

From Page 1

Lord Mahavira's ...

Oswal; Members of Legislative Assembly, Yudhvir Sethi and Arvind Gupta; Anand Jain, ADGP Armed; Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Bhim Sen Tuti, IGP Jammu and other senior officers were also present.

J-K Govt ...

Rs 7,800.58 crore towards contractor bills, Rs 5,821.43 crore under General Provident Fund (GPF), Rs 2,864.14 crore as gratuity, Rs 1,123.22 crore for commutation and Rs 773.47 crore towards leave salary.

He added that most of the bills under these categories have been cleared up to March 27, 2026, while GPF claims have been settled up to December 31, 2025.

Addressing concerns regarding pending liabilities, he said dues are being systematically cleared and there is a structured mechanism in place to ensure timely payments. On the issue of division-wise allocation, the chief minister clarified that funds are allocated and accounted for based on "Heads of Expenditure" rather than on a divisional basis, and payments in treasuries are recorded accordingly.

Meanwhile, CM Abdullah today said his government is committed to ensuring a transparent recruitment process while avoiding undue haste that could lead to legal complications.

Answering a supplementary to a starred question raised by PDP MLA Waheed-ur-Rehman Para, Abdullah said 25,000 vacancies are targeted to be filled this year.

"The issue of recruitment has already been discussed in detail during this session. We all want the process to be transparent and time-bound. However, time-bound should not mean rushing matters and ending up in court the next day," he said.

The chief minister said that on several occasions, recruitment lists had been challenged in courts, leading to the entire process being stalled.

He said the prolonged legal delays resulted in many aspirants becoming overage and missing out on job opportunities.

"Our effort has been to balance things, follow procedures properly, maintain transparency, and do it as soon as possible," he said, reiterating government's resolve to fill up at least 25,000 vacancies this year.

According to data shared by the General Administration Department, headed by the chief minister, over 28,000 vacancies -- mostly non-gazetted -- exist across various departments in Jammu and Kashmir.

Of these, over 7,000 posts, including 959 gazetted and 6,340 non-gazetted positions, were referred to the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC) and the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB) for recruitment during 2025.

Nearly half of the vacancies are concentrated in key public service sectors, particularly the Health and Medical Education Department, which accounts for over 10,000 posts. Of these, 2,497 gazetted and 8,088 non-gazetted positions fall under the direct recruitment quota, while 898 gazetted and 3,601 non-gazetted posts are to be filled through the promotion quota.

The data revealed that the School Education Department is also facing a shortage of 594 gazetted and 727 non-gazetted posts under the direct recruitment quota, along with 2,683 gazetted and 3,598 non-gazetted vacancies under the promotion quota.

Other departments with significant staff shortages include finance, industries and commerce, jal shakti, power development, public works (R&B), rural development & panchayati raj, forest ecology and environment, and youth services and sports.

Govt clears ...

family is capped at Rs one lakh, and importantly, the benefit is not restricted to tribal or BPL families but is available to all affected families.

Clarifying the scope of the term "calamity" in the amended guidelines, he said it includes events causing significant damage or harm, including fire incidents.

Referring to district Srinagar, the chief minister said 24 cases were received from Habba Kadal MLA (Firdous) for providing assistance to fire victims under the CDF scheme, involving an estimated cost of Rs 12.80 lakh.

Of these, five cases have been cleared for additional assistance after completing all required formalities, Abdullah said.

He said the remaining 19 cases are under examination with the Srinagar deputy commissioner, and assured that eligible cases recommended by the MLA will be processed as per the norms.

Encounter breaks ...

story. Meanwhile, suspected drone activity was also reported along the IB in Jammu today, triggering alertness in the security grid.

Personal data ...

hashtags and trends, for example, from YouTube channels and Telegram groups, for radical content and posts that promote extremist ideologies or share propaganda videos or bomb-making tutorials.

It said the technique may be used to monitor scam websites or links to track, for example, online gambling, fake job scams, and fake investment scams.

It may be used on matrimonial and dating Platforms for honeypots or fraud, and from dark web marketplaces for the extraction of cryptocurrency wallet addresses, it said, giving examples of the process.

"Public profiles on matrimonial/dating sites may be scraped in cybercrime investigations where people are blackmailed or trapped into sharing sensitive data," it said while giving examples.

The ministry told the panel that AI is being used for intelligence gathering and counter-intelligence, with key application including face recognition, social media parsing and network analysis, natural language processing for analysis of structured and unstructured data, pattern analysis and hidden connections, etc.

"Additionally, AI is used for entity resolution, enabling accurate identification and correlation of individuals across multiple data sources," it said.

Giving details about the use of artificial intelligence, the home ministry said it is helping security agencies in enhancing their capabilities for intelligence gathering and counter-terrorism efforts by rapidly analysing vast datasets, detecting anomalies, predicting patterns, cross-linkages, etc., thereby improving decision-making, speed and accuracy.

