



Good Governance During Omar Abdullah-led Coalition Government in Jammu and Kashmir

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ARTICLE DETAILS

Research Paper

Keywords:

*Good Governance,
Governance, Development,
Jammu and Kashmir*

ABSTRACT

Good governance has gained popularity over the past 20 years and is a buzzword in our day and age. It has also grown to be a crucial tenet when evaluating a state's capacity to uphold democratic norms that are broadly acknowledged. Development is absolutely dependent upon good government. Several nations with comparable society's frameworks and its natural assets demonstrated remarkably different outcomes in enhancing the well-being of their populace; a significant portion of this variation can be ascribed to governance norms. Development always suffers in nations with high levels of corruption, mismanaged public finances, a lack of transparency, violations of human rights, and strong military power. The way that authority is used to manage the social and economic resources of a nation is known as its governance.

Good Governance

The government of Jammu & Kashmir implemented a comprehensive strategy involving establishing institutional and legal structures, leveraging modern technology, enforcing laws rigorously, and

increasing preventive measures to eliminate corruption and enhance good governance, ensuring a transparent, accountable, and citizen-focused administration. The Jammu and Kashmir Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, 2010 was enacted to stop public officials from investing illegally acquired wealth in Benami Transactions. The Prevention of Corruption Act has been amended to enhance its enforcement. In 2009, the government chose and designated the inaugural state Chief Information Commissioner (CIS). On December 13, 2002, the State Accountability Commission's responsibilities were revised to enhance its ability to combat corruption. Officials at the local level are now required to conduct field visits. Secretariats for winter and summer would manage daily activities in Jammu & Kashmir following the Darbar-Move. They began to receive complaints and deal with problems from the general people in Jammu and Kashmir, respectively. The various programmes' monitoring systems have been strengthened to ensure that they are completed on schedule. The Grievance Redressal Cell is also known as Awaz-e-Awam was founded by the Chief Minister's office to quickly handle public complaints. It served as a platform for internet monitoring and complaints. In order to facilitate an expeditious resolution, the complaints are escalated to the relevant administrative divisions. To bring the Jammu and Kashmir RTI Act into conformity with the Central Act, amendments were made in accordance with the tenets of good governance hence enhancing transparency and accountability within the government. Citizens now have legally mandated access to information from government agencies according to the amended laws. In adherence to the legislation, nominations for public information officers have also been processed. Other endeavours such as the Jammu and Kashmir e-governance Agency, the National e-Governance Plan, Khidmat Centres, and fundamental infrastructure projects including the State Wide Area Networks, State Data Centre, and State Delivery Gateway were initiated with the objective of enhancing the transparency and efficiency of service provision. These programmes are expected to be crucial in carrying out the e-government agenda in a way that would effectively advance Effective governance inside the state. 2009's RTI Act: This Act aims to empower citizens, enhance openness and accountability in government operations, minimise corruption, and ensure that democracy effectively fulfils the needs of the people. It is becoming more widely recognised that the RTI Act of 2009 for Jammu & Kashmir is a cutting-edge, proactive organisation that is encouraging accountability and openness in the state. Young, intelligent activists are keeping an eye on the government's development projects, and the RTI institution has given them the authority to point out any shortcomings. Indeed, this process had already begun, and the activists were actively seeking information and inquiring about the progress of these projects through the Right to Information (RTI). The younger campaigners have called the RTI "The Way to Healing". The RTI has

sparked enthusiasm, suggesting a shift towards positive change in society, replacing feelings of powerlessness and despair. The RTI Commissioner has been arranging events and delivering lectures to educate the public about the advantages of RTI in promoting transparency and enhancing government efficiency. The state's administrative efficiency and governance would inevitably experience substantial changes due to the increasing popularity and knowledge of the RTI.

Technology & Science

It is commonly known that science and technology play a critical role in advancing and supporting societal progress as well as economic expansion. Jammu and Kashmir can currently take pride in its strong network of scientific and technology institutions, highly skilled labour force, and innovative body of knowledge. The region has made significant advancements over the years in a number of scientific and technological disciplines.

