THE JULY ISSUE

PUBLISHED AUGUST 2026

JammuBeat

THE PULSE OF THE CITY

THE JULY COVER STORY

The River, Reclaimed

Boats returned Jammuites to the Tawi in July, while a new bus, new public spaces and a month of young ambition redrew the city around it.

- **Made in Jammu** - TerraGIS reached the world
- **Jet-Powered** - inside IIT Jammu's drone lab
- **Every Sunday** - 22 years of free theatre
- **Ideas to Income** - Mission YUVA, explained

Digital Review Edition - Free

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Contents

EDITOR'S NOTE

July gave Jammu a month that moved. Boats slipped onto the Tawi, an electric sightseeing bus joined the traffic, student founders shipped software beyond India, and familiar institutions opened unfamiliar doors. We went back after the announcements, cut the duplicates, checked what had actually happened and rewrote the month in the tense it deserved: the past, with an eye on what lasts.

The Desk
JAMMUBEAT EDITORIAL

3 **August Watchlist** — *dates after the July issue*

4 **Rewind** — *six verified moments from the month*

NEWS

6 **Made Here, Mapped Everywhere** — *three students shipped TerraGIS*

8 **Three Platforms to Seven** — *inside the Rs 450-crore station rebuild*

9 **A Jet Engine in Jagti** — *the IIT Jammu startup building SkyReaper*

10 **A Permanent Shelf for Local Work** — *two Unity Malls, Rs 255 crore*

11 **Nine Academies, No Fee** — *Khel Gaon opened an elite pathway*

11 **The Exit Door Mattered** — *a court-ordered coaching-centre audit*

CULTURE

13 **Before Dawn at Bhagwati Nagar** — *inside Jammu's season of service*

14 **The Curtain Kept Rising** — *22 years of a free Sunday stage*

15 **Clay, Mirrors, Company** — *kalaKARI's first shared table*

15 **Veergatha on Two Wheels** — *a Kargil tribute rode out of Jammu*

FOOD & DRINK

17 **First Stop, Dogra Food** — *a street-food hub at the gateway*

TRAVEL & WEEKENDS

19 **The River, Reclaimed** — *the month Jammu took to the Tawi*

21 **Four Lines, One City** — *Raahi's electric view of Jammu*

22 **The Hills Went Green** — *three cool-outs from the plains*

22 **Akhnoor in Half a Day** — *fort, ghat and history 28 km away*

EDUCATION

24 **A Room to Talk** — *Jammu University's counselling unit*

25 **More Campuses, More Questions** — *what the Universities Act could change*

26 **What Is Care Worth?** — *J&K's first HTA resource centre*

26 **The Idea Got an On-Ramp** — *two challenges for young founders*

27 **Summer Became a Startup Lab** — *221 students finished JKEDI's programme*

27 **Who Set the Fee?** — *the panel behind professional-college fees*

JOBS & CAREER

29 **From Idea to Income** — *the Rs 1,830-crore founder pipeline*

30 **Talent Was the Credential** — *a route to the Skills Olympics*

30 **From Lecture Hall to Factory Floor** — *a five-year industry link for SKUAST*

31 **The Board** — *August applications and reporting*

What Comes *Next*

The useful dates immediately ahead as this retrospective issue lands. Timings and access can change, so confirm on the organiser's official page before leaving home.

1 AUG

Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra - final month

Bhagwati Nagar and onward routes · **Registration required**

The 57-day 2026 pilgrimage continued through August and was scheduled to conclude on 28 August, Raksha Bandhan.

1 AUG

Tawi Riverfront boating

Tawi Riverfront, Jammu · **Rs 100**

Daily boating continued from 10 am to 7 pm, with 15-minute sessions on paddle boats, rafts, motor boats and shikaras.

1 AUG

Raahi: Hop Jammu

Four themed city routes

The AC electric sightseeing service continued on Tirath, Chenab, Sarhad and Fun lines; confirm stops, timings and fares before travel.

2 AUG

Natrang Sunday Theatre

Schedule varies, Jammu · **Free**

Jammu's long-running weekly theatre series continued on Sundays; check Natrang's current listing for the play and venue.

10 AUG

Jammu District Khel Mahotsav

J.P. World School, Jammu · **Registration**

A 10-12 August district event for school and college students across cricket, basketball, volleyball, athletics, badminton, yogasana and more.

15 AUG

Independence Day

Across Jammu · **Public observances**

Flag ceremonies and civic programmes marked 15 August across the city; check district advisories for venue access and traffic changes.

PLAN IT RIGHT

Check the organiser.
Venue, access and registration can shift after print.

Read the weather.
August rain can change roads, river activity and timings.

Leave a buffer.
Allow extra travel time around public events and yatra traffic.

Never miss what's on.

The live city diary updates daily — every gig, fair and fixture, with timings and tickets in one place.

jammubeat.com/events →

July, *in Brief*

Six more moments that shaped the month beyond this issue's longer stories, each checked against a live report or official page.

SCHOOLS

2 days

Rain kept classrooms closed

Jammu district ordered schools closed for staff and students on 21 and 22 July as persistent rain raised safety concerns. Reopening later remained tied to checks on affected buildings.

MAKERS

7 days

Yatri Niwas became a shop window

From 7 to 13 July, JKTPO ran an exhibition-cum-sale at Bhagwati Nagar for artisans, weavers, self-help groups, MSMEs and startups seeking buyers during yatra season.

SCHOLARSHIP

90.3%

Six thousand sat the NMMSS exam

JKBOSE recorded 6,000 candidates present out of 6,644 enrolled for the National Merit-cum-Means Scholarship examination on 10 July - attendance of 90.3 per cent.

SHOOTING

395/400

Paloura put 115 shooters on the line

The 15th Jammu District Shooting Championship brought 115 competitors to the Mission Olympics Shooting Academy on 19-20 July. Laksh Chetan Wazir scored 395/400 in air rifle.

SPORT

570+

A Rs 650-crore sports pipeline came into view

A July review counted more than 570 youth and sports infrastructure projects across J&K, including 315 CapEx works for 2026-27 and a mix of ongoing and new facilities.

CIRCULARITY

3R

Jammu took its waste ideas to the region

The Jammu Municipal Corporation used July's regional circular-economy forum to showcase local sustainability work, placing the city's waste and reuse experiments in a wider Asia-Pacific conversation.