The ministry said the CRPF is using AI in identifying narratives/sentiment analysis on open source (social media platforms).

"An AI-driven intelligence fusion centre is in the final stage of deployment. It will ingest a huge amount of structured and unstructured data and provide analysis, creation of a decision support system which can help in smart explorative interpretations, and solutions for operational requirements of CRPF," it said.

Underlining the potential of AI in intelligence gathering, the ministry said AI can automate the processing of vast and diverse data sources, including communication records, open-source intelligence, financial transactions, and surveillance feeds.

"This allows for quicker identification of threats, detection of anomalies, and linkage analysis across different data points. Natural language processing tools can be used for multilingual monitoring, including regional dialects, aiding in decoding sensitive content from open and dark web sources," it said.

Evolving multi...

grandeur. A revival of that tradition in this institution is an indicator of the rise of not just India but Asia itself".

The minister also noted that there were "intense debates" about "future directions of growth and progress in the world".

"Much of that understandably centres around technology. But as the Nalanda spirit reminds us, we should never forget that there is always a human side", added Jaishankar.

The minister expressed hope that "international students" would do their bit in promoting "understanding of India in their respective countries when they go back".

"All of you, I know, have given your best here and, and I know equally well that you are taking a part of India back with you", added Jaishankar.

Omar slams ...

would be good," he said.

There was no word from the Jammu and Kashmir Police on the decision of the withdrawal of the security to the ruling party headquarters.

Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary said the security should not be granted on a pick-and-choose basis or influenced by political affiliation or personal preference.

"It must be ensured objectively, keeping in view the sacrifices made by leaders across parties in Jammu and Kashmir. Any arbitrary withdrawal or reduction of security is inappropriate, and agencies must act fairly to strengthen democracy," he said.

Choudhary said the MLAs across party lines have raised the issue in the House and "therefore, it is expected to have come to the notice of the Lieutenant Governor, who will take appropriate action.

Earlier, concluding a 30-minute discussion initiated by National Conference MLAs during Zero Hour on the withdrawal of security to the party headquarters, Speaker Rather said members had been raising the security concerns, including withdrawal of their escort vehicles, which require urgent attention.

"The message from this House is loud and clear: if you do not want to provide security, then declare Jammu and Kashmir a risk-free state.

"But a pick-and-choose approach has no merit. We are not speaking against any institution or the Lieutenant Governor; we are speaking against the system," he said.

Referring to the recent assassination attempt on senior Abdullah at a function, he said "if you are withdrawing security to his office, what message are you sending to the people?"

The speaker, while thanking both the treasury and opposition benches for speaking in one voice on the security concerns, said withdrawing security to the National Conference is not "proper" and "you (police) cannot justify it."

The matter was raised by NC MLA Hasnain Masoodi in the House, calling it a "serious and grave" issue, given the recent attack on Farooq Abdullah.

He was joined by party colleagues, including Nazir Ahmad Gurezi, Salman Sagar and Javid Hassan Baig, and Congress legislator Nizam-ud-Din Bhat. BJP's S S Slathia also supported the demand for adequate security to the leaders facing threats.

On Saturday, the Assembly had presented total unity as members from both the treasury and opposition benches unanimously condemned the March 11 assassination attempt on Farooq Abdullah.

During a two-hour discussion, legislators characterised the shooting as a "glaring security lapse" and a "disgrace to humanity", with many calling for a high-level judicial inquiry led by a sitting high court judge.

Govt's assurance ...

matter to provide further relief to the institutions.

MLA Nizam-ud-Din Bhat had moved amendment on the resolution.

Legislator, Mubarak Gul also moved a resolution which read, "This House resolves that considering the alarming degradation of Lakes and water bodies in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, it urges the government to establish a dedicated lakes, water bodies and waterways development authority on the pattern of the Manasbal Lake Development Authority Model, with a mandate for protection, restoration and sustainable development of Khusal Sar, Gilsar, Shallabug Water Body etc".

Responding to the resolution and concerns raised by the Members, Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development & panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Departments Javid Ahmad Dar agreed upon the seriousness of the resolution and said that the government has taken many initiatives for conservation of lakes and water bodies.

He said that there are already many acts to protect the water bodies and urged the member to withdraw the resolution. He assured the member that the government will take every step possible to stop degradation of the lakes and water bodies.

Legislator, Mir Saifullah moved amendment on resolu-

tion.