Notable accomplishments in this field include:

1. The inaugural Agriculture Science Congress took place from July 28–30, 2011, at The University of Agricultural Science and Technology, Shar-i-Kashmir (SKUAST) is located in Kashmir.
2. Organised a number of scientific-popularizing events, including science competitions, debates, exhibitions, and public lectures, with the goal of advancing and educating the public about science, technology, and their potential.
3. The Department of Science & Technology, Government of India, and Kashmir University collaborated to organise the 6th Science Congress, with the theme "Science Technology and Sustainable Development." d. The University of Jammu hosted the 7th Science Congress in 2011. There were about 600 delegates present from both inside and outside the state.
4. The "Innovative Science Teacher Awards" programme was launched. Projects for Research and Development approved to start state-wide research initiatives.
5. Scholarships of Rs. 1.71 Lakhs (first installments) were given to 92 deserving students at the 10+2 and PG levels so they could pursue science courses in higher education.

6. Four scientists from different state-run research and development (R&D) institutions received some financial support to enable them to travel abroad to participate in and provide research presentations in regional, national, and worldwide scientific conferences.

7. The Jammu & Kashmir government awarded Rs. 20.00 lakh to four degree colleges in the state for the purpose of upgrading their biotechnology laboratories and implementing biotechnology programmes (two for Jammu & two for Kashmir).

8. In 2011–12, a new plan was initiated to enhance the scientific laboratories in eighteen schools, with six schools in each zone, situated in disadvantaged areas.

9. The Jammu and Kashmir Young Scientist Award now grants 10 awards instead of five, with the award sum raised from ten thousand to twenty thousand. k. Forty students received a year of bio-informatics training under the "Skill upgradation of Biotechnology-Youth" programme. Additionally, Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University Rajouri sponsored fifteen students to complete a four-month biomedical engineering training course. Initiatives related to information technology and e-governance, such as e-tendering and e-procurement, have improved service quality and increased departmental openness. This initiative improved the state's Common Service Centres Schemes (CSCs), also called Khidmat Centres, and helped with the timely delivery of services like revenue documents, driver's licences, state-subject certificates, ration cards, and birth and death certificates. The State Wide Area Network (SWAN) Project is a major national infrastructure initiative under the e-Government Plan (NeGP). With 174 Pops located in district, state, and regional offices, SWAN aims to build a secure network.

The coalition government carried out several significant projects for mass development, including the UID (Adhar) Project, Biometric Attendance System (BAS), IT Parks, LAN, Computerised Personal Information System (CPIS), Grievance Monitoring Cell, E-Procurement, and Video Conferencing Facilities. Regarding Ladakh Region Development: The National Conference-Congress alliance envisioned just development for each of the state's three regions. In order to bolster developmental endeavours in the Jammu & Kashmir regions, the Jammu and Kashmir government sanctioned Rs. 690 crore in state plan funds designated for the Jammu and Ladakh areas. Moreover, Jammu and Ladakh received Rs. 45 crore under the "Bad Pocket" category of the NC-Congress coalition government. Until March 2013, an allocation of Rs. 690 crore was made available to the two regions. Two Special Task Forces were established by the Indian government in 2010 for the purpose of identifying the unique

