

CM meets Council...

Office said the meeting also focused on improving public service delivery across the Union territory. "The meeting deliberated on a range of proposals and policy matters aimed at strengthening governance, accelerating development and improving public service delivery across Jammu and Kashmir," the Chief Minister's Office said in a post on X.

11 India-bound ships...

(MEA) said on Tuesday. With the US withdrawing sanctions on Iranian petroleum products as part of the peace deal, New Delhi said it is monitoring the developments in West Asia and that its energy sourcing is guided by national interest.

"As of today, we have 10 Indian-flagged vessels still in the Persian Gulf region. In addition, two have recently arrived there," MEA spokesman Randhir Jaiswal said at a media briefing. "Since the signing of the MoU on June 17, 11 India bound vessels have transited through the Strait of Hormuz," he said. The vessels include three Indian-flagged crude oil tankers, each carrying over 285,000 MT (Metric Tonnes) of crude oil; one foreign-flagged LPG carrier, one foreign-flagged crude oil tanker and six foreign-flagged bulk carriers, carrying fertilisers, he said.

"We hope that the remaining India flagged vessels would also be able to cross the Hormuz soon," Jaiswal added. US President Donald Trump and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian signed the landmark peace MoU which provided for an immediate halt to all military operations, the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, and the lifting of the US naval blockade on Iranian ports.

Global oil and gas prices had surged after Iran virtually blocked the Strait of Hormuz through which around a fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) usually passes. The blockade had severely impacted energy supplies to countries around the world including India. West Asia has been a major source of India's energy procurement.

To a question on US removing sanctions on Iranian crude oil, Jaiswal said: "We are closely monitoring all developments related to West Asia. As far as our energy sourcing is concerned, you are well aware that our policy is guided by national interest." "Our priority is to ensure that 1.4 billion people have access to energy at affordable prices and from diverse sources. This has consistently been our policy," he said.

To a separate question, Jaiswal said India has maintained good relations with Palestine for decades. Under our development partnership framework, we have extended several development projects to Palestine, he said. These projects have been delivered both through bilateral channels and through United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), he added.

"In addition, we have extended humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people on numerous occasions. We will continue to provide such support in the future as well," he noted. Jaiswal also responded to a question on the India-UAE defence partnership. "This is a very important relationship with the United Arab Emirates," he said. In recent years, there has been a major upswing in the relationship and defence partnership plays an important role in that, he said.

India trashes Pak...

"We have seen some reports on the matter. Such remarks are desperate attempts by Pakistan to cover-up its own failings and deflect attention away from its human rights abuses," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said. "We categorically reject these fabricated claims with the contempt they deserve."

"The ongoing protests in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) are a direct consequence of Pakistan's decades-long policy of systemic economic exploitation, denial of fundamental rights, and administrative oppression in areas under its illegal and forcible occupation," Jaiswal said.

He said the Pakistani state has responded to the protests with extreme brutality, blocking of essential supplies and medicines, internet blackouts, and use of lethal force against unarmed civilians. "We hope the international community will hold Pakistan accountable for its misdeeds and abuses," he said.

Shutdown across Ladakh...

Understandings reached during the May 22 talks in the official Minutes of Meeting (MoM), besides expressing resentment against the Lt Governor-led administration for taking decisions on issues such as liquor policy, land, power, transport and tourism without consulting the people.

LAB and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) have been jointly spearheading an agitation seeking statehood for Ladakh and the extension of constitutional safeguards under the Sixth Schedule to the region. They have held several rounds of talks with the Centre since 2021. The LAB and KDA leaders have claimed that the May 22 discussions covered a proposed democratic structure for Ladakh with legislative, executive and financial powers, along with constitutional safeguards through a proposed Article 371K.

The two groups called for a Ladakh-wide shutdown and a rally in Leh town, accusing the Centre of failing to honour the understanding reached during the sub-committee level talks on the Union Territory's political and constitutional future. Shops, business establishments and private institutions remained closed in most parts of the Union Territory, including Leh and Kargil, in response to the bandh call. However, transport services, exempted from the strike due to the ongoing tourism season, continued to operate normally.

