

From Page 1

Geopolitical importance ...

could ensure continued strategic leverage. In many cases, political equilibrium was deliberately left incomplete, creating conditions where ambiguity could be exploited when needed.

Jammu and Kashmir was one such region. Its political structure, its external vulnerabilities and its internal diversity made it particularly susceptible to these dynamics. By the time 1947 arrived, the state was already navigating a complex web of pressures—internal, regional and international.

In such a context, expecting a smooth and decisive transition into a settled political arrangement may have been unrealistic. The choices available were constrained, the timelines compressed and the stakes extraordinarily high. Any decision, regardless of its direction, was bound to carry significant consequences.

The unresolved trajectory of Jammu and Kashmir has had deep and lasting consequences. What began as a geopolitical challenge has, over time, translated into lived realities for millions of people.

The region has witnessed cycles of unrest, security challenges and political uncertainty. These have not only affected governance but have also shaped identities and perceptions. Competing narratives—historical, political and ideological—have emerged, each seeking to define the region’s past and future.

One of the most painful outcomes of this prolonged instability has been the displacement of communities. The Kashmiri Pandit exodus remains a stark reminder that geopolitical conflicts are never abstract. They are experienced in the loss of homes, the rupture of communities and the erosion of cultural continuity.

Beyond displacement, there has been an ongoing struggle to reconcile differing visions of identity and belonging. For many, Jammu and Kashmir is not just a place—it is a question of history, memory and aspiration. These layers make the region’s challenges far more complex than a simple political dispute.

If there is one lesson to draw from this history, it is the need to reframe the debate. Jammu and Kashmir’s story cannot be fully understood through the actions of individuals alone. Personalities matter, but they operate within larger structural realities.

Maharaja Hari Singh Ji did not create the conditions that made Jammu and Kashmir vulnerable. He inherited a state shaped by geography, influenced by imperial strategies and exposed to competing external interests. His decisions, like those of many leaders in transitional periods, were made under constraints that are often overlooked in retrospective judgments.

This does not mean that his choices were beyond scrutiny. Rather, it suggests that they should be evaluated within the context in which they were made. Blaming a single individual for a complex historical outcome risks oversimplifying the problem and obscuring its deeper causes.

Understanding Jammu and Kashmir through a geopolitical lens allows for a more balanced perspective. It highlights the role of external forces, the impact of strategic considerations and the limitations placed on internal agency. It also underscores the importance of addressing structural issues rather than focusing solely on historical personalities.

As India continues to redefine its strategic and internal frameworks in the years following 2019, there is an opportunity to revisit the narrative around Jammu and Kashmir. Doing so requires moving beyond simplified accounts and engaging with the region’s history in all its complexity.

Jammu and Kashmir is not merely a political issue to be managed; it is a historical and geopolitical continuum that must be understood in its entirety. Recognising this does not diminish the importance of leadership or decision-making. Instead, it places them within a broader context, allowing for a more informed and constructive discourse.

Maharaja Hari Singh Ji was not the problem. He was a figure navigating a landscape shaped by forces far larger than himself. To understand his role—and the region’s trajectory—one must look beyond individual choices and examine the geopolitical realities that defined them.

Only by doing so can Jammu and Kashmir move from being a theatre of contest to a space of resolution, where history informs progress rather than constrains it.

Modi flags ...

"Our mission is still ongoing. On Uniform Civil Code, 'One Nation, One Election' and other issues, serious discussions are taking place in the country, and we have achieved tremendous progress on those fronts," he said.

Modi said the BJP aims to make the country developed and self-reliant, and it will continue to march in this direction.

Under the 'One Nation, One Election' system, the Modi government proposes to conduct simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and state assemblies. The Uniform Civil Code seeks to create same set of laws for everyone across the country irrespective of religion, especially with regard to marriage, adoption, et cetera.

Modi said the BJP is sincerely striving to face every challenge.

"There are countless works that were the result of BJP's honest efforts, such as ending hundreds of black laws from the British era, the construction of a new Parliament building, 10 per cent reservation for the poor in the general category, triple talaq ban, the Citizenship Amendment Act, the construction of Ayodhya Ram temple," he said.

