

# Jammu & Kashmir Digest

A Review of Developments in J&K



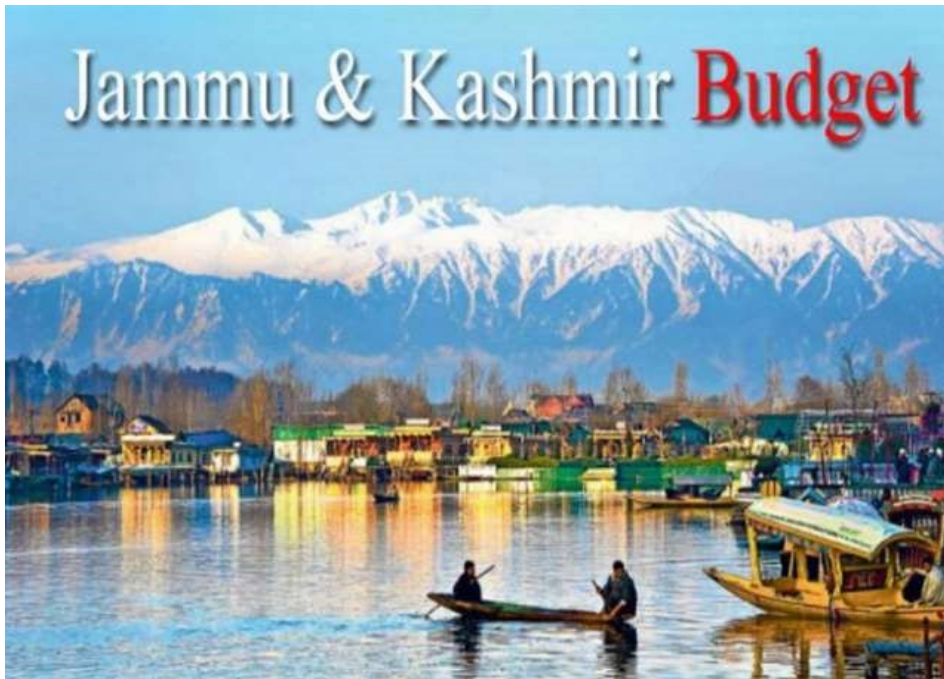
MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR  
DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES  
मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान

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- Inclusive J&K Budget to double GDP of UT in 5 Years
- Breathing Life into Hokersar wetlands
- Radio Sharda: Voice of Kashmiri Pandits

**More News and Analyses**



On 22 March 2023, Lok Sabha passed a budget of over ₹1.18 lakh crore for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir for 2023-24. The budget includes a capital expenditure of ₹41,491 crore, which represents 35% of the total budget and is intended to be used for development and infrastructure.

The J&K budget, along with the supplementary budgets for both J&K and the Union, was approved by the House via a voice vote. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman highlighted the capital component of the budget, which has increased significantly and the revenue receipts are expected to be ₹1,06,061 crore.

On the other hand, the expenditure is expected to be around ₹77,009 crore, which would leave a revenue surplus of ₹29,052 crore available for capital expenditure.

Priorities of the J&K budget include accelerated development and inclusive growth, promoting sustainable agriculture, facilitating investment and industrial growth, employment generation, women's empowerment, social inclusion, strengthening grassroots democracy, and good governance.

Another priority of the budget is to double the gross state domestic product (GSPD) within five years. "The economy is on right track and government is focusing on equitable growth in all the sectors of the economy. The economy is expected to grow at 10 percent and there has been significant growth in collections under GST (goods and services tax), excise and duty stamps," the finance minister added. The J&K budget aligns with the federal budget presented in Parliament on February 1, 2023 which focused on capital expenditure to boost growth, recognizing it as a driver of growth and jobs, and raising the outlay by 33% to ₹10 lakh crore.

— *Hindustan Times*

## DEVELOPMENT SECTION

### INCLUSIVE J-K BUDGET TO DOUBLE GDP OF UT IN 5 YEARS

#### RECORD INVESTMENTS



### 500 STARTUPS IN THREE YEARS

According to Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai, Jammu and Kashmir has received a significant investment of Rs 1,547 crore in the current fiscal year until January 2023. The government anticipates that investments will continue to rise over the next five years in critical industries.