According to LAB co-chairman Chering Dorjay, it was also agreed during the talks that the bureaucracy, including the chief secretary, would function under the authority of an executive led by the people of Ladakh. However, the organisations maintain that such understandings were not properly reflected in the minutes issued subsequently.

Reiterating their accusation against the Centre of adopting delaying tactics and failing to make meaningful progress on Ladakh's long-pending demands despite several rounds of dialogue over the past five years, Dorjay demanded continuation of the dialogue with sincerity to address all the issues in a peaceful manner.

He said the shutdown was intended to register public protest against what he called the Centre's "lack of sincerity" in addressing Ladakh's concerns and to press for a faithful implementation of the understandings reached during negotiations.

Criticising the functioning of the UT administration, he demanded the immediate rollback of all decisions taken "behind closed doors", including the new liquor policy, land conversion laws and tourism reforms, alleging that they undermined the aspirations and interests of the people of Ladakh. He also expressed concern over the alleged activities of certain missionary groups, claiming that attempts were being made to convert local residents, and stressed the need to preserve Ladakh's distinct cultural and religious identity.

Public delivery system...

Revolutionized public service delivery. From just 35 online services in 2020 to more than 1,100 by 2023, UT topped the national e-service delivery rankings. We made Panchayati Raj institutions the strongest voice and largest participants in governance. Through 'Block Diwas' and 'Back to Village' campaigns, we tried to ensure services reach doorsteps, infrastructure meets local needs, and policies flow from the grassroots up.

We put the common person's aspirations at the core of administration. By ensuring accountability and citizen participation, we have translated a commitment to multi-generational change into reality within 3 years and rebuilt a powerful relationship of trust with citizens," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor urged the participants from Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand to study the grassroots service delivery models of Jammu Kashmir including BEAMS-EMPOWERMENT, Aapki Zameen-Aapki Nigrani and "Your Mobile -Our Office" which had transformed service delivery and program implementation in villages. He highlighted the Government of India report which had observed that between 2016 and 2018 Jammu Kashmir recorded 20 million digital transactions over three years. In contrast, in the first six months of 2023 alone there were 50 Crore digital transactions - far exceeding many large states such as Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Odisha, Karnataka, and Kerala.

"More than 15,000 CSC (Common Service Centre) outlets are operational in Jammu Kashmir today. Of the 4,290 panchayats, 4,211

are connected to this network, representing an impressive 98.16 per cent coverage. The remaining 79 panchayats are in very remote and border areas where connectivity remains a challenge.

We must also strengthen a culture of knowledge exchange. It is essential to share successful models, best practices, and innovations from each state and Union Territory so that service delivery at the last mile becomes more effective. I believe events like this will foster mutual learning and cooperation. A successful panchayat model in Haryana can inspire a panchayat in Karnataka. Similarly, an innovative initiative from Jammu Kashmir can open new possibilities in Jharkhand," the Lieutenant Governor said. The Lieutenant Governor said that the regional conference on service delivery is a reflection of three core traits of India- unity in diversity, strength through cooperation, and prosperity through service.

"I am confident these qualities together will build local governance rooted in collaboration, participation, and a spirit of change. Our objective must be clear: to develop panchayats where every citizen can access services digitally, grievances are resolved quickly, decisions are taken collectively, and accountability is systemic. We must remember that the panchayat of the future will not be merely an administrative unit. They will be a dynamic centre of innovation, equal opportunity, sustainable development, and public trust," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor shared key recommendations with the participants to implement in their respective states. The focus remains on strengthening grassroots service delivery and driving innovation across the nation. "My first recommendation is to establish a 'Village Innovation Lab' in every panchayat. Local youth, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, and social organisations can collaborate there on low-cost solar solutions, new irrigation techniques, and other local innovations. My second recommendation is to run modern capacity-building programmes in every panchayat so leaders grow confident and capable of building self-reliant, progressive villages. My third recommendation is to institutionalise participatory budgeting in every panchayat - an initiative we had launched in Jammu Kashmir in 2021. When citizens decide how part of the panchayat fund is spent, governance becomes a powerful means of citizen participation.