SECTION 01

News

A student-built world map, a jet drone, safer coaching rooms and large public investments made July a month of unusually concrete ambition.

IN THIS SECTION

01 **Made Here, Mapped Everywhere** — three students shipped TerraGIS 6

02 **Three Platforms to Seven** — inside the Rs 450-crore station rebuild 8

03 **A Jet Engine in Jagti** — the IIT Jammu startup building SkyReaper 9

04 **A Permanent Shelf for Local Work** — two Unity Malls, Rs 255 crore 10

05 **Nine Academies, No Fee** — Khel Gaon opened an elite pathway 11

06 **The Exit Door Mattered** — a court-ordered coaching-centre audit 11

NEWS - TECHNOLOGY

Made Here, *Mapped Everywhere*

Three University of Jammu students turned a classroom idea into desktop mapping software available worldwide. The important word was not student. It was shipped.

BY MANIK GUPTA · 5 MIN READ

IMAGE · WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

On 1 July, a story from the University of Jammu reset the scale of what a student project could mean. Third-year B.Tech students Adil Mahajan, Tavishi Amla and Gourav released TerraGIS, a desktop Geographic Information System available through its website and the Microsoft Store in more than 240 countries.

Geographic Information Systems turn layers of location data into usable maps. Planners can compare roads, water, land use and buildings; researchers can work with elevation and satellite images; disaster teams can see where risk and people overlap. TerraGIS entered that demanding field with vector editing, raster support, AI-assisted segmentation, buffer analysis, web basemaps, GeoPackage files, PDF exports and drone-survey workflows.

240+

COUNTRIES WITH ACCESS

TerraGIS was released through its own website and the Microsoft Store, making the desktop application available internationally.

The students built the software inside the university's interdisciplinary Design Your Degree programme under the mentorship of Prof. Jatinder Manhas. That context mattered. The programme gave a mapping problem, a coding practice and an applied engineering brief room to collide rather than forcing them into separate course boxes.

This was not a certificate, a pitch deck or a prototype left on a pen drive. It was a product people could install. The team reported more than 30 installations in its first two days, an early number that mattered less for scale than for proof: users beyond the classroom had found the work.

This was not a certificate, a pitch deck or a prototype left on a pen drive. It was a product people could install.

The software entered a market shaped by expensive proprietary tools and powerful but often intimidating open-source alternatives. TerraGIS did not displace either category overnight, and the team still had to prove reliability, documentation, support and long-term development. July's achievement was the crossing of the first hard boundary - from building to releasing.

A map application is useful only when it can accept messy information and return something a person can act on. Vector tools let a user edit points, lines and boundaries; raster support handles imagery and gridded data; buffer analysis measures what falls within a chosen distance. These were practical building blocks, not decorative features on a launch slide.

The drone workflow made the Jammu context especially legible. Survey images could be assembled into mapped layers for a road, farm, campus or landscape. The software did not claim that a local authority had adopted it, but it demonstrated how a tool built in Jammu could speak to planning and fieldwork familiar across the region.

Its AI-assisted segmentation also needed the right expectation. Automation can help separate features in an image, but a planner or researcher still has to inspect the result. Responsible software reduces repetitive work without pretending that an algorithm has understood every wall, stream or shadow correctly.

Distribution through the Microsoft Store lowered another barrier. Users did not have to receive a file privately from the team; they could find a packaged application through a familiar channel. For student developers, that release work - installers, versioning and presentation - is often the part a classroom brief never teaches.

The first installations were therefore a beginning of feedback, not a victory lap. Real users would expose unclear menus, unusual file types and performance limits that a development machine could hide. If the team kept responding, those problems could become the roadmap that moved TerraGIS from impressive release to durable tool.

For Jammu's students, the signal travelled further than GIS. Serious software could be designed, packaged and distributed from a local campus. The global address of a product did not have to erase the place where it began.

For the university, the test after the headlines was institutional. A shipped product needs continued mentoring, user testing, legal and licensing clarity, infrastructure and time. If those supports remained, TerraGIS could grow; if they disappeared after the launch photograph, the burden would fall back on three students.

July closed with TerraGIS live and downloadable. That fact was the centre of the story. Jammu did not merely host a workshop about innovation; three of its students completed the unglamorous final mile and put their work into other people's hands.

NEWS - INFRASTRUCTURE

Three Platforms to *Seven*

July brought the clearest account yet of how Jammu Tawi station was being remade - and what passengers would endure before December 2027.

BY JAMMUBEAT EDITORIAL • 6 MIN READ

IMAGE · DAILY EXCELSIOR

In July, Northern Railway put a clearer shape around Jammu Tawi station's long redevelopment. The Rs 450-crore project was targeted for completion by December 2027 and was designed to expand the station from three platforms to seven.

Four new platforms were being laid on ballastless track. A 72-metre-wide air concourse and two 12-metre foot overbridges were intended to move passengers across the expanded station without forcing everyone through one narrow crossing. Behind them, electronic interlocking, two additional washing pit lines, four stabling lines and a parcel siding formed the less visible operational upgrade.

The passenger buildings were changing on both sides. The main terminal was planned at about 15,600 square metres, while a roughly 4,500-square-metre entrance on the Narwal side was nearing use. Lifts, escalators and separate arrival and departure flows were meant to make the station easier for older travellers, disabled passengers and anyone carrying a semester's worth of luggage.

The promise was substantial because Jammu Tawi was not only a tourist gateway. It was the departure point for exams, admissions, first jobs and family journeys. Every missed connection or inaccessible platform landed hardest on people travelling with the least spare time and money.

The rebuild also meant disruption. Demolition, temporary paths and changing entrances would remain part of the journey before the new station arrived. July's useful takeaway was therefore double-sided: the station was gaining real capacity, and passengers needed to allow extra time while it was being built.

By the month's end, seven platforms were still a future outcome, not a present fact. The work had moved beyond a concept, but December 2027 remained the date against which Jammu would judge the promise.

The useful measure was therefore not the artist's impression but the handoff between systems. A wider concourse would matter only if the lifts worked, the signs were readable and a passenger could move from auto stand to platform without guessing which temporary route was open.

Jammu Tawi also carried a social burden that a project brief could not show. Students travelled with exam forms, families travelled with medicine and workers travelled with one carefully budgeted ticket. A bigger station would earn its cost when those ordinary journeys became less tiring, not only when the building looked complete.