developmental needs of Jammu and Ladakh, suggesting solutions, and reviewing the infrastructure requirements assigned to the regions. After visiting Ladakh and Jammu, the teams of the Special Task Force made recommendations for short-term developmental projects totaling Rs. 915 crore for the two regions based on their knowledge of the facts and needs of each area. Jammu received Rs. 496.63, Ladakh received Rs. 189.19, and Kargil received Rs. 229.82 crore. All members of the Special Task Force recommended that funding for these projects come from the state plan; no other sources of funding were available. As a result, Ladakh received a large portion of state funding during this time. A 14.1 kilometre tunnel at Zojila was in the contact stage during the NC-Congress era, while a 6.5 km tunnel at Z-Mohr was started during the same time. The LAHDC, or Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, is to In 1995, the administration of P.V. Narsimha Rao issued an act that established the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council. As shown in the Act's schedule, section 5 grants the state government the power to determine the number of constituencies and the jurisdiction of each one. After holding elections, the first council (for Leh) took the oath of office on September 3, 1995. Regarding the council, positions are occupied by the representatives who are directly elected from territorial constituencies using adult suffrage. The council's powers and responsibilities included the following: allocating, using, and occupying land (notably, all waste land does not include land classified as forests); creating and reviewing the district's growth and improvement programmes; creating the district budget; creating guidelines for the grassroots implementation of schemes; promoting the region's languages and cultures; managing undemarcated forests; organising tourism; providing vocational training; and conserving local ecosystems and environmental conditions. The coalition administration of the country tried to hand up authority to the council additional authority so that it could function more independently. The council has a wide range of taxation rights, including the ability to pay and collect taxes on grazing, businesses, transportation, entertainment, and roads. The state government established the Ladakh Hill Development Council (LAHDC) in 1995 and gave it a lot of power in the Leh District so that it could deal with local issues and give the Ladakhi people, who have always cared about their region, a say in how they wanted to see it developed. The Mufti administration also granted the LAHDC more power. The council now has more administrative and financial power. The Hill Council was initially established in Kargil in 2003, however the concept was originally proposed by the Darjeeling Hill Development Council. In order to facilitate the region's massive growth, the Mufti-led coalition government sought to have Kargil District brought under the authority of the Autonomous Hill growth Council. The Kargil Hill Council was formed in July 2003. The Hill Council is

striving to ensure that the developmental activities are monitored promptly by making sure that the district administration is transparent and accountable.

Program for Rehabilitation Aid to Kashmiri Refugees, including Housing, Jobs, and Scholarships
Armed warfare in the Kashmir valley has displaced approximately 50,000 Hindu families since 1989. They have since relocated to Delhi (19,338 households), Jammu (34,878 families), and other Indian states and regions. Instead of providing long-term rehabilitation outside of the valley, the administration has focused on creating conditions that could facilitate the return of Kashmiri migrants to their homes in the valley. In light of this, the state government has been offering dry ration and cash assistance to 15,045 eligible households residing in the Jammu region, up to a monthly cap of 4,130,000 rupees per family. Financial aid was also made available by the Delhi administration of the National Capital Territory to families that were in need. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited the state in November 2004 and announced plans to construct 5,242 two-room tenements in the Jammu region to improve the living circumstances of the families already living there. There were 1, 024 apartments constructed and given to households in the Jammu neighbourhoods of Parkhoo, Muthi, and Nagrota. During his visit to the state on April 25–26, 2008, Dr. Manmohan Singh announced a package worth 1,618.40 crores of rupees. Refugees from Kashmir were the target audience for this program, which aimed to facilitate their return home and rehabilitation. The package's main components were:

- Support Houses, whether totally or partially destroyed, will not incur repair and reconstruction expenditures more than 7.5 lakh per family.
- Assistance for abandoned and decrepit houses for every household of 2 lakh rupees.
- Support for buying or building a home in group housing societies is offered to individuals who sold their properties between 1989 and May 30, 1997, prior to the enactment of the Jammu and Kashmir Migrant Immovable Property (preservation, protection and restraint of distress sale) Act, 1997. The program costs 7.5 lakh rupees each family.
- As an alternative to job allocation, a lump sum payment of Rs. 5 lakhs in cash to the families of the victims.
- An increase from 500 to 750 rupees per month for widows.

• Financial support for the orphans whose parents were killed in violence related to militancy @Rs.750 a month, per kid, prior to turning eighteen (extended up to 21 in special circumstances), to all orphans without distinction. The Rehabilitation Policy, approved by the state cabinet in November 2010 with the union government's endorsement, aimed to facilitate the return of former militants from Jammu & Kashmir who had moved to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. A sum of approximately 4.5 crore was given by the state Rehabilitation Council to aid in the physical, psychological, and financial rehabilitation of individuals impacted by militancy. Particular attention was given to widows, orphans, elderly people, and handicapped individuals whose breadwinners were killed or rendered incapable due to militancy. The state government approved only 12 cases of ex-militants seeking to return to Kashmir under the 2010 rehabilitation policy. Participants in this program will not receive any particular benefits or advantages, as the government's focus is on rehabilitation rather than granting broad amnesty. Following the required revisions to the pertinent provisions of the 1973 Code of Criminal Procedure, the state administration notified the public about the Victim Compensation Schemes of 2013. A number of scholarship initiatives are being put in place to help children from the weaker groups SCs, STs, OBCs, physically challenged individuals, and minorities get an education.