My fourth recommendation is to mainstream sustainable development models like Green Jammu Kashmir, Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam, Ek Ped Beti Ke Naam, across panchayats nationwide. My fifth recommendation is to put women in leadership roles across all schemes. In Jammu Kashmir we prioritised women's leadership in campaigns against substance abuse and in ensuring access to clean drinking water, dairy, health, education, and social equity," the Lieutenant Governor said.

As part of the workshop, Panditpora Gram Panchayat from Kupwara and Shri Syed Waris Hafiz, a dedicated CSC Village Level Entrepreneur from Budgam, J&K UT, along with outstanding Gram Panchayats and Common Service Centres (CSCs) from participating states were recognized and felicitated.

The workshop, held in collaboration with the Common Services Centre Special Purpose Vehicle (CSC-SPV), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, J&K, forms part of a sustained series of initiatives undertaken by the Ministry to facilitate improved service delivery and strengthen Ease of Living in Gramen Bharat through empowered, accountable, and responsive Panchayati Raj Institutions and Rural Local Bodies.

Representatives from civil society organisations, academic and research institutions, and organisations working in rural technology and digital public infrastructure also participated, contributing diverse perspectives on last-mile governance and service delivery. Deliberations focused on strengthening Panchayat-led service delivery through digital transformation, citizen participation, innovation, and improved accessibility of public services at the grassroots. Panel discussions, technical sessions, and experience-sharing sessions provided a structured platform for inter-state knowledge exchange and the dissemination of scalable governance models.

Shri Javid Ahmad Dar, Minister for Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, J&K; Shri Vivek Bharadwaj, Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj; Shri Saurabh Bhagat, Commissioner Secretary, Information Technology, J&K; Ms. Palka Sahni, Joint Secretary, MoPR; Shri Pravin Chandekar, Chief Operating Officer, Common Service Centres; Ms. Rehana Batul, Director General, J&K IMPARD; Shri Mohammad Ajiz Asad, Secretary, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, J&K; Shri Rajiv Omprakash, DIG CKR; Dr. GV Sundeep Chakravarthy, SSP Srinagar; Shri Akshay Labroo, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar; Ms Anoo Malhotra, DG Rural Sanitation J&K; Panchayat functionaries, elected representatives, Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs), and senior officials attended the inaugural session.

Syama Prasad Mookerjee's...

preserving India's unity and integrity. Addressing a gathering at the launch of NAFED's Auction Portal in New Delhi, Shah said June 23 holds special significance for Bharatiya Janata Party workers as it marks the day when Mookerjee sacrificed his life for the cause of national unity.

"Today, June 23, is a very inspiring day for many workers like me who are associated with the Bharatiya Janata Party. It was on this very day that Syama Prasad Mookerjee sacrificed his life to keep the country united and to fulfil the motto of 'one nation, one constitution, one leader,'" Shah said. The Home Minister said Mookerjee died under suspicious circumstances while being held in a jail in Jammu and Kashmir and did not receive medical treatment.

Shah hailed Mookerjee's role during the partition of India, saying he fought to ensure that West Bengal remained a part of India while East Bengal became part of Pakistan. "Before independence, when partition was taking place, it was Syama Prasad Mookerjee who fought against the British to ensure that West Bengal would remain in India while East Bengal would go to Pakistan. It is because of this that West Bengal remains an integral part of India today," he said.

Referring to the erstwhile special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370, Shah said the provision had created a separate constitutional framework for the region. "After the country gained independence, Article 370 was implemented in Kashmir. Kashmir had its own state flag, its own separate constitution, its own Prime Minister and its own President. This concept was very dangerous for the unity and integrity of India," he said.