The prime minister said it was the BJP that had proposed women's reservation for the first time in 1994 in Vadodara.

"We had also decided that we would encourage women in our party organisation as far as possible. When we came to power, we fulfilled that promise. Now we are fully dedicated to ensuring that the Nari Vandan Adhinyam (Women's Reservation Act) is implemented in the 2029 general elections," he said.

Referring to the ongoing West Asia conflict, Modi said the BJP believes in the idea of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (the world is one family) even in times of war.

He said there was a time when India took pride in maintaining equal distance from every country, but now it is moving ahead by keeping close relations with each country.

Highlighting that the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) has completed 25 years of existence, Modi said it is the only coalition that has been working for the interests of the country and the welfare of its people.

"The BJP has set an example in coalition politics. The consistent expansion of the NDA is proof that it is an all-inclusive coalition. It works by prioritising regional aspirations," he said.

Modi said people have seen dynastic politics, which is still prevalent in some parts of the country, and the Left government model, but the BJP's governance model is unique.

"Under our governance model, policies and governments are stable," he said.

Modi said the BJP has its own agenda and aims, and besides handling the current crisis, the party-led government is preparing the country for the future.

"Works are ongoing on issues such as the demographic change, infiltration, corruption, dynastic politics, and freeing people from the slave mentality. The BJP has to make the country free from all these challenges. This responsibility can be fulfilled only by the BJP," he said.

Referring to the abrogation of Article 370 (which gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir) in 2019, Modi said that for decades, the law was a hurdle in fully integrating Jammu and Kashmir with the rest of the country.

"People thought it was impossible to scrap Article 370, but we had promised to abrogate it. We have completed the task," he said.

Modi said the BJP has been maintaining a consistent stand on issues like national security and terrorism, and now new technologies are being installed for border security, the border villages are being developed, and the backbone of Naxals has been crushed.

He said that under the "vast and sacred banyan tree" of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, the BJP was inspired to step into politics with good intentions and integrity.

"In the initial few decades, we devoted our energy to setting policies for the organisation," he said.

He added that the party cannot forget that in 1984, the Congress won a record number of seats, but the country also witnessed how they betrayed the people.

"This increased people's trust in the BJP, and slowly we began to win seats. At that time, two types of political ideologies existed: one was power-driven, and the other was service-oriented. The politics that prioritised power gradually declined, and service-oriented politics gained massive public support. Today, we are proud that through our conduct, we have established a new principle in Indian politics: the principle of nation first," he said.

Earlier, in an X post, Modi greeted BJP workers on the party's foundation day.

The BJP was formed on April 6, 1980.

"Our party has always been at the forefront of serving society, guided by the principle of India First. Our 'karyakartas' are known for their selfless service, unwavering dedication and a deep passion towards good governance. They have worked tirelessly at the grassroots, ensuring maximum people are connected to our ideology and work. We also remember the countless workers whose dedication, sacrifice and perseverance have shaped the party's growth over decades," he said.

He said the BJP stands as a party that places the well-being of people at the centre of its vision, and this is reflected in the work at the Centre and in various states.

"BJP remains committed to building a Viksit Bharat. May our collective resolve continue to drive this vision forward and take India to new heights of progress and prosperity," he said.

Meanwhile, PM Modi on Monday said that while his government carried out 'Operation Sindoor', the Congress continued to "sing to the tune of" Pakistan.

Addressing back-to-back election rallies in Barpeta, Hojai and Dibrugarh in Assam, Modi also accused the Congress of taking a myopic view on development, while asserting that the BJP focuses on long-term growth.

"The party always took short-term measures so that they could indulge in corruption. But the BJP looks far ahead while taking decisions for all-around development of all sections of society," he said.

The PM alleged that during the 2016 surgical strikes or the 2025 'Operation Sindoor', the Congress has always sung to Pakistan's tune, giving importance to their agenda.

"This Pakistan connection always weighs heavily on the country, and we can never allow that," he said.

Modi also accused the Congress of neglecting the Army by refusing to implement the 'One Rank, One Pension' for the veterans for decades.

"But the BJP government ensured that justice was done to those who protect the nation by giving them this benefit," he said, adding that so far, Rs 1.24 lakh crore has been disbursed to the bank accounts of veterans.