The Pre-matric scholarship project has incurred expenses of Rs. 1.54 crore. Under the programme, scholarships totaling Rs. 6.78 crore were given to 79, 000 students who spoke Pahari and 17, 200 other students. More than 32 billion rupees were spent on 2 lakh students from different minority groups. Under the post-matric scholarship programme, 2, 000 students with physical disabilities and members of the OBC and SC categories received payments totaling Rs. 9.9 crore. Managed by the advisory board overseeing the development of Gujjar and Bakerwals, there were 19 dormitories accommodating 1,575 convicts. The advisory board manages six boys' hostels for the advancement of Pahari-speaking individuals in the state. Scholarships were awarded to 1,500 Pahari community members at the pre- and post-matric levels, respectively. to take care of the unique requirements for the state's SC and ST development. The government engaged consultants to assist in creating the SC/ST plans for 2012–2013. A specialised cell, specifically designated for 132, was operational to supervise the implementation of SC/ST programmes. Amnesty for Stone Throwers: In accordance with the August 2010 Amnesty Scheme for Youth Involved in Stone Throwing Incidents, 1,811 persons engaged in 230 Stone Throwing incidents in 2010 and 2011 were awarded amnesty. Out of the total cases, 228 cases were withdrawn, while proceedings for the remaining 2 cases were still ongoing. The scheme's goals were to pardon those who had stoned people during the summer unrest starting in March 2010, with the exception of

those who had regularly set fire to and damaged public property. This was carried out to help these young people seek further education, furthermore, for the purposes of obtaining passports, jobs, and loans, it is necessary to confirm their character and background.

India proposed Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) between Pakistan and India, two of which are travel and trade across the Line of Control. Regarding the humanitarian concerns that affect both sides of the Line of Control, Shyam Saran announced on December 28, 2004, that India had proposed holding family gatherings and reunions in Kashmir at five different places at specific times under Joint Security Arrangements. This was done in order to pursue this idea. During the course of the Discourse, a number of steps were taken to encourage human encounters between the two nations. The first bus service between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad began on April 7, 2005, while the second bus service between Poonch and Rawalakote began on June 20, 2006. In addition, the Poonch–Rawalakote and Srinagar–Muzaffarabad routes will be simplified to facilitate cross-LOC transit, and duty-free trade over the LOC will be initiated. "The expansion of people to people contacts, including through trade and commerce, will provide an effective platform to develop and strengthen bilateral relations," said Pranab Mukherjee, the then-minister of external affairs, in a speech to the parliament. The method had been successful in mending fences of distrust between Pakistan and India and between the Indian government and the Jammu and Kashmiri people. Interactions between civilians across the Line of Control (LOC) have proven to be an important step in reuniting separated families and have generated substantial support for the state and federal governments of India and Pakistan. The advantages of Cross-LOC CBMs for India manifestly surpass the disadvantages. Without a question, they have had a good effect on how those who have spent decades being divided by fenced boundaries interact with one other. These seem like modest but necessary moves in the right direction. "The journey of peace must be on a step by step approach, but the road must be travelled," Prime Minister Manmohan Singh stated in March 2006, marking the launch of the Amritsar-Lahore Bus Service. Though the trip is yet early, strengthening current systems and expanding possibilities for additional Cross-LOC connections should eventually lead to even better outcomes. Following a resolution made in a roundtable session in Srinagar in May 2006, the peace effort was given a new direction. Five working groups were established to advance the peace process during this summit, which was hosted by the prime minister. The inaugural Srinagar Round Table Conference made a significant contribution to paving the way for the future. The Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir announced on April 6, 2006, a comprehensive package under its auspices. The Prime Minister's Package included some good attention to the Cross-LOC Confidence

Building Measures. In an attempt to ease tensions between the two nations, over the last decade, both India and Pakistan have implemented numerous programmes to boost trust. The terrorist attacks on November 26, 2008, in Mumbai dealt a devastating blow to the Composite Dialogue. Conflicts between Pakistan and India have an effect on these CBMs since they might cause an abrupt halt to trade and travel, as happened most recently in January 2013.

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