The Home Minister said Mookerjee launched a movement against the arrangement and raised the slogan that there could not be "two constitutions, two flags and two Prime Ministers in one country." "He led a march from Delhi to Kashmir. When he reached the border of Kashmir, a permit was demanded from him. He stated, 'Kashmir is a part of my country; I do not need any permit,'" Shah said while recalling Mookerjee's campaign against the permit system that existed at the time.

Shah said Mookerjee was arrested after refusing to comply with the permit system that existed for entry into Jammu and Kashmir at the time. "He was arrested there. He had even resigned as Industry Minister from Jawaharlal Nehru's first cabinet over this very issue," Shah said. The Home Minister asserted that Mookerjee's vision had been realised with the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019. Shah also highlighted the growth of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, founded by Mookerjee, into the Bharatiya Janata Party.

"Today, Syama Prasad Mookerjee's dream has come true. Article 370 has been abrogated. And the party he founded, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, is now known as the Bharatiya Janata Party, which rules from the Ganges to the Ganga Sagar in Bengal," he said. The Union Home Minister also hailed the NAFED's auction portal, NAFEX, in, claiming that the initiative has reached a Rs 500 crore profit with a turnover of Rs 3000 crore. "NAFED, which was on the verge of shutting down in 2014, has now, through these very measures, achieved a turnover of Rs 30,000 crore and a profit of Rs 500 crore, while serving 7.6 million farmers across the country," said Amit Shah.

DGP Prabhat reviews...

Amarnath Ji Yatra. The DGP was accompanied by Special Director General (SDG) Coordination and Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir Zone during the visit. Senior police and security officials briefed the visiting officers on the multi-layered security framework put in place to ensure the safe and smooth conduct of the annual pilgrimage. During the visit, the DGP was given a comprehensive presentation by the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of South Kashmir Range and the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Anantnag regarding the overall security grid, deployment strategy, surveillance

measures, access control mechanisms, emergency response plans and coordination among various security agencies.

The officers informed the DGP about the arrangements made at the base camp and along the Yatra route, including round-the-clock monitoring, area domination exercises, anti-sabotage checks and enhanced vigilance to address any security challenges. Reviewing the preparations, DGP Nalin Prabhat emphasized the need for maintaining a high level of alertness and seamless coordination among all security agencies to ensure a secure environment for the pilgrims. He also directed the officers to remain vigilant and ensure effective implementation of all security protocols.

The visit forms part of the ongoing efforts by Jammu and Kashmir Police and other security agencies to strengthen security arrangements ahead of the annual pilgrimage, which is scheduled to commence next month. Officials reiterated their commitment to providing a safe, peaceful and hassle-free pilgrimage experience for devotees visiting the holy Amarnath cave shrine.

PM Modi calls...

significance as political circles in the national capital are buzzing with the growing possibility of a cabinet reshuffle. Earlier in the day, veteran BJP leader from Kerala George Kurian resigned from the Union council of ministers following the expiry of his Rajya Sabha term.

Kurian (65) was Union minister of state for minority affairs and also for fisheries, animal husbandry and dairying. President Murmu has accepted Kurian's resignation, a communique issued by the Rashtrapati Bhavan said. The BJP had decided not to renominate Kurian, whose term ended on June 21, in the recent Rajya Sabha polls.

Union Minister of State for Railways Ravneet Singh, whose Rajya Sabha term ended on June 21, has also not been renominated by the BJP to the Upper House. Singh, who had been a Rajya Sabha member from Rajasthan since August 2024, also holds the charge as the Minister of State for the Ministry of Food Processing Industries.

Of late, a few Union ministers have been given key organisational responsibilities in their home states. Their appointment has also led to speculation of an imminent cabinet reshuffle. BJP national president Nitin Nabin had on May 28 appointed Union Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways Harsh Malhotra as Delhi BJP chief.