Meanwhile, a senior official of J&K industries department has said: "In the last three years, a total of 500 start-ups have come up in Jammu and Kashmir — *Daily Excelsior, Deccan Herald*





# ENVIRONMENT SECTION

## BREATHING LIFE INTO HOKERSAR WETLANDS

### AN AVIAN HAVEN

Authorities in Kashmir have initiated a major project to revive the Hokersar Wetlands, which serve as natural water purifiers, flood retention areas, and a sanctuary for migratory birds during the winter season.

Over the last 30 to 40 years, the wetlands have suffered significant damage. On the outskirts of Srinagar, the wetland is facing the threat of extinction due to extreme pollution, encroachments and siltation.

Hokersar is an important refuge for migratory birds (read inset). It also acts as one of the water absorption basins that saves Kashmir from floods.

The Department of Wildlife Protection officials have now developed a comprehensive plan to revive the wetlands and also explore the potential of eco-tourism in the area.

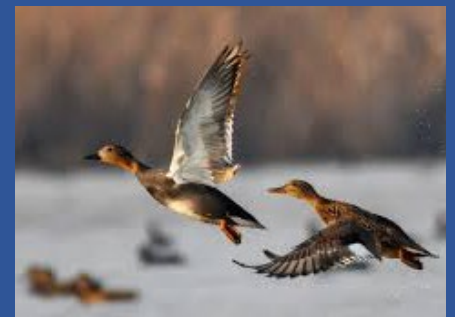
The Department of Environment and Remote Sensing has created a list of more than 3,000 wetlands in Kashmir that require protection and revitalization.

These wetlands serve as a flood mitigation system as they are situated in the Jhelum River basin.

These areas are also rich in biodiversity, attracting millions of birds during the winter season.

The project aims to maintain a minimum water level of one meter in the Hokersar Wetlands throughout the year.

Once the restoration work is completed, the areas that are currently silted up and marked by embankments will become inundated, allowing the wetland characteristics to thrive once again. — *The Print, Greater Kashmir*



### OVER HALF-A-MILLION MIGRATORY BIRDS FLY TO RESERVE

According to a recently published water bird census report, over 567,884 birds from 33 species, migrate to the Hokersar Wetlands seasonally. It is estimated that about 81 percent of all birds at the wetland are migratory.

They mostly include Gadwalls, northern Pintail, Conman Teal, Eurasian Coot, Geese and Northern Shoveler.

Indian Bird Conservation Network and Bombay Natural History Society conducted the census for the first time in history.

— *Kashmir Life*



*Broadcasting on 90.4FM, Radio Sharda airing views of the Kashmiri Pandit community under the tagline 'Booziv Te Khosh Rooziv' (Listen and Be Happy)'. — PTI*

Radio Sharda, a community radio station based in Jammu, has become a significant platform for the Kashmiri Pandit community as people from different parts of the world listen to it to reconnect with their heritage and traditions.

With its tagline 'Booziv Te Khosh Rooziv' (Listen and Be Happy), Radio Sharda broadcasts on a frequency of 90.4 MHz and was founded by Ramesh Hangloo.

The station commenced operations in December 2011 with the aim of preserving, promoting, and propagating Kashmiri culture, music, and knowledge among the younger generation while connecting Kashmiri Pandits residing in India and 108 other countries.

Due to its informative and engaging programs on Kashmiri culture, history, music, bhajans, and issues that affect the community, it has become a household name in the community.

The radio station has also served as an information dissemination center for Kashmiri Pandits who live far away from their homeland and have contacted the station to obtain updates on their family members in the valley, especially during the abrogation of Article 370 and the Kashmir floods in 2014.

Additionally, Radio Sharda has won two national awards for Community Radio in 2018 and 2019.

"We are connecting Kashmiri Pandits living in India and 108 other countries through this community radio station. It is a household name in the community because of its programmes on Kashmiri culture — history, music, bhajans and issues confronting the community," Founder Director of Radio Sharda Ramesh Hangloo said. — *Daily Excelsior, Outlook*

## CULTURE SECTION

### RADIO SHARDA: VOICE OF KASHMIRI PANDITS

## BAISAKHI IN JAMMU



### Jammu Celebrates Dogra Culture in Baisakhi Mahotsav

A Baisakhi Mahotsav was organized to celebrate Dogra culture and heritage in Jammu from 13-15 April 2023.

The festival filled with cultural events was planned by the Tourism Department and celebrations were scheduled in locations such as Gulbarg Paddar in Kishtwar, Devika Udampur, Mansar Lake, Dera Baba Banda Bahadur, Jia Pota Ghat Akhnoor, Nangali Sahab Gurdudwara Poonch and Mubarak Mandalai Complex.

— *The Northlines*