During the discussion on these resolutions, Legislators Mir Saifullah, Nizam-ud-Din Bhat, Peerzada Farooq Ahmad Shah, Dr. Devinder Kumar Maniyal, Balwant Singh Mankotia, Qaysar Jamshaid Lone, Dr. Sajjad Shafi, Dr. Rameshwar Singh, Iftikar Ahmad, Sajad Gani Lone, Shabir Ahmad Kullay, Pawan Gupta, Rajiv Jasrotia, Tanvir Sadiq, Devyani Rana, Salman Ali Sagar, Nazir Ahmad Khan Gurezi and Shakti Raj Parihar spoke and raised their concerns on the subject.

Later, the Members withdrew their resolutions after satisfactory assurances from the government.

Army rescue ..

said.

The locals approached the army unit stationed there, which responded by launching a prompt humanitarian assistance operation.

"Despite challenging conditions and dangerously high water levels, the teams managed to reach the stranded individuals and safely evacuate all 34 persons to secure locations," the officials said.

Following the evacuation, the army provided the rescued children and staff with necessary assistance, including medical care and refreshments.

The army was assisted in the operation by the police, district administration and local youngsters, they added.

A snow avalanche was reported in the Tulai area of the Gurez sector in Bandipora district. However, officials said it caused no damage as it remained confined to the mountainous region.

The valley received moderate rainfall in the plains and snowfall in some higher reaches over the past 48 hours.

Baramulla received over 70 mm of rainfall in the past 24 hours, the highest in the valley. Nowgam in the Handwara area received 58.2 mm during the corresponding period, followed by Qazigund (48.6 mm) and Kulgam (42.2 mm). Srinagar city also received a fair amount of rain, recording 31.6 mm of precipitation in the past 24 hours.

The weather in Kashmir is expected to remain cloudy on Wednesday before another wet spell over the weekend, they said.

LG, CM condole ...

Teams from the police and other agencies have managed to retrieve the bodies of Koul and Pandit so far.

Abdullah expressed sorrow over the loss of lives in the incident and conveyed his condolences to the bereaved families.

In a post on X, he also prayed for strength and solace for the affected families in this hour of grief.

11K ticketless ...

Jammu, Katra, Srinagar and Budgam in J&K, and Pathankot Cantonment in Punjab.

Given the heavy rush in trains during the Navratri festival, the ticket checking staff delivered an exceptional performance, thereby curbing the presence of unauthorised passengers, the official said.

Senior Divisional Commercial Manager Uchit Singhal urged passengers to always travel with valid tickets to avoid inconvenience and penalties.

"The month of March is always challenging. Our ticket checking staff worked round the clock to ensure that honest passengers face no inconvenience. The revenue generated is not merely a financial gain, but a reflection of growing public trust in railway regulations," he said.

The Jammu Division appeals to its passengers to travel with a valid ticket. Traveling without a ticket is a punishable offense under various sections of the Railways Act, 1989. Passengers are advised to always utilize valid tickets, the UTS mobile app, ATVMs, or the 'RailOne' app to avoid inconvenience and penalties.

I-T Dept ...

those who do not have to get their accounts audited is July 31.

AKM Global Partner-Tax Sandeep Sehgal said ITR-1 appears to have widened its scope for AY 2026-27 by permitting certain taxpayers to report income from up to two house properties. Earlier, the form was generally understood to be restricted to income from one house property only, often requiring taxpayers with a second house property to migrate to ITR-2 or ITR-3.

"By doing this, it could help taxpayers to reduce the compliance burden in such cases wherein they were required to disclose the income of two house properties in ITR 2 or ITR 3," Sehgal said.

He said taxpayers will continue with the familiar assessment year-based return structure for AY 2026-27, which should help contain interpretational issues and reduce compliance friction during the current filing window.

Deloitte India Partner Sumit Singhania said the income reporting structure and number of forms have been kept unchanged.

He said these forms will be filed under the Income Tax Act, 1961, and therefore, broader alignment is with the existing set of disclosure requirements, including reference to 'assessment year'.

The Income Tax department has already said its e-filing portal will facilitate compliance under both the old and new Income Tax Acts in the transition period, and all assessments, appeals, and other proceedings relating to earlier years will continue to be conducted under the old Act until their final resolution.

Taxpayers filing returns for AY 2026-27 (pertaining to the period governed by the old Act) in July 2026 will do so using the forms prescribed under the old Act.

ITR Form 1 (Sahaj) and ITR Form 4 (Sugam) are simpler forms that cater to a large number of small and medium taxpayers.

Sahaj can be filed by a resident individual having annual income up to Rs 50 lakh, and who receives income from salary, one house property, other sources (interest) and agricultural income up to Rs 5,000 a year.

Sugam can be filed by individuals, Hindu Undivided Families (HUFs) and firms (other than Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs)), having a total annual income up to Rs 50 lakh and income from business and profession.

ITR-2 is filed by individuals and HUFs who do not have income from profits and gains in business or profession, but have income from capital gains.

ITR-3 is for individuals and HUFs earning income from a proprietary business or profession.