Malhotra (62) is also Union Minister of State for Corporate Affairs. He currently holds both portfolios. Union Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary was in December last year named the new president of the BJP's Uttar Pradesh unit.

L-G Saxena inaugurates...

of the revered Sindhu (Indus) River in Leh. The landmark gathering witnessed participation from ambassadors and high commissioners of eight countries, including Fiji, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, Ecuador, Chile and Ireland, reflecting the growing international significance of the event.

Highlighting the significance of the Indus River, L-G Shri Saxena observed that the Sindhu is among the oldest known rivers in human history and nurtured the Indus Valley Civilisation, one of the world's earliest and most significant cradles of civilisation. He noted that the river occupies a profound place in India's civilisational consciousness and continues to live in the nation's traditions and collective memory. He remarked that the very name "India" is derived from the word Sindhu, underscoring how deeply the river is intertwined with the identity and heritage of the nation.

Shri Saxena recalled that the Sindhu Darshan initiative, launched in 1997, was conceived as a visionary movement to revive and strengthen the cultural and spiritual bond of the people of India with the iconic river. Over the years, it has evolved into the Sindhu Darshan Mahakumbh, marked by greater participation and richer cultural expression. Referring to the unique tradition of devotees bringing water from rivers across the country and ceremonially merging it with the Sindhu, he said the practice beautifully symbolises the confluence of India's diverse identities into one unified national stream. L-G Shri Saxena stated that the Sindhu Darshan Mahakumbh is a living expression of the vision of "Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat" envisioned by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and provides a unique platform where India's many languages, traditions and customs come together to celebrate a shared civilisational heritage. Emphasising the ecological significance of the Indus River, Shri Saxena said the Sindhu stands not only as a profound spiritual symbol but also as a vital ecological asset that reminds humanity of its dual responsibility to revere and protect. "At a time when climate change and environmental degradation are increasingly threatening fragile Himalayan ecosystems like Ladakh, spirituality must go hand in hand with sustainability. True reverence for nature must find expression in conscious and responsible actions. Rivers must be viewed as living entities deserving respect, protection and mindful care," he said. The Lieutenant Governor underlined the need to promote responsible and sustainable tourism, conserve precious water resources and safeguard Ladakh's unique biodiversity. He observed that Ladakh is steadily emerging as a hub of sustainable tourism, a centre of spiritual and cultural heritage and a region of strategic and ecological importance. Events such as the Sindhu Darshan Mahakumbh, he noted, play a significant role in strengthening local economies through tourism, showcasing Ladakhi art and traditions and enhancing Ladakh's global visibility as a destination associated with peace and spiritual reflection. Envisioning a larger role for the event, Shri Saxena said the Sindhu Darshan Mahakumbh has the potential to evolve into a globally recognised spiritual congregation comparable to the world's great gatherings of faith and emerge as a vibrant platform for intercultural dialogue and exchange. Reaffirming the UT Administration's commitment to sustainable and ecologically sensitive development, the Lieutenant Governor called upon governments, local communities, cultural institutions and participants to work together to shape the Sindhu Darshan Mahakumbh into a model of inclusivity, sustainability and responsible cultural celebration. On the occasion, Shri Saxena informed devotees about the UT Administration's recent decision to impose a strict ban on single-use plastics and littering across Ladakh and urged all visitors to maintain the sanctity of the sacred Sindhu River by ensuring cleanliness and avoiding littering while enjoying the unparalleled beauty of Ladakh. In a deeply symbolic gesture reflecting the universal appeal of the Sindhu civilisation, water collected from water bodies of 156 countries was ceremonially immersed in the sacred Indus River by L-G Shri Saxena.

Parliamentary Panel in...

India's bilateral relations, the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty and threats posed by cross-border terrorism along the Line of Control and the international border.

It is also focusing on India-China relations and the situation along the Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh. Tharoor on Monday drew ire of Congress leaders for making remarks about "encouraging progress towards normalcy" in Jammu and Kashmir after a meeting with LG Manoj Sinha. He clarified, however, that the panel is in the UT not to evaluate conditions in the Valley, and its focus is limited to matters related to foreign affairs, including India-Pakistan and Sino-Indian relations and passport services.

