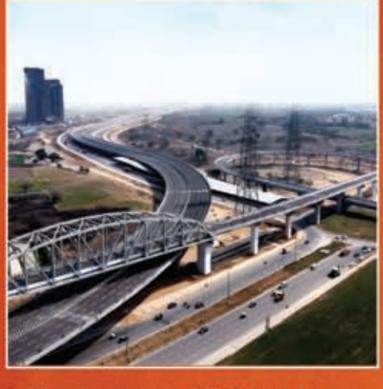


National Waterways increased from 5 to 111; record 145+ MMT cargo movement in 2024, 8 times as compared to 2014



Airports more than doubled-from 74 to 162

1.50+ crore people availed affordable air travel under UDAN



India stands tall with 66+ lakh km of roads-2nd largest in the world

National Highways rose over 60% from 91,000 km to 1.46 lakh km

Rural road connectivity surges to 99% coverage

272 projects worth ₹1.41+ lakh crore completed under Sagarmala, expanding coastal networks and driving port-led development

India is home to Atal Tunnel-world's longest high-altitude highway tunnel above 10,000 feet and Chenab Bridge-world's highest rail arch bridge



11 SAAL

Viksit Bharat ka Amrit Kaal
Seva, Sushasan, Garib Kalyan ke

142 world-class Vande Bharat train services have become the face of modern railways, ensuring a fast and comfortable travel experience

With Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link, the dream of connecting Kashmir to Kanyakumari by rail is now a reality

Redevelopment of 1300+ railway Stations under Amrit Bharat Station scheme

CBC 37101/13/0008/2526



142 world-class Vande Bharat train services have become the face of modern railways, ensuring a fast and comfortable travel experience

With Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link, the dream of connecting Kashmir to Kanyakumari by rail is now a reality

Redevelopment of 1300+ railway Stations under Amrit Bharat Station scheme