Modi accused the Gandhi family of indulging in dynastic politics and corruption.

"The first family of Congress is the most corrupt in the country, indulging in seams of huge proportions and is currently out on bail. The Congress can do only two things -- tell lies and indulge in corruption," he alleged.

In an apparent swipe at Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi's "mohabbat ki dukaan" pitch, Modi said the Congress represents "mithya ki dukaan" (shop of lies) and "apmaan" (insult).

"There is another family in Assam... and both are making false promises ahead of the polls," he said, in an apparent reference to Gandhi's deputy in Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi, who is also the president of the party's state unit.

The PM also accused the Gandhi family of occupying land in prime locations of Delhi.

"The Congress alleges that the BJP acquires land from people, but they don't talk about the prime lands in Delhi with them in the name of National Herald, Rajiv Gandhi Charitable Trust and others," he said.

Modi said the BJP acquired land for the state's development, which has benefited all sections of society.

"They are now talking about land as it (land) has shifted from beneath their feet," he claimed.

Referring to the Emergency Landing Facility (ELF) at Moran, the PM said that earlier, the road conditions were such that even vehicles had difficulty in plying, but now fighter jets can land on a highway in Assam.

Modi alleged that the Congress adopted a stepmotherly attitude towards the state and neglected Upper Assam and the Barak Valley.

"The Congress did nothing for the tea garden workers, but the BJP government gave them land rights for their homes," he claimed.

"During my last visit to Dibrugarh, I had interacted with women tea garden workers, but to insult me, they made fun of their dress and culture," he alleged.

The PM alleged Congress only helped infiltrators for vote bank politics, and allowed them to settle on the land belonging to 'satras', temples, tribal communities, besides the Kaziranga National Park.

"It is the BJP that is freeing these lands from the encroachers and also giving land rights to the indigenous people of Assam," he said.

Asserting that people's aspirations are the BJP's priority, Modi said, "The Congress is in power in Himachal, Karnataka and Telangana; they made tall promises before the polls, but what have they done so far?"

Referring to the West Asia conflict, Modi said the government is working to shield citizens, especially the poor, middle class and farmers, from its impact.

"It has been the BJP's priority since the beginning to focus on minimising their sufferings, and this will continue," he

said.

Modi said peace was re-established in Assam after a lot of sacrifices, and this has led to the state's development under the BJP rule.

"To continue development, it is necessary to keep the Congress out," he claimed.

Modi said the 33 per cent reservation for women in Parliament would be implemented from the 2029 Lok Sabha elections.

"A special session of Parliament has been convened on April 16 to discuss the issue with all parties and take this forward. But some people are trying to spread rumours even about this," he said.

"All states in the country will benefit from this. They have waited 40 years for this, and women in Assam should urge all parties to ensure the bill's passage," he said.

Listing the various works done by his government, Modi said the minimum support price for paddy has increased from Rs 1,300 per quintal in 2013 to Rs 2,370 per quintal at present.

"Farmers' income is increasing, and the BJP government is transferring money directly to their bank accounts, bypassing middlemen," he said, noting that Assam's famed 'Joha' rice is now being exported to European countries.

Polling for the 126 assembly constituencies in Assam will be held on April 9, while counting of votes will take place on May 4.

Probe ordered ...

adopted by the lieutenant governor is right. Let the magisterial inquiry do its work, and whatever the truth is, it will come out before the people."

Referring to the broader situation in Iran, Abdullah took note of remarks made by the President of the United States and questioned the tone of his public communication.

"The kind of language used by the US President and his office: does it suit him or his office? Is such rhetoric appropriate for someone in that position? The kind of words being used are such that even you and I cannot repeat them without censoring them in a broadcast," he said, adding that the dignity of the office must be maintained.

On the issue of war, the chief minister expressed concern over the prolonged conflict. "We are all concerned about it. The longer it continues, the more difficult it will become for all of us," he said.

Reiterating the need for peace, Abdullah said, "We all hope that a ceasefire is announced as soon as possible, that the war comes to an end, and the current situation stabilises and improves."

Meanwhile, CM Omar Abdullah on Monday handed over appointment orders to 124 candidates from the Jammu division under the rehabilitation assistance scheme, urging the appointees to serve with dedication, integrity and compassion.