Shukla also said on Tuesday that the purpose of this parliamentary tour is the issue of the country's relations with Pakistan. "What must we do on the Pakistan border and what steps should we take going forward to strengthen our security? The army officers briefed us on this and their future requirements and how the work is being done here to give confidence to the local population," he said.

On the peace deal between Iran and the United States, the Congress MP said India was suffering economically due to conflict. "We were suffering losses, the whole world was suffering losses because of this ongoing conflict. So the sooner this gets resolved, the sooner peace is restored, the better it is for us and for everyone," he added. Shukla said India wants peace to be restored as soon as possible. "The Strait of Hormuz opening up will benefit us. With the Strait open, around 300-400 of our ships used to come, but right now very few are able to come. If it opens, our energy crisis will end," he said.

CM Omar reviews...

The meeting was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary, Additional Chief Secretary, Mining, Ashwini Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister, Dhbeeraj Gupta, Additional Chief Secretary, Public Works (R&B), Anil Kumar Singh, Commissioner Secretary, Forest, Ecology & Environment, Sheetal Nanda, besides senior officers of the Public Works Department and

other concerned departments.

The Chief Minister reviewed the status of PMGSY works under various phases of the programme and took stock of the progress achieved in providing all-weather road connectivity to rural habitations across Jammu and Kashmir. He was briefed on the ongoing projects, newly sanctioned works and the roadmap for completion of pending road and bridge projects.

Emphasising the transformative role of rural road connectivity in improving the quality of life in remote areas, the Chief Minister directed the concerned departments to ensure timely execution of all sanctioned works while maintaining the highest standards of quality.

He stressed the need for close inter-departmental coordination to resolve issues affecting project implementation, particularly those relating to statutory clearances and other procedural requirements. He called for regular monitoring of works at all levels to ensure adherence to timelines and avoid unnecessary delays.

The Chief Minister also reviewed the implementation strategy for PMGSY-IV and directed the concerned authorities to expedite preparatory processes so that sanctioned works are taken up in a time-bound manner. He underscored the importance of extending reliable road connectivity to eligible rural habitations, especially those located in remote and border areas.

During the meeting, the officers presented an overview of the progress achieved under different phases of PMGSY and outlined the action plan for completion of the remaining works. The Chief Minister directed that all pending issues requiring inter-departmental coordination be addressed on priority to facilitate seamless execution of the programme.

Prof. Rukhsana Najeeb...

According to Government Order No. 506-JK (HME) of 2026 dated June 23, 2026, issued by the Health and Medical Education Department, Prof. (Dr.) Rukhsana Najeeb has been entrusted with the additional responsibility in the interest of administration with immediate effect and until further orders.

The order states that the assignment of charge is purely an interim administrative arrangement and shall not confer any right upon the officer to claim regular appointment, seniority, promotion, or any other service-related benefits attached to the post. The matter shall continue to be governed by the relevant rules and regulations in force.

The order was issued by the Health and Medical Education Department under the authority of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir and was signed by Commissioner/Secretary, Health and Medical Education Department, M. Raju (IAS). Copies of the order have been forwarded to the offices of the Chief Minister, Lieutenant Governor, Ministry of Home Affairs, Director Archives, Principal GMC Srinagar, and other concerned authorities for information and necessary action.

J&K Govt nominates...

Education, Home, Housing and Urban Development, Industries and Commerce, Information, IT, Jal Shakti, Revenue, Rural Development, Social Welfare, Tourism, Transport, Tribal Affairs and Youth Services & Sports have been nominated for the programme.

Representatives from major institutions including the J&K Police, J&K Bank, National Informatics Centre (NIC), National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT), J&K Public Service Commission, J&K Services Selection Board and J&K Board of Professional Entrance Examinations (BOPEE) will also participate.

