

EDITORIAL

Choose life over destruction

For decades, Jammu & Kashmir has witnessed the human cost of conflict. Families have endured the pain of violence, uncertainty, displacement, and loss. While the region has never experienced nuclear devastation, its people understand perhaps better than many the value of peace and the heavy price that instability extracts from society. Hiroshima Day, therefore, is not merely about remembering a tragedy that occurred thousands of miles away—it is about reaffirming the importance of choosing dialogue over discord and hope over hostility. The destruction of Hiroshima demonstrated that war has no real winners. Beyond the collapsed buildings and shattered infrastructure lay broken families, lost generations, and lifelong suffering caused by radiation. The tragedy remains one of history's strongest warnings against the use of weapons capable of indiscriminate destruction. It reminds us that every conflict, regardless of its origin, ultimately affects ordinary people the most. For Jammu & Kashmir, the message of Hiroshima resonates through a different but equally meaningful lens. The Union Territory today stands at an important stage of transformation, with increasing emphasis on infrastructure development, education, tourism, entrepreneurship, healthcare, and employment opportunities. These aspirations can flourish only in an atmosphere of lasting peace and stability. Progress is sustainable when schools remain open, businesses thrive, tourists feel secure, and young people can focus on building careers rather than confronting uncertainty. The youth of Jammu & Kashmir represent the region's greatest strength. Their ambitions extend far beyond conflict—they aspire to excel in education, innovation, sports, arts, agriculture, technology, and entrepreneurship. Hiroshima Day serves as a reminder that investing in young minds yields far greater dividends than investing in instruments of destruction. Every classroom built is more valuable than another weapon; every employment opportunity created is a stronger guarantee of peace than hostility. Observing Anti-Nuclear Day also reinforces the importance of dialogue in resolving differences. History consistently shows that lasting peace cannot be imposed through force alone. Mutual understanding, democratic engagement, respect for diverse viewpoints, and adherence to the rule of law remain indispensable for building trust among communities. Jammu & Kashmir's future depends not merely on physical development but also on nurturing social harmony, reconciliation, and inclusive progress. The observance also encourages society to reject all forms of violence and extremism. Whether violence occurs through conventional conflict or the unimaginable devastation of nuclear weapons, its victims are almost always innocent civilians. Every life lost diminishes humanity. The true strength of any society lies in its ability to resolve disputes peacefully while safeguarding human dignity. For educational institutions across Jammu & Kashmir, Hiroshima Day presents an opportunity to educate students about the consequences of war and the importance of global peace. Discussions, debates, exhibitions, and community programmes can help cultivate values of tolerance, compassion, and responsible citizenship. A generation that understands history is better equipped to prevent its repetition.

DISCLAIMER

"Jammu Bulletin" does not take responsibility for the contents of the advertisements (Display/ Classified) carried in this newspaper. The paper does not endorse the same. Readers are requested to verify the contents on their own before acting there upon.

Edited, Printed, Published and owned by
Ankush Mahajan

Published at Plot No. 4A, 1st Floor, Sector-3,
Surya Chowk, Channi Himmat Jammu (J&K)
Printed at JK Printing and Publications,
Sunjwan, Jammu (Tawi).

E-mail: jammubulletin@gmail.com

All disputes are subjected to the exclusive
jurisdiction of competent courts and forums
in Jammu only.

Handloom weaving the future of Viksit Bharat

BY
GIRIRAJ SINGH

As India marks the 12th National Handloom Day, it is time to view handloom as a strategic sector that values sustainability, authenticity and resilient supply chains.

The making of a developed nation is not defined by technology alone. It is shaped by the ability to transform enduring strengths into engines of future growth. As India advances towards Viksit Bharat 2047, we are investing in frontier technologies, strengthening manufacturing and building globally competitive industries. Yet one of our greatest strengths has been with us all along — our handloom tradition. On August 7, as India marks the 12th National Handloom Day, it is time to view handloom as a strategic sector for a world that values sustainability, authenticity and resilient supply chains.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 is built on prosperity, self-reliance, inclusivity and

cultural confidence. Handloom embodies this vision by bringing together heritage and innovation, while driving women-led development, rural entrepreneurship, livelihoods and global competitiveness.

In the Vijay Rath discourse, Lord Rama teaches that lasting victory is built not on power, but on values. Those very values have sustained India's handloom tradition for centuries. Every handwoven fabric reflects the courage to preserve tradition, the patience to perfect every thread, the integrity of honest craftsmanship and the wisdom passed down through generations. That is why handloom is not merely a craft, but one of India's greatest civilisational strengths. From the Indus Valley Civilisation, where cotton was first cultivated and woven, to the eighteenth century when Indian textiles dominated global trade, India set global benchmarks in textile excellence. Bengal's legendary muslin, so fine that a 25-metre length could pass through a ring, along with Banarasi silk, Kanchipuram weaves, Pochampally Ikat and countless regional traditions, earned India worldwide admiration. Today, as the world turns towards

authentic, sustainable and handcrafted products, we have a historic opportunity to reclaim that leadership. Our next handloom revolution must export not just textiles, but craftsmanship, heritage, innovation and trust, making every handwoven product an ambassador of Brand India.