Expressing solidarity with the families, the CM said the appointees were aimed at providing support and stability in difficult times and asked the beneficiaries to carry forward the legacy of service of their loved ones with dignity and commitment.

"The appointees should serve with dedication, integrity and compassion, and carry forward the legacy of service of their loved ones with dignity and commitment," Abdullah said while addressing the gathering here.

He reiterated that these appointments are a step towards ensuring support and stability in difficult times.

Abdullah said such occasions were usually moments of great joy for recipients, but also served as reminders of responsibility. "Generally, for someone, receiving a government order is perhaps the happiest day of their life. But when I look at my responsibilities and feel that I fall short, it feels strange to me," he said.

He noted that unlike routine recruitment processes involving examinations and interviews, the beneficiaries under the scheme had endured far greater hardships.

"For you, this has not been just a simple test. To obtain your orders, you have had to pay a heavy price—something far more difficult than any examination. Compared to what your families have gone through, clearing exams like IAS, IFS or IPS seems easier," he said while referring to the loss of their kith and kin.

Highlighting the need for administrative efficiency, Abdullah said he wanted the process of issuing appointment orders to be expedited. "It should not happen in the future that such orders take a long time to be issued. The situation is better than before, but change cannot come all at once," he added.

The CM said the government was committed to addressing pending issues and concerns across districts and blocks, while maintaining that the focus of such programmes was service rather than politics. "We are here to assure you of our commitment in this difficult time. Whatever we can do, we will serve the people," he said.

He said that as far as political matters are concerned, "we are not here to engage in politics or to talk about what our government has done or not done. We are here to assure you of our trust and commitment, especially in this very difficult time. Whatever we can do, we will serve the people of Jammu and Kashmir. It will be our responsibility to continue serving you for as long as we are here."

He also acknowledged the challenges faced by people at the grassroots level, particularly those coming from remote areas. "Many of you have come from far-off districts. You understand the hardships on the ground and what needs to be done to overcome them," he said.

Advising the new appointees to remain steadfast in their duties, Abdullah cautioned against taking shortcuts. "Some people may try to lead you on the wrong path. You may feel tempted to choose the easier way, but remember—the satisfaction that comes from overcoming hardships can never be matched by taking the easy route," he said.

Referring to his own experience, he said that age and exposure had taught him the value of perseverance. "The hardships you face while choosing the difficult path are real, but even the easy path has its own challenges. The difference lies in what you learn and achieve from them."

Reiterating his commitment to the people, Abdullah assured that efforts would continue to improve governance and ensure better service delivery across Jammu and Kashmir.

Govt employee ...

District Kathua for demanding and accepting bribe The said accused public servant, demanded the bribe amounting to Rs 10,000 from the complainant, for releasing of assistance under State Marriage Assistance Scheme for the marriage of his daughter, whose marriage stands fixed on 16-04-2026.

The said accused, after negotiation, agreed to receive Rs 5,000 as bribe money from the complainant for doing the needful. The complainant had already paid an amount of Rs 1500 as bribe to the said accused and now, after re-negotiation, he is further demanding an amount of Rs 3000 for the release of ₹50,000 as assistance under the said scheme. Since, the complainant didn't want to pay bribe and accordingly he approached Anti-Corruption Bureau for taking legal action against the accused public servant under law.

On receipt of the complaint, a discreet verification was

conducted, which corroborated the demand of bribe by the public servant concerned and accordingly, a case FIR No. 03/2026 U/S 7 of Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 was registered in Police Station ACB Jammu and investigation taken up.

During the course of investigation, a trap team was constituted. The team laid a successful trap and accused public servant was caught red-handed while demanding and accepting bribe amount from the complainant in the presence of independent witnesses. The accused was arrested on the spot by the ACB team after following due process of law. The bribe money was also recovered from his possession in presence of independent witnesses associated with the trap team. Moreover, search is also being conducted in his residence situated at Kishanpur, Billawar in presence of Magistrate.

Further investigation of the instant case is going on.

Rs 1.24 lakh ...

encourages financial indiscipline in the management of public resources," it added.