NEWS - DEEP TECHNOLOGY

A Jet Engine in *Jagti*

MachFly Aerospace spent July making an audacious claim from IIT Jammu: a reusable, jet-powered combat drone could be engineered here.

BY MANIK GUPTA • 4 MIN READ

A small team incubated at IIT Jammu drew national attention in July for a project with a large silhouette. MachFly Aerospace was developing SkyReaper, a reusable, jet-powered unmanned combat aerial vehicle intended for long-range surveillance and strike roles.

The company described targets above 550 km/h and altitudes up to 10 km, with room for intelligence sensors and payloads. Those were design ambitions, not independently verified flight results. SkyReaper remained in development, and its performance would depend on testing, certification and deployment that had not yet happened.

550+ km/h

DESIGN TARGET

MachFly described SkyReaper as a development-stage platform targeting speeds above 550 km/h and altitudes up to 10 km; neither figure was a verified flight result.

The engineering story sat inside the powerplant. Jet engines demand mastery of heat, materials, tolerances, fuel systems and control. For a young company to work on that problem from Jammu placed local students close to a class of technology usually associated with much larger aerospace centres.

IIT Jammu's Innovation and Incubation Centre supplied the institutional bridge - space, mentors and a campus network around a company attempting deep technology rather than a quick consumer application. That proximity mattered to mechanical, electronics and computer-science students who could see the work before it became a distant headline.

July's coverage needed one clear boundary. A development programme was not a deployed defence system, and patriotic excitement was not a substitute for test evidence. The credible claim was narrower and still significant: advanced aerospace work was underway in Jagti, and a Jammu team had entered one of engineering's hardest rooms.

If SkyReaper moved from prototype to validated aircraft, the local value would reach beyond one platform. Supplier skills, internships, testing culture and specialised jobs could accumulate around it. July did not deliver that ecosystem. It showed where one might begin.

That beginning also needed a realistic student pathway. A company working near a campus could offer placements in propulsion, flight software, composite structures, controls and testing, but only if the work was documented well enough for students to learn from it rather than simply watch a launch graphic.

The July story was strongest when it stayed close to that scale. A Jammu startup had entered difficult engineering territory; its next achievement would be repeatable evidence, a tested machine and a team that could explain what failed as clearly as what worked.

NEWS - LOCAL ECONOMY

A Permanent Shelf for *Local Work*

The government approved twin marketplaces for artisans and regional entrepreneurs. July supplied the sanction; execution would decide the value.

BY MANIK GUPTA • 5 MIN READ

IMAGE · DAILY EXCELSIOR

On 22 July, the J&K government approved two Unity Malls - one in Jammu and one in Srinagar - at a combined cost of Rs 255 crore. The projects were conceived as permanent retail and exhibition spaces for artisans, handloom and handicraft producers, GI-tagged goods and regional entrepreneurs.

The model came from the PM Ekta Mall programme. It was less a multiplex-style mall than a professionally managed bazaar with year-round footfall, built to place One District-One Product goods and regional craft under one roof.

For a young maker, the importance was distribution. A home workshop or small food label could produce good work and still struggle to find customers beyond an annual exhibition or an Instagram feed. A permanent, tourism-linked marketplace could lower that barrier if stall allocation, fees and curation remained accessible.

The Jammu mall could also give Basohli painting, regional food, textiles, woodwork and other products a sales address that made provenance easier to trust. A government-backed counter did not guarantee quality or buyers, but it could improve visibility and reduce the distance between maker and market.

July delivered approval, not a finished building. The location, construction schedule, operating model and terms for small sellers still needed to emerge. Those details would determine whether the project served working artisans or became an expensive display case.

The most honest reading at month's end was hopeful but conditional. Rs 255 crore had put institutional weight behind local products. The next question was whether local producers would get affordable, usable space when the doors eventually opened.

A market like this could become a practical first retail step for a young maker who was not ready for a full shop. It could also become a dead end if rent, commissions or long approval cycles pushed out the people the project was meant to represent.

The best version of the mall would make the maker visible without flattening the story behind the object. Clear labels, fair rotation, online discovery and regular buyer footfall would matter as much as the building's facade.

NEWS - YOUTH SPORT

Nine Academies, *No Fee*

Free coaching began at Nagrota across nine sports, turning a facility into a programme.

BY JAMMUBEAT EDITORIAL • 5 MIN READ

On 20 July, coaches were directed to report to Khel Gaon, Nagrota, for nine Academies of Excellence covering taekwondo, athletics, hockey, football, kabaddi, volleyball, badminton, wrestling and fencing.

The training was offered free to talent from across J&K. Former India footballer Arun Malhotra joined the football academy as honorary technical adviser, adding national-level experience to a programme designed for progression rather than a one-off camp.

The important change was operational: a sports complex had acquired coaches, disciplines and a pathway. Selection clarity, regular schedules and sustained staffing would decide how many young athletes could actually use it.

The academies were presented as specialised clusters rather than casual open sessions. That meant young players still needed transparent trials, age groups and performance criteria, especially when applicants travelled from outside Jammu district.

Malhotra's honorary role also set a useful standard: elite advice could reach a public programme without adding a fee. The next proof would be a calendar of regular coaching and athletes progressing into state and national competition.

Free did not mean frictionless. A player still needed transport to Nagrota, equipment, time away from school and a family that could support regular attendance. The academies would become genuinely open only when those practical barriers were acknowledged alongside the fee waiver.

For now, the programme gave Jammu a clearer answer than another promise of a sports city. It named the disciplines, placed coaches on the ground and created a route that young players could test.

The academy model could also change what young athletes saw as a realistic next step. A child did not need to leave the region to encounter structured coaching; the local test became whether the programme stayed consistent long enough for talent to develop.

NEWS - PUBLIC SAFETY

The Exit Door *Mattered*

The High Court moved fire clearances and legal building plans from paperwork to student safety.

BY JAMMUBEAT EDITORIAL • 3 MIN READ

In July, the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh directed the Jammu Municipal Corporation to survey coaching institutes, tuition centres, hotels, banquet halls and other public buildings for sanctioned plans, parking, fire clearances and statutory permissions.

The order allowed consequences including sealing, closure, demolition of unauthorised work, prosecution and penalties. It also required coordination with Fire and Emergency Services, Traffic Police and the development authority, followed by a detailed affidavit.