The nominated officers include departmental secretariat officers, Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs), technical experts, programmers, network managers, engineers and information technology professionals tasked with handling critical government data and digital infrastructure.

Senior officers from J&K Police, including DIG Shahid Mehraj and other telecom and technical personnel, along with cybersecurity specialists from J&K Bank and NIC, are expected to share expertise and participate in discussions on emerging cyber threats, data protection strategies, cyber governance and institutional preparedness.

Officials said the workshop forms part of the government's broader efforts to strengthen cyber security architecture, ensure secure digital governance and build capacity among officers responsible for managing sensitive government information and digital services. The order was issued by the General Administration Department on behalf of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir.

Panel's mandate doesn't...

10-member delegation has so far visited only the Suchetgarh border in Jammu and reviewed the functioning of the passport office and Passport Seva Kendra. "We are now heading to Srinagar, where we will have discussions with the Lieutenant Governor and the Chief Minister. After that, we go to Kargil the day after tomorrow and Leh the following day. We will decide on what to write only after observing everything," he added.

Yesterday, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs visited Jammu as part of its ongoing engagements in the Union Territory. After a visit to the Regional Passport office in Jammu and the Passport Seva Kendra, Tharoor took to X to post, "They seem to be functioning smoothly."

"Had a detailed meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs in Jammu this morning, reviewing the work of the Regional Passport Office (RPO) and the Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs). We asked some tough and probing questions about passport issuance to their representatives and to those of the Police, CID and Postal Department. Some of the unconscionable delays in processing, police verification and issuance of passports were flagged and discussed. Improvements have been promised," Tharoor's X post read.

The Congress MP also said they took a look at the pharmacy that served for 20 years as the clinic where the local MP Jitendra Singh practised before becoming a Union Minister. "It's in a corner of the same building. A welcome reminder that for most MPs, there's real life before and after politics!" he said.

Tharoor, who is leading the 10-member parliamentary panel had reached Jammu on Sunday (June 21) evening. He took to X to post on the same day about his meeting with Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Lok Bhavan in Srinagar.

"We discussed the situation in the state and the encouraging progress towards normalcy. When I arrived he was chatting to the President of the Kashmiri Writers' Association and the Women's Organisation -- a positive outreach that I welcomed. Many challenges remain and much remains to be done, but I left the meeting feeling more positives than I have felt for a while," said the Congress MP.

On Monday, Tharoor clarified that the visiting Parliamentary committee is focused on studying three matters, including Indo-Pak relations, Sino-Indian relations, and the functioning of passport offices and Passport Seva Kendras. Addressing reporters here yesterday, Tharoor said that the committee will not look into the domestic issues in Jammu, as it is an "External Affairs Committee."

"I have only talked about calling on the Governor. I have not had a chance to see other things or listen to other people's voices. I want to make it very clear that this is not a visit about assessing the conditions in the Kashmir Valley. The committee is here to study three issues: Indo-Pak relations, Sino-Indian relations, and the functioning of passport offices and passport seva kendras. These are the only issues we are studying. We are not here to look at domestic matters; that is not our mandate. We are the External Affairs Committee," he said.

Addressing reporters, committee chairperson Tharoor also praised the role of Border Security Force (BSF) personnel in safeguarding the country and said that every citizen should have the opportunity to witness their work in the border areas. "What the BSF soldiers do for our country, keeping us safe, is truly commendable. I believe everyone should witness this firsthand. Every Indian citizen should take the opportunity to visit the border and see the work our soldiers are doing. It was a wonderful experience."

J-K govt should...

government is asking questions. He should account for his work," he added.

Regarding the fire incident in Lucknow, Chugh said it was a very "unfortunate incident." "The Chief Minister (Yogi Adityanath) and Deputy Chief Minister (Brajesh Pathak) reached the spot and efforts were made to save people from that massive fire. The incident is very tragic. An investigation is going on. The guilty will not be spared," he said.