The report noted that the excess expenditure was incurred across a total of 543 grants and appropriations year after year between 1980 and 2019, with particularly high overruns being recorded during the late 1990s and early 2000s, including Rs 12,954.06 crore in 2005-06 and Rs 9,770.53 crore in 2003-04.

It further pointed out that even in recent years, prior to the reorganisation of the state, excess expenditure continued, with Rs 5,311.53 crore recorded for 2019-20 (April 1 to October 30, 2019).

Nation's prosperity ...

inauguration, Bhagwat offered floral tributes to Lord Krishna.

He also interacted with children participating in the Bal-agokulam event.

Traffic remains ..

assisted by the local administration, while emergency services have been kept on alert in vulnerable stretches. The Border Roads Organisation and other agencies have deployed additional machinery to expedite restoration work. Continuous rainfall in the region has increased the risk of fresh landslides, prompting authorities to monitor the situation closely. Traffic will be allowed in a regulated manner only after complete clearance and safety assessment of the affected stretches, the officials said.

CS Dulloo ...

Senior officials from the Union Territory administration, Reserve Bank of India, NABARD, Jammu and Kashmir Bank, insurance companies and other financial institutions attended the session.

Dulloo called for expanding banking infrastructure in under-served areas, stating that establishing banking touchpoints in un-banked Gram Panchayats is essential to advancing financial inclusion. He expressed dissatisfaction over delays by some banks in providing such services and asked them to coordinate with local authorities to expedite the process.

On housing schemes, he flagged weak performance under the interest subsidy component of Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana 2.0 and suggested leveraging Common Service Centres to improve beneficiary outreach. He also pressed for complete credit linkage in housing and education sectors, noting that growth in these segments has not met expectations.

The Chief Secretary highlighted deficiencies in the re-KYC process and called for intensified compliance efforts to establish a more robust regulatory framework. He further advised banks to enhance lending under employment-oriented government schemes, stating that proactive financial support could enable youth to translate entrepreneurial ambitions into viable enterprises.

Referring to credit support for Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), Dulloo appreciated the performance of J&K Bank while urging closer coordination between banks and departments to strengthen the FPO ecosystem through awareness campaigns and improved credit linkage.

He also recommended issuance of smart cards to Kisan Credit Card holders and emphasised the need for improved participation in schemes involving Self Help Groups, Joint Liability Groups, and renewable energy initiatives.

A major concern raised during the meeting was the low CD ratio in certain districts. Dulloo proposed the constitution of an expert committee to examine the issue and recommend corrective measures, stating that the current figures necessitate targeted intervention.

Earlier, Kashmir Director and Chief Executive Officer of Jammu and Kashmir Bank, Amitava Chatterjee, who is also the Convenor of UTLBC, reiterated the banking sector's role in fostering economic transformation and expanding access to credit across segments. He assured full cooperation from member banks in implementing employment and enterprise-driven initiatives.

According to the progress report presented at the meeting, banks in Jammu and Kashmir disbursed credit amounting to ₹63,892 crore to 14.56 lakh beneficiaries during the first three quarters of the 2025-26 financial year.

The review also covered performance under various government-backed schemes, including MISSION YUVA, PMEGP, PMFME, HADP, KCC, and financial inclusion and social security programmes.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks by Chief General Manager, J&K UTLBC.

NOTICE

I, Zahra Mirza D/o Sh Iqbal Ali, R/o Vill Chohala, Tehsil R.S. Pura, District Jammu, Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, do hereby state that my name as entered in my Aadhaar Card bearing No. 4623 2730 5076 is "Zahra Mirza". That I have changed my name from "Zahra Mirza" to "ISA" due to my astrological and religious beliefs. Henceforth, I shall be known and identified by the name "ISA" for all purposes and in all records.

NOTICE

I, Misbha Parveen & Chasham Batool D/O Nisar Ahmed & Nazima Banoo are studying in class 4th & 2nd in Bhaadewah Valley Public School Kahi Bhaadewah. Our mothers name is written in school documents as Nazima Begum instead of Nazima Banoo due to some clerical error. Now we want to correct the name of our mother as Nazima Banoo in school record. Anybody having any objection shall contact to the concerned authorities with in seven days of the publication of this notice.