For students packed into converted upper floors, the audit was not abstract municipal housekeeping. A clear staircase, working extinguisher and legal occupancy could decide whether an emergency remained manageable. July produced the order; visible inspections and corrections would be the test.

The court allowed enforcement to include sealing, demolition of unauthorised work, withdrawal of permissions, prosecution and penalties. That range signalled that a missing clearance was not meant to end with another notice pinned to a wall.

Students and parents could also ask practical questions before the survey finished: where the second exit was, whether it opened, when extinguishers were serviced and how many people the room was approved to hold. Safety became harder to ignore once it was made visible.

The order also shifted responsibility toward landlords, operators and institutions that had treated occupancy as a paperwork detail. A centre that earned from crowded classrooms had to show that its building could carry the crowd in an emergency.

July did not produce a safety certificate for every coaching hub. It produced a public standard against which the next inspection could be read, and that was a more useful beginning than another general warning.

A visible audit could also help responsible operators. Centres that had invested in exits, occupancy limits and maintenance should not have to compete with rooms that saved money by ignoring them. Enforcement was a safety measure and a fairness measure at the same time.

SECTION 02

Culture

Service before sunrise, theatre every Sunday, clay on a cafe table and women riders on mountain roads - culture appeared as a habit, not a slogan.

IN THIS SECTION

01	**Before Dawn at Bhagwati Nagar** — inside Jammu's season of service	13
02	**The Curtain Kept Rising** — 22 years of a free Sunday stage	14
03	**Clay, Mirrors, Company** — kalaKARI's first shared table	15
04	**Veergatha on Two Wheels** — a Kargil tribute rode out of Jammu	15

CULTURE - THE CITY HOSTS

Before Dawn at *Bhagwati Nagar*

Through July, pilgrim convoys left before sunrise while langars, volunteers and seasonal workers kept the base camp moving.

BY JAMMUBEAT EDITORIAL • 3 MIN READ

IMAGE · X

Before sunrise through July, Bhagwati Nagar was already awake. Floodlights, loudspeakers and rows of vehicles marked the departures for the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra, which began on 3 July and was scheduled to run for 57 days.

The scale showed itself early. On 4 July, the third batch carried 4,812 pilgrims in 259 vehicles, split between the Baltal and Pahalgam routes. Police, paramilitary personnel, medical teams and ambulances moved with or around the convoys.

The city around those numbers performed quieter work. Langars served food, volunteers guided first-time pilgrims, drivers waited through odd hours and small vendors supplied a base camp that briefly became its own neighbourhood.

For students on summer break, volunteering offered a direct way into the season. For drivers, helpers, food sellers and hospitality workers, the yatra created a short but important earning window. Faith, public service and local economy occupied the same streets.

The operation also altered ordinary movement. Security layers and convoy timings changed traffic around Bhagwati Nagar and the highway, asking residents to plan around a national pilgrimage that began inside their city.

By the end of July, the yatra still had almost a month to run. What the first weeks had already shown was Jammu's recurring civic role: before the mountains received pilgrims, the city organised, fed and sent them onward.

That work was rarely photographed as the main event. It lived in the queue manager who found a missing passenger, the volunteer who translated an instruction and the kitchen worker who served one more plate after a delayed convoy arrived. The base camp functioned because thousands of small decisions were made before breakfast.

For residents, the season asked for patience as well as pride. Traffic plans, noise and security checks changed the texture of the neighbourhood, while local businesses absorbed a sudden, useful rush. A city of service still needed the city around the camp to be treated as a place where people lived.

CULTURE - THEATRE

The Curtain Kept *Rising*

Natrang's weekly theatre had survived changing venues, seasons and attention spans by doing one radical thing: showing up.

BY RUPALI GUPTA • 5 MIN READ

IMAGE · BOLD NEWS

In July, Natrang's Sunday Theatre entered another monsoon with a habit few cultural programmes anywhere could match. For 22 years, the Jammu group had staged a live performance nearly every Sunday, usually free and open to anyone who arrived.

The venue moved with the season between the Studio Theatre, Abhinav Theatre and outdoor settings such as Rani Park. The form moved too: social drama, satire, comedy and experimental short work shared a calendar shaped less by spectacle than regularity.

Its achievement was not one famous production but the discipline of returning the next Sunday. That continuity gave new actors real audiences instead of making them wait for a festival, and it gave residents a cultural appointment that did not depend on a ticket or an algorithm.

> ***Its achievement was not one famous production but the discipline of returning the next Sunday.***

The 2026 run had included work on addiction and social pressure alongside lighter plays. Young performers were not ornamental additions; weekly repetition let them learn timing, voice and audience response in public.

For Jammu, the series filled a gap between formal institutions and casual entertainment. It made theatre ordinary enough to become a habit while keeping the live encounter - one room, one cast, one evening - intact.

As August began, the series was continuing, though play and venue details still needed a check before travelling. July's retrospective point was larger: a free cultural institution had endured because artists kept turning up and Jammu kept taking a seat.

The audience was part of the production. A free room lowered the first barrier, but regular attendance gave performers the feedback that made the next script sharper. Parents, students and older theatre-goers built a mixed public without needing a formal season ticket.

That model was modest and demanding at once. It needed a venue, a punctual cast and enough trust that a newcomer could walk in without knowing the group. Natrang's July record suggested that cultural infrastructure could be a repeated habit, not only a large annual event.

CULTURE - NEW COMMUNITY

Clay, Mirrors, *Company*

Three founders used one cafe workshop to test whether Jammu wanted a slower, screen-free creative evening.

BY RUPALI GUPTA • 3 MIN READ

At kalaKARI's debut workshop in July, a cafe table filled with air-dry clay, small mirrors, paint and people who mostly had not met before. Ishpreet Kour, Anushka Gupta and Banmeet Kour had founded the initiative around a simple line: a place where art, stories and people met.

Participants turned plain mirrors into individual pieces, with materials and a cafe menu included. No previous art experience was required, and the room's real product was as much conversation as craft.

The founders said they wanted more than a workshop brand. July's first session gave that ambition a practical beginning: phones stayed down, hands stayed busy and a new creative community had its first shared memory.

Every participant received the materials and left with a finished mirror, which gave the evening a useful shape: make one thing, talk to the person beside you and take the result home. The absence of an experience requirement made the table less intimidating.