Handloom is India's largest cottage industry, supporting the livelihoods of more than 35 lakh weavers and allied workers, nearly 72 per cent of whom are women. Over the past decade, the Government has strengthened the sector through the Raw Material Supply Scheme, 797 handloom clusters, over 1.24 lakh improved looms, skill upgradation for nearly 97,000 artisans, and initiatives such as Producer Companies, GI-tagged products, the Handloom Mark, India Handmade certification, Urban Haats and Design Resource Centres. Today, 29 Weavers' Service Centres provide end-to-end support through training, upskilling, design development, raw material assistance and market linkages, while the 11 Indian Institutes of Handloom Technology are being strengthened to expand advanced training and develop niche, high-value

handloom products. These initiatives mark a shift from supporting handloom as a welfare activity to building it as a globally competitive creative industry. The forthcoming National Handloom and Handicraft Programme will strengthen 1,800 clusters across 500 districts, benefit 65 lakh weavers and artisans, and establish Handmade in India as a globally recognised brand. The forthcoming National Handloom and Handicraft Programme will accelerate this transformation by strengthening 1,800 clusters across more than 500 districts, benefiting 65 lakh weavers and artisans and establishing Handmade in India as a globally recognised brand. Innovation has always been part of India's handloom journey. Mahatma Gandhi's Ambar Charkha made spinning easier, faster and more efficient, advancing the vision of self-reliance. More recently, Assam's Maina Loom and the Chitrangan Handloom developed in Sivasagar have shown how better loom design can make weaving easier and more productive. Building on this legacy, the Centre of Excellence for Handloom Technology, established with the Indian Institutes of Technology, is developing

lighter, stronger and easier-to-use looms that reduce physical effort and improve productivity, including for persons with disabilities. Under the Centre, the Handloom 4.0 initiative uses digital tools and Artificial Intelligence to monitor productivity, quality and maintenance, and is being piloted on 100 looms before expanding across the States.

Technology should empower the artisan, not replace the artisan. Platforms such as VisionNXT can help forecast demand, identify design trends, authenticate genuine handloom products and connect weavers directly with global markets. At the same time, product diversification into premium silk, natural fibres, sustainable fibres and innovative blends can create high-value products and unlock new markets. Combined with better branding, value addition and direct market access, these innovations can significantly enhance weavers' incomes. Our vision is to enable every weaver to earn a dignified and aspirational income, with the ambition of Rs 50,000 per month in the years ahead.

The future of handloom depends as much on mindset as on markets. Our weavers are not mere-

ly a workforce. They are entrepreneurs, innovators and creators of value. By enabling them to build brands, move up the value chain and reach global markets, we can transform handloom into one of India's most dynamic creative industries. This is also a call to India's youth to bring together heritage and technology, creativity and enterprise, to shape the next chapter of handloom. On this National Handloom Day, let us celebrate our weavers not only as custodians of our heritage, but as architects of India's progress. And let us make handloom a part of our everyday lives. Every handloom product we buy and wear strengthens a weaver's livelihood, preserves a timeless tradition and carries India's story to the world. By choosing handloom, we do not just wear our heritage — we help weave the future of Viksit Bharat.

Every handloom product we buy and wear strengthens a weaver's livelihood, preserves a timeless tradition and carries India's story to the world. By choosing handloom, we do not just wear our heritage — we help weave the future of Viksit Bharat.

The writer is the Union Minister of Textiles; Views presented are personal.

Beyond punishment: Restoring the soul of India's examination system

BY
PRAMOD BORO

The passage of the Public Examinations Amendment Bill, 2026, marks an important attempt to restore public confidence. But the legislation will achieve its purpose only if it becomes part of a broader reform agenda that strengthens institutions, embraces technology, and rebuilds trust in the integrity of public examinations.

"The future of a nation is not stolen only on the battlefield; sometimes it is stolen silently, in a room where a question paper is sold before the examination begins." FastTrack Courts

Every year, millions of young Indians walk into examination halls carrying more than admit cards. They carry the dreams of parents who sacrificed comforts, teachers who nurtured hope, and a nation that believes education remains the fairest path to opportunity. For many families, a single examination is not merely a test—it is the turning point of generations.

Yet, when a question paper is leaked, something far greater than an examination is compromised. It is not merely the sanctity of a test that is broken; it is the faith of honest students, the dignity of public institutions, and the moral promise of our Republic.

The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026, passed by both Houses of Parliament during the

Monsoon Session 2026, is therefore more than an amendment to the law enacted in 2024. It serves as an affirmation that the dreams of India's youth are not commodities to be bought and sold. It is a national resolve that merit shall never again become the victim of organised crime.