ITR-5 is filed by firms, limited liability partnerships,

and cooperative societies. ITR-6 is filed by companies registered under the Companies Act.

ITR-7 is filed by trusts and charitable institutions.

5 high-risk ...

category," he said, replying to a question of National Conference MLA Tanvir Sadiq.

However, the government stressed that such classification does not mean an imminent threat, but indicates a higher likelihood of outburst only under specific triggering conditions", Abdullah said.

The chief minister said the assessment provides a baseline for understanding vulnerability and prioritising future detailed studies.

Highlighting gaps in accurate risk estimation, the study said that precise assessment of GLOFs requires reliable data on glacial lake volumes, which can only be obtained through field-based bathymetric measurements— finding out depth and topography of water bodies—currently unavailable for most Himalayan lakes. It added that work in this direction has already been initiated by researchers.

To strengthen scientific assessment, the Department of Geo-informatics, University of Kashmir has procured a high-precision RTK-enabled robotic echo-sounding boat with support from the Ministry of Earth Sciences, it added.

"Bathymetric surveys of at-risk glacial lakes in the western Himalaya are planned for 2026, aimed at improving hydrodynamic modelling and downstream risk evaluation".

The study pointed out that these high-susceptibility lakes pose potential risks to downstream infrastructure.

Outlining mitigation measures, Abdullah said that continuous monitoring of vulnerable lakes through remote sensing and field assessments is being prioritised.

He added that early-warning systems, ecozonation plans for downstream areas and integration of GLOF risk scenarios into district-level disaster preparedness frameworks are part of the future strategy.

Researchers are also working on developing tailored GLOF early-warning systems for mountainous regions, integrating satellite monitoring, field observations, sensor-based hydro-meteorological inputs and near real-time communication systems to ensure timely detection and dissemination of hazard information, it said.

LG urges ...

observed that emerging India's duty is to empower the knowledge economy and to propagate innovations, cultural values, and philosophical ideas globally.

"In this defining moment as global strife fractures societies and humanity quests for peace, India stands tall to illuminate a new path for the world. We are heirs to a civilization that lit lamps of knowledge, culture, and spirituality across continents millennia ago," he said.

He said the world awaits fresh ideas, and youth inherit the tradition birthing transformative thought.

"The youth should return to their roots, cultivate new ideas and innovation and use cultural heritage as a potent tool to transform society. In this interconnected era, strengthen brotherhood's bond and champion compassion over conflict worldwide," he said.

Sinha said the art and culture wield profound insight, purpose, and craft, which is essential for nation-building. For India, art, spirituality, philosophy, and ethics are bridges linking generations.

"This is modern history's toughest phase, and we are fortunate that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is leading the country, establishing new benchmarks in progress and welfare," he said.

The Lt Governor highlighted that India's transformation over the past 12 years has been extraordinary.

He emphasised that the society must accelerate this transformation collectively. "In coming decades, we must harness new energy and resolve to build technologies and systems reshaping domestic and global industries."

On international platforms, he said India has reclaimed ancient glory and confidence.

"Indian engineers, scientists, industrialists, and innovators now steer global discourse; their technologies and talents earn worldwide acclaim. I see this as a renaissance, reviving India's glorious history," he said.

Members of Legislative Assembly, Sham Lal Sharma and Devyani Rana; Mahant Rohit Shastri, President, Shri Kailakh Jyotish and Vedic Santhan Trust; Mukul Kanitkar, prominent citizens and people in large numbers attended the cultural festival.

Suresh Kumar Sharma, Member, Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board; Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu and senior officials were also present.

J&K Bank ...

well as outside the Union Territory. In his last assignment at the Corporate Headquarters, he headed several key departments including Corporate & International Banking/ Forex, Digital & Alternate Channels, Credit Monitoring and Asset Centralization.

Speaking on the occasion, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee acknowledged the immense value of experience that senior executives bring to the organisation and the void created upon their superannuation. He said, "It is always a moment of mixed emotions for the Bank as we bid farewell to senior management functionaries like Nishikant Sharma. The wealth of experience, institutional knowledge and professional commitment that such officers carry is truly invaluable for the organisation."

The MD & CEO extended his best wishes to the retiring officer for a healthy, fulfilling and happy post-retirement life.

On the occasion, Nishikant Sharma expressed his gratitude to the Bank's leadership and his colleagues for their constant support and encouragement throughout his career, recalling his journey with a sense of pride and fulfilment. "I am thankful to the Bank's leadership and all my colleagues in the Bank for their love and support. I will keep cherishing my long and lovely journey at this beloved intuition for the rest of my life", he said.

Executive Director Sudhir Gupta, along with other senior functionaries, also appreciated the outgoing General Manager for his professionalism, dedication and efficiency, acknowledging his significant contributions to the Bank's growth and strengthening of its operations.