

Jammu & Kashmir Digest

A Review of Developments in J&K



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR
DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES
मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

Volume 4, Issue 4

April 2025

- J&K's Digital Education Revolution
- Blooming Kashmir Unveils Spring Festival 2025
- J&K Visionaries: Stratups Shine Bright

More News and Analyses

J&K's Digital Education Revolution

The Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) administration, in a remarkable move towards digital empowerment in education, has rolled out 1,700 new smart classrooms in government schools.

This expansion is part of the nationwide Information and Communication Technology (ICT) scheme, which focuses on transforming traditional classrooms by incorporating digital tools, e-learning content, and robust teacher training programs. With this update, the total number of smart classrooms in the Union Territory has surged to 3,427, reflecting a strong commitment to modernising education.

While Jammu and Kashmir is gaining ground, states like Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh still lead the race in absolute numbers of smart classrooms. However, the UT's proactive approach signals an increasing awareness of the role technology plays in enhancing learning outcomes. A milestone includes the inauguration of smart classrooms (February 2024) in 12 government schools in Poonch by Deputy Commissioner Yasin M Choudhary, marking a strategic expansion into more remote areas.

The Tribal Affairs Department has also played a crucial role, contributing 200 smart classrooms over the past two years, aimed specifically at improving education for tribal communities. These efforts underline a focused attempt to bridge educational gaps and bring quality learning resources to underserved populations.

Despite the progress, challenges remain. Poor internet connectivity, issues in maintaining digital infrastructure, and the ongoing need for teacher training continue to hinder the full potential of this initiative. Experts stress that addressing these concerns is essential to ensure that digital classrooms do not become digital divides, and instead serve as inclusive, sustainable tools for educational growth across the region. – [Digital Learning](#)

Blooming Kashmir Unveils Spring Festival 2025

The spring is casting its vibrant spell over the Kashmir Valley, a wave of excitement is sweeping across one of India's most iconic and picturesque destinations. From the blooming blossom strolls of Badamwari to the colourful tulip fields along the Zabarwan Hills, Kashmir is unveiling a season of unmatched beauty. This year's festivities are extra special with the launch of the Spring Festival 2025 (5–13 April) — a celebration of Kashmiri culture, cuisine, and music. Adding to the buzz, the Vande Bharat Express is all set to begin operations from April 19, connecting the valley by train for the first time, making travel easier and more scenic than ever before.

Tourism is booming, and so is the demand for travel and accommodation. Flights into Srinagar are filling fast, with fares from major metros like Hyderabad, Bengaluru, and Mumbai rising

quickly—Delhi being the most economical. Homestays, guesthouses, and luxury houseboats on Dal Lake are seeing full bookings, especially hotels in hotspots like Gulmarg and Pahalgam. While budget-friendly options still exist (Rs3,000–5,000 per night), early reservations are strongly recommended. Tour operators are also stepping up, offering flexible packages—from houseboat stays and Shikara rides to adventure-packed trips featuring the Gulmarg Gondola and scenic treks.

Srinagar itself is a trove of experiences. Wander through Asia's largest Tulip Garden, visit the Mughal Gardens, or glide on a peaceful Shikara ride across Dal Lake. A visit to the Shankaracharya Temple offers both spiritual solace and panoramic views. From the bustling lanes of Lal Chowk to the tranquil Mughal-era gardens, the city serves as the perfect gateway for deeper exploration. Road trippers and bikers can enjoy an unforgettable journey via the Chenani-Nashri Tunnel, as the Jammu-Srinagar highway offers a scenic transition from subtropical forests to alpine valleys.

For those seeking solitude and soul-stirring nature, the less-travelled corners of Kashmir beckon. Remote and raw landscapes like Gurez, Tulail, Bangus, and Warwan offer breath-taking treks, camping, and authentic rural hospitality. Hidden gems like Yusmarg, Doodhpathri, and Tosa Maidan invite travellers to bask in nature's lap, while ancient temples in Naranag add a spiritual dimension to the adventure. Whether you're a solo traveller, a culture buff, or a nature enthusiast, spring in Kashmir promises not just a trip—but a revelation. —[ETV Bharat](#)

J&K Visionaries: Startups Shine Bright

Two innovative startups from Jammu and Kashmir—Genetico Pvt Ltd and GR8 Sports Pvt Ltd—made waves at the prestigious Startup Mahakumbh 2025, emerging as national winners in the highly competitive Startup MahaRathi Challenge. Out of 2,400 startups from across India, these ventures stood out, with Genetico securing Rs 20 lakh in the HealthTech and BioTech category and GR8 Sports bagging Rs 5 lakh in Gaming and Sports. The event, hosted at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi and backed by the DPIIT, wasn't just about awards—it opened doors to mentorship, incubation, investor networks, and a whopping Rs 70 crore in funding opportunities.

Representing Jammu and Kashmir under the guidance of JKEDI (Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute), five startups showcased their innovation and ambition. Alongside the winners were CLMRAT Sports, AL-Hamdaan Crafts, Studio Agama, and BISA Innovation Pvt Ltd, all mentored by Irtif Mehraj Lone and Zahid Ali Dar of JKEDI. Founders Arjun Gupta (Genetico) and Fawz-ul-Kabir (GR8 Sports) celebrated the recognition as a testament to their team's dedication and JKEDI's unwavering support in nurturing the region's startup ecosystem.

The achievements come at a pivotal time, as the Industries and Commerce Department of J&K has earmarked Rs 50 crore for the financial year 2025–26 to implement the J&K Startup Policy

2024–27. This policy aims to supercharge the region's entrepreneurial landscape through seed funding, grants, incubator expansion, and innovation-driven programs. It signals a strong governmental push to empower startups and make Jammu and Kashmir a significant player in India's innovation map.

With continued support and strategic investments, the region's entrepreneurial spirit is clearly on the rise, promising a future where startups from J&K aren't just participating—they're leading. - [Kashmir Life](#)

Budget for Women, Poorer Sections

The Chief Minister of J&K, Omar Abdullah, has announced during the maiden budget presentation of the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory, that women will be entitled to free travel on all government-operated transport, including eco-friendly e-buses, starting April 1. This move aims to empower women and enhance their mobility across the region.

Among other key highlights, the budget provides 200 units of free electricity for recipients of Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY), a government-sponsored programme that provides subsidised food for the poorest sections, promises the setup of 98 water testing labs to improve water safety, and increases marriage assistance for girls under the AAY scheme.

Additionally, plans to establish a National Law University in the Union Territory reflect the government's focus on education and long-term development. Chief Minister Abdullah emphasised that this budget lays the foundation for economic growth and inclusive progress across Jammu and Kashmir. – [Free Press Kashmir](#)