After the debut response, the founders began planning new themes and formats. Their larger bet was that Jammu had room for recurring creative gatherings that were neither a formal art class nor another night spent scrolling in a cafe.

The cafe setting mattered because it kept the threshold low. People could arrive alone, order something familiar and join a table without presenting a portfolio or committing to a long course. That made the workshop feel less like tuition and more like a first invitation into a creative circle.

If the idea lasted, its test would be repetition: sensible pricing, enough material, a host who made beginners comfortable and a new reason to return. The first mirror was an object; the community around the next one would be the real result.

CULTURE - WOMEN ON THE ROAD

Veergatha on *Two Wheels*

Shakti Udghosh Foundation's third expedition linked remembrance with women claiming difficult roads.

BY RUPALI GUPTA • 3 MIN READ

On 18 July, women riders left Jammu's Balidan Stambh for Ride with Pride 3.0, a Kargil Vijay Diwas tribute routed through Billawar, Bani and Bhaderwah before returning to the city.

The Shakti Udghosh Foundation, led by convenor Preeti Choudhary, had already organised long-distance tribute and anti-drug rides, including journeys toward Rezang La and along sensitive border stretches.

The third ride turned remembrance into motion. Its public message was patriotic, but its local effect was equally visible: a women-run collective kept placing riders on demanding roads and widened the picture of who belonged there.

The route carried the group through Billawar, Bani and Bhaderwah, with stops connected to military memory and families of martyrs. It was organised as a disciplined expedition rather than a recreational weekend convoy.

Earlier rides had taken 26 women more than 2,000 km toward Rezang La and 18 riders along border stretches with an anti-drug message. July's departure mattered because it extended a record the collective had already built.

Long rides also required the unglamorous work of route checks, fuel planning, mechanical support and group discipline. That preparation kept the gesture from becoming a photo opportunity and made the ride legible to younger women watching from the roadside.

The tribute therefore carried two timelines. It looked back to soldiers and families remembered on Kargil Vijay Diwas, while it also recorded a change in who could claim distance, adventure and public space on a motorcycle.

The route gave the message a physical scale. A memorial was not only a name spoken at a ceremony; it became a road shared, a town visited and a group of riders showing that remembrance could move through the region.

SECTION 03

Food & Drink

At the gateway to J&K, July put a future food hub on the map and asked whether Dogra flavour could become a stronger local business.

IN THIS SECTION

01 **First Stop, Dogra Food** — a street-food hub at the gateway 17

FOOD & DRINK - LAKHANPUR

First Stop, *Dogra Food*

A national street-vendor scheme selected Lakhanpur for two food clusters, while a Rs 1.5-crore gateway aimed to remake J&K's road entrance.

BY JAMMUBEAT EDITORIAL • 3 MIN READ

IMAGE · DAILY EXCELSIOR

In July, Lakhanpur was selected for a street-food hub under PM SVANidhi, placing J&K's road gateway among 50 towns chosen nationally. The plan paired two market clusters with a separate Rs 1.5-crore Gateway to J&K monument and beautification work.

The food spaces were proposed near the Old Bus Stand and Sales Tax Office across roughly 1,754 square metres. Dogra cuisine and regional delicacies were meant to lead the offer, giving road travellers a first taste of the region rather than a generic highway stop.

1,754 sq m

ACROSS TWO CLUSTERS

The proposed hub covered sites near Lakhanpur's Old Bus Stand and Sales Tax Office, with Dogra food and regional delicacies at its centre.

The youth angle sat behind the counters. Structured stalls, sanitation and steady footfall could help small vendors and first-time food entrepreneurs move from an informal cart to a more stable business. PM SVANidhi's collateral-free working-capital support was designed for that transition.

The menu possibilities were obvious - rajma-chawal, kaladi, ambal, patisa and other foods that travelled poorly on a tourism brochure but very well on a plate. A well-run hub could give those foods visibility at the precise point where every road visitor entered the Union Territory.

July's announcement did not open a single stall. Construction, vendor selection, affordability and hygiene would decide whether the project actually served local sellers. A polished gateway with inaccessible rents would miss the point.

Still, the premise was sound: Jammu's cuisine could be infrastructure as well as memory. Lakhanpur had been treated as a checkpoint for years; the food hub proposed that it become a destination and a small-business platform too.

For a traveller, the difference would be visible in the details: a clean place to sit, a menu that named the food properly and a vendor who could explain where an ingredient came from. For a seller, it would be visible in predictable footfall and a stall agreement that did not turn every good day into a new negotiation.

The hub's success would also depend on the gateway's relationship with the road. Visitors needed a safe stop, not another reason to hurry through Lakhanpur. A good first plate could make the border town feel like the beginning of J&K rather than the last checkpoint before it.

SECTION 04

Travel & Weekends

July put the city back on its river, onto an electric tour bus and out on roads that climbed quickly into cooler air.