For too long, irregularities in the examination process have been treated as isolated incidents. In truth, every paper leak is an organised assault on justice. Behind every leaked question paper lies a chain of corruption-brokers, middlemen, technology experts, dishonest officials, organised criminal syndicates, and those who profit from the desperation of students. As noted by the K Radhakrishnan-led Committee of Experts, established in 2024, vulnerabilities exist throughout the entire testing cycle that have been exploited for a long time.

History teaches us an uncomfortable truth. The crisis before us did not arise overnight, nor is it the failure of any one government or one institution. Successive governments, across decades, struggled with recurring weaknesses in examination security, investigation, and accountability.

Institutions often reacted after the damage had already been done. Criminals learnt that the rewards were enormous while the risks remained limited. Such softness emboldened organised networks whose only objective was profit, regardless of the shattered futures they left behind. The world now watches India not merely as the largest democracy but as a rising knowledge economy. Every examination

scandal echoes beyond our borders, raising questions about the credibility of our educational institutions. A nation aspiring to lead in science, technology, medicine and innovation cannot afford uncertainty in the very examinations that identify its future talent.

For this reason, stronger punishment is both necessary and justified. Those who organise paper leaks are not committing ordinary offences; they are committing crimes against the future of the nation.

It has been observed that, in many recent cases, leaks have come to light after citizens, including whistleblowers and teachers/professors, found that some copies of papers already in circulation matched exactly with the papers that were used in the examination. The inability of the testing agencies and concerned authorities to identify irregularities reflects key gaps in the internal detection machinery of examination authorities. A revamped, dedicated vigilance wing must be created in all public examination bodies. It should be manned by permanent staff, with adequate safeguards against conflicts of interest.

A law that punishes criminals but ignores institutional shortcomings remains incomplete. Accountability must extend beyond the accused to every authority entrusted with protecting public examinations.

The National Testing Agency and every examination-conducting body must become institutions that are transparent, answerable, and willing to learn from every mistake. After every major examination, they should publish an

Examination Integrity Report explaining what worked, what failed, what vulnerabilities were identified, and how those weaknesses will be permanently corrected. The Government should also take the necessary steps to bring the National Testing Agency within the scope of statutory audits by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG).

The Ministry of Education must also complete an equally important responsibility. Numerous expert bodies—including the K Radhakrishnan Committee, the Justice AK Ranjan Committee, parliamentary committees, and ministerial panels—have invested immense intellectual effort in examining examination reforms. Their recommendations should not remain confined to government files. A comprehensive Action Taken Report detailing which recommendations have been implemented must be placed before both Houses of Parliament for perusal by elected representatives. The greatest lesson emerging from these committees is that technology should become our strongest ally. In the twenty-first century, we trust technology with our banking, our taxation, our passports, our digital identities, and even the conduct of elections. It is therefore legitimate to ask: why should millions of high-stakes examinations continue to rely predominantly on vulnerable paper-based systems when safer technological alternatives are available?

India must gradually embrace secure computer-based testing wherever infrastructure permits. Artificial intelligence, encrypted

digital transmission, blockchain-enabled audit trails, biometric authentication, cybersecurity monitoring, and real-time digital surveillance should become the guardians of examination integrity. Technology cannot eliminate every risk, but it can make organised fraud extraordinarily difficult and far easier to detect. A strong forensic infrastructure is indispensable for the effective investigation and prosecution of paper leak offences, as modern examination fraud is increasingly orchestrated through digital means rather than conventional physical methods. However, technology alone cannot solve an educational problem whose roots lie much deeper. The dependence of students on expensive private coaching reflects another challenge. When success in national entrance examinations appears impossible without years of coaching, it raises serious questions about the strength of our school education system. IndiaNews Portal

Low government investment in education remains a critical structural challenge in India, with combined Union and State spending hovering around 4.1% of GDP—falling well short of the long-standing 6% target recommended by various panels.

Government schools must once again become centres of academic excellence through sustained investment in enhancing their competitiveness. Science education at the higher secondary level should be modernised, laboratories strengthened, and teachers continuously trained in contemporary teaching methods. Private coaching cen-

tres undoubtedly support many students, but their rapid expansion also demands responsible regulation. Perhaps the most overlooked voices in examination reform are those who experience the system first-hand. Students know where fear exists. Parents understand the emotional burden of uncertainty. Teachers witness the strengths and weaknesses of the process from within. Their collective wisdom should become part of public policy.

Ultimately, no reform can succeed without leadership.

Leadership is not measured only by authority during moments of success; it is measured by responsibility during moments of failure. Accountability should never be viewed as blame. It is the foundation upon which public trust is rebuilt.

India's youth deserve more than promises. They deserve an examination system where preparation matters more than privilege, honesty triumphs over manipulation, and merit is never defeated by money or influence.

The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026, passed by both Houses of Parliament during the Monsoon Session 2026, is therefore more than an amendment to the law enacted in 2024. It serves as an affirmation that the dreams of India's youth are not commodities to be bought and sold. It is a national resolve that merit shall never again become the victim of organised crime.

The writer is a Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha (Assam); Views presented are personal.