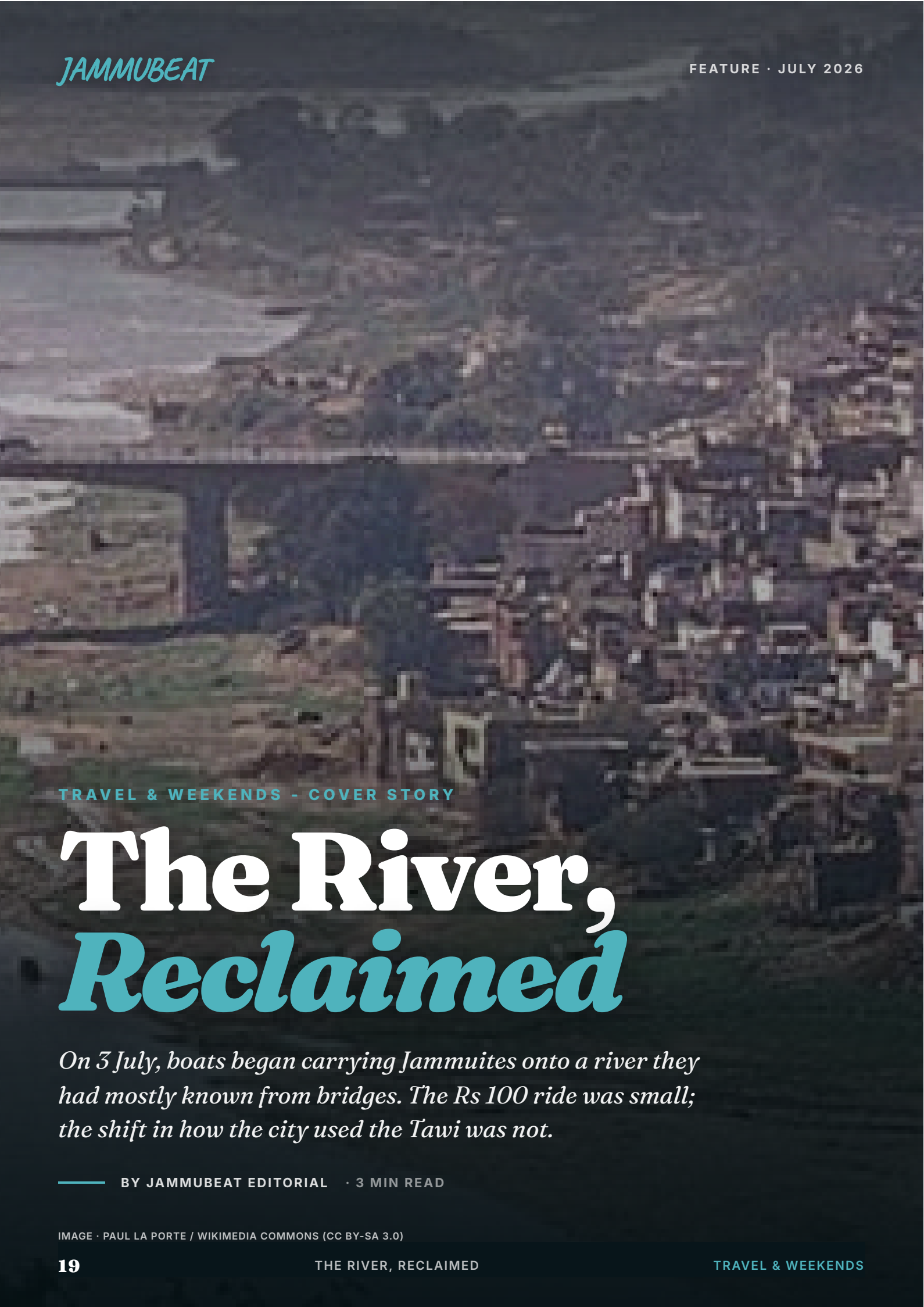
IN THIS SECTION

01 **The River, Reclaimed** — the month Jammu took to the Tawi 19

02 **Four Lines, One City** — Raahi's electric view of Jammu 21

03 **The Hills Went Green** — three cool-outs from the plains 22

04 **Akhnoor in Half a Day** — fort, ghat and history 28 km away 22



TRAVEL & WEEKENDS - COVER STORY

The River, *Reclaimed*

On 3 July, boats began carrying Jammuites onto a river they had mostly known from bridges. The Rs 100 ride was small; the shift in how the city used the Tawi was not.

BY JAMMUBEAT EDITORIAL · 3 MIN READ

IMAGE · PAUL LA PORTE / WIKIMEDIA COMMONS (CC BY-SA 3.0)

At the beginning of July, the Tawi was still a river most Jammuites crossed, photographed and discussed from a distance. On 3 July, Jammu Smart City Limited changed that relationship by opening a public boating facility at the riverfront. Paddle boats, rafts, motor boats and shikaras went onto the water, and the city's newest evening plan suddenly came with a life jacket.

The practical offer was deliberately simple. A session cost Rs 100 per person, lasted about 15 minutes and ran within daily hours of 10 am to 7 pm. Advance booking was offered through the city portal, while trained operators, rescue personnel, life jackets and emergency procedures formed the safety layer described by the organisers.

Rs 100

FOR A 15-MINUTE SESSION

The service opened daily from 10 am to 7 pm with paddle boats, rafts, motor boats and shikaras.

The launch had been timed for the Amarnath Yatra and was inaugurated by Dr Devansh Yadav, then chief executive of Jammu Smart City Limited and commissioner of the municipal corporation. Yet the most visible response came from residents. Students, families and young professionals arrived for an affordable sunset outing that did not require a mall, a restaurant bill or a drive out of town.

That mattered because the riverfront had already been accumulating reasons to stay after dusk. The Tawi Aarti and light-and-sound programme had established a ceremonial rhythm; the promenade had given walkers a place to pause. Boating added participation. The river was no longer merely the background to a civic project - it was the activity itself.

The comparison with other river cities was tempting, but July's achievement was local and modest in the best sense. Jammu did not need to imitate Ahmedabad or Srinagar to prove anything. It needed one well-run, safe and repeatable way for residents to spend time beside and on their own river. For one month, the Tawi stopped being scenery and became part of the city's social life.

For one month, the Tawi stopped being scenery and became part of the city's social life.

Each craft changed the pace of the same short journey. Paddle boats gave friends control of the outing; shikaras made the river feel briefly theatrical; motor boats and rafts offered a faster circuit. That variety mattered because the facility was not aimed at one kind of visitor, even if the single Rs 100 price kept the first decision simple.

The opening also created a modest chain of work around it. Operators, rescue staff, booking support, maintenance crews and the vendors serving new footfall all became part of whether the attraction felt dependable. Public space succeeds through repeated ordinary labour long after the inaugural ribbon disappears.

Safety was the part no glossy photograph could settle. The organisers said life jackets were compulsory and trained operators and rescue personnel were on duty. In a monsoon city, readers still had to treat temporary closures, changed water levels and instructions at the jetty as operating facts rather than inconveniences to argue away.

Access would be the next editorial test. A low ticket price helped, but clear booking, queues that moved, safe approaches and usable hours would decide whether the attraction stayed open to students and families instead of becoming easy only for people with extra time and a private vehicle.

The riverfront's success would also be measured by what it did not leave behind. More visitors meant more cups, wrappers and pressure on the edge. A city inviting people onto its river had accepted a matching responsibility to keep the water and promenade cleaner than it found them.

There were still questions for the months ahead: how the boats would operate through changing water levels, whether queues and online booking would remain manageable, and how the riverfront would handle litter and peak-hour traffic. Those were operational questions, not reasons to dismiss the experiment.

The image that remained from July was uncomplicated: a shikara on the Tawi, the bridges behind it and a city looking back at itself from the water. The ride lasted fifteen minutes. Its larger promise was that Jammu's public spaces could become places people actively used rather than projects they only drove past.

As August began, the facility was still advertised for daily operation. Visitors needed to confirm current timings and river conditions before travelling, especially during unsettled weather. July, however, belonged to the opening - and to the first wave of Jammuites who finally got onto the river.

TRAVEL & WEEKENDS - CITY TRANSPORT

Four Lines, *One City*

The Raahi sightseeing service arrived on 1 July with four themed electric routes and an argument for seeing familiar Jammu at a slower pace.

BY JAMMUBEAT EDITORIAL • 5 MIN READ

On 1 July, Jammu acquired a transport idea more familiar in larger tourist cities: an air-conditioned, electric hop-on-hop-off bus. Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha launched Raahi: Hop Jammu as part of a cluster of yatra-season additions that also included the Tawi Aarti and light-and-sound show.

The service divided the city into four themed lines - Tirath, Chenab, Sarhad and Fun. Together they were meant to connect spiritual, river, frontier and leisure landmarks without requiring visitors to negotiate a fresh cab or auto at every stop. The model allowed a rider to leave at a chosen sight and rejoin a later loop.

For residents, the novelty was not sightseeing alone. The buses were electric and air-conditioned, which made the service a visible extension of Jammu's wider e-bus programme. It offered students and families a lower-stress way to string together places they knew individually but rarely visited in one day.

The launch arrived before complete route-by-route information had settled into public habit. That made the service's second phase as important as the first: clear stop lists, dependable intervals, transparent fares and signs at boarding points would decide whether Raahi became useful transport or remained a ceremonial launch.

By the end of July, the strongest idea behind Raahi had survived the fanfare. Jammu could be explored as one connected place - river, shrine, border memory and leisure - and public transport could be part of the experience rather than the compromise at the beginning of it.

Readers planning an August ride still needed to check the district administration's current channels for fares, timings and operating routes. That present-tense caution did not change what had happened in July: the city had put a new, cleaner way of seeing itself on the road.

The service also made a quiet argument about access. A city tour did not have to be reserved for visitors with a private car or a large weekend budget. If the loops were legible and the buses arrived when promised, a student could use Raahi as both an outing and a practical way to connect places that public transport usually kept apart.

Its longer test would be whether residents used it after the launch season. Tourism infrastructure became public infrastructure only when a local family could board without feeling that the bus belonged to someone else.

TRAVEL & WEEKENDS - MONSOON

The Hills Went *Green*

July's wet weekends sent Jammu uphill, but the best trips were the ones that respected the road.

BY JAMMUBEAT DESK • 4 MIN READ

As Jammu turned warm, sticky and rain-heavy, Patnitop, Sanasar and Bhaderwah offered the month's familiar escape. Patnitop remained the easiest run at roughly 112 km; Sanasar added a quieter meadow beyond it; Bhaderwah demanded more time but rewarded the longer drive with Jai Valley, Chinta and cooler days.

The monsoon made those places vivid and also less forgiving. Slippery roads, fog, falling rocks and sudden weather changes meant early departures, daylight driving and a check of traffic advisories mattered more than a packed itinerary.

The best July trip was not the one that covered the most stops. It was the one that left room for rain, stayed away from swollen water and returned before darkness turned a scenic road into a test.

Patnitop worked as the low-friction choice: meadows, deodar walks and nearby Nathatop without a multi-day plan. Sanasar, a short drive farther, offered the quieter bowl of meadow and lake that many groups actually wanted from a weekend.

Bhaderwah was the slower expedition. Jai Valley, Chinta and the road itself rewarded an overnight stay, but distance and changing mountain weather made it the option that demanded the most preparation rather than the most enthusiasm.

The road was part of the itinerary, not just the space between attractions. A full tank, a daylight return plan and a quick check for closures mattered more than squeezing in one extra viewpoint. Monsoon travel rewarded the group that left margin in its schedule.

Those limits did not make the hills less inviting. They made the trip more honest: the weekend worked when the weather set the pace and the traveller treated the landscape as a place to move through carefully rather than a background to collect.

TRAVEL & WEEKENDS - CLOSE TO HOME

Akhnoor in *Half a Day*

A July field guide made the case for Jammu's least complicated history trip - with one firm monsoon caveat.

BY ISHPREET KOUR CHAHAL • 5 MIN READ

Akhnoor sat only about 28 km from Jammu, yet it remained outside the city's usual weekend rotation. July's guide linked three reasons to correct that: the Dogra-era fort above the Chenab, Jia Pota Ghat and the ancient Buddhist remains at Ambaran.

The fort and ghat made an easy, low-cost half-day by bus, shared taxi or car. Together they placed the river beside the Dogra coronation story and a much older archaeological past, without the expense or planning of a hill-station weekend.

July was not the month to improvise beside a swollen Chenab. Travellers were advised to keep away from the water's edge, check the forecast and shift the trip to a calmer day if rain persisted. Akhnoor's strongest season would return; its history was not going anywhere.

The fort's ramparts looked over a crossing that had mattered for centuries, while Jia Pota Ghat tied the riverbank to the coronation of Maharaja Gulab Singh. Nearby Ambaran pushed the timeline further back through its Buddhist archaeological remains.

Regular buses and shared taxis made the town workable without a large budget. An early start, an unhurried hour at the fort and late-afternoon light at the ghat were enough; the appeal was precisely that Akhnoor did not need to be overplanned.

The half-day format also made the trip easier to share across generations. A student could chase the archaeology, a family could sit by the river and an older traveller could take the fort slowly without turning the outing into a race between sites.

Akhnoor's strength was its proportion. The fort, ghat and archaeological remains sat close enough to create a complete story, while the short distance from Jammu kept the invitation practical even when a full weekend away was not.

SECTION 05

Education

Mental-health support, fee oversight, health-policy research and founder pipelines made July's campus news about the systems around a degree.

IN THIS SECTION

01 **A Room to Talk** — Jammu University's counselling unit 24

02 **More Campuses, More Questions** — what the Universities Act could change 25

03 **What Is Care Worth?** — J&K's first HTA resource centre 26

04 **The Idea Got an On-Ramp** — two challenges for young founders 26

05 **Summer Became a Startup Lab** — 221 students finished JKEDI's programme 27

06 **Who Set the Fee?** — the panel behind professional-college fees 27

EDUCATION - WELL-BEING

A Room to *Talk*

On 3 July, the university opened a confidential support space and made student distress an institutional responsibility.

BY JAMMUBEAT EDITORIAL • 5 MIN READ

IMAGE · DAILY EXCELSIOR

On 3 July, the University of Jammu inaugurated a Counselling Services Unit at the TBS Convention Centre. The unit was established for students, research scholars, faculty and staff under the UGC's national push for campus mental-health and well-being centres.

Its promise was straightforward: trained support in a safe, confidential and non-judgmental setting. That wording mattered in a campus culture where students often feared that asking for help would reach a teacher, become gossip or be read as weakness.

The pressures were familiar - examinations, family expectations, loneliness, money and uncertainty after graduation. Until now, the institutional answer had often been informal advice or endurance. A dedicated unit acknowledged that distress required professional attention, not only encouragement.

Opening a room did not finish the work. Students needed to know where it was, how to book, what confidentiality covered and whether appointments were available when pressure peaked. Staffing and trust would decide whether the service became real.

July's change was therefore both small and structural. The university had created a place where a student could say that things were not fine without beginning in a disciplinary office.

The service remained relevant beyond the month. Anyone seeking current access needed to confirm the unit's hours and referral process with the university, while emergencies still required immediate local medical or crisis support.

A counselling unit also had to become visible before a crisis made visibility urgent. Orientation sessions, clear booking instructions and teachers who could refer without stigma would decide whether students saw the room as a normal campus service rather than a last resort.

The university's next measure would be trust. Confidentiality had to be explained plainly, appointments had to be available and the service had to connect students to specialist care when a conversation needed more support than one campus room could provide.

EDUCATION - POLICY

More Campuses, *More Questions*

July moved J&K closer to admitting private universities. Choice could expand, but affordability and regulation would carry the real argument.

BY RUPALI GUPTA • 5 MIN READ

IMAGE · WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

By late July, rules under the Jammu and Kashmir Universities Act, 2026 had moved toward final approval. The Act had passed the Legislative Assembly on 4 April and received assent on 15 April, creating a legal framework for private universities to establish campuses in the Union Territory.

The rules were expected to define eligibility, finances, governance, academic standards and compliance. Until they were notified, no new campus could be treated as an operational outcome. July's story was about the framework nearing readiness, not universities opening their gates.

For students, the attraction was course choice closer to home. Jammu families routinely paid for tuition, rent and travel outside J&K because a specialised programme was unavailable locally. New institutions could reduce that outflow and create teaching, research and service jobs.

Private expansion also carried familiar risks: high fees, aggressive marketing, uneven faculty and programmes designed for enrolment rather than employment. Strong approval and disclosure rules would matter as much as the number of campuses sanctioned.

The policy could also bring collaboration or international participation, but brand names alone would not guarantee quality. Accreditation, faculty strength, laboratories, placement data and student protection needed to remain visible before a family committed years of savings.

July ended with possibility, not proof. More seats could widen choice; weak regulation could simply widen the bill. The final rules and the first approvals would show which version J&K was actually building.

For families, the useful comparison would not stop at a brochure. Fees, hostel costs, faculty turnover, laboratory access, placements and refund rules would tell a clearer story than a new campus name. Those details had to be available before an application became a financial commitment.

The policy therefore deserved attention from students who wanted more options and from students who could least afford a bad one. Expansion was valuable only when information and protection expanded with it.

EDUCATION - RESEARCH

What Is Care *Worth?*

CSIR-IIIM gained a centre that would study which medicines, tests and programmes deserved public money.

BY MANIK GUPTA • 3 MIN READ

In July, CSIR-IIIM Jammu received approval from the Department of Health Research to establish a Health Technology Assessment resource centre for 2026-27, reported as the first in J&K.

HTA compares clinical benefit, safety, cost and wider impact before a public system funds a medicine, test, device or programme. The work sits between medicine, economics, statistics and policy.

For Jammu students, the centre created a local research lane beyond the wet lab. Its longer value would depend on projects, staffing and whether the evidence it produced actually shaped health decisions.

The work could draw researchers from pharmacy, medicine, economics, statistics and public health. That mix made the centre relevant to students who liked science but did not see themselves only at a laboratory bench.

CSIR-IIIM Director Dr Zabeer Ahmed led the institutional effort, with Dr Mir M. Asrar named principal investigator. Their task after approval was to turn a new designation into studies that decision-makers could use.

That work could give local students a different picture of health science. The question was not only whether a treatment worked in a controlled study, but whether it remained safe, affordable and useful when a public system had to serve thousands of people.

The centre's credibility would come from transparent methods and decisions that could be examined by clinicians, economists and patients alike. July supplied the institutional beginning; useful evidence would take longer.

A student entering this field would therefore learn to ask a public question in several languages at once: did the intervention help, could people reach it and was the cost justified when budgets were finite?

EDUCATION - STUDENT FOUNDERS

The Idea Got an *On-Ramp*

ASCEND J&K launched separate idea tracks for college students and under-18 founders.

BY MANIK GUPTA • 5 MIN READ

At ASCEND J&K on 23-24 July, the government and JKEDI launched Startup Idea Challenge 2.0 for college and university students and a Junior Level Idea Challenge for school students under 18.

The launch sat beside visible proof of the wider pipeline: seven startups received Rs 5 lakh each, while 20 ventures pitched to 14 investors. The challenges were meant to move younger ideas toward mentorship and seed support.

For Jammu students, the useful feature was access without a private incubator or family introduction. Application dates and terms still needed an official check, but July had created a named route from notebook idea to structured scrutiny.

The school-level challenge treated early ideas as worth hearing before a student had a degree or company. The college track was the next rung, aimed at concepts ready for feedback, mentors and a possible seed-support path.

The summit around the launch showed what that pipeline could become: 20 startups pitched to 14 investors and seven ventures received Rs 5 lakh each. The challenge still had to publish and run a fair selection process, but the route no longer existed only in theory.

For a school founder, the first gain was permission to take an idea seriously. A problem observed in a classroom could be tested with a mentor, a customer conversation and a small prototype before anyone asked for a polished company story.

The selection process would matter as much as the prize money. Clear criteria, useful feedback for teams that were not chosen and support beyond one demo day would decide whether the challenge built founders or simply produced another stage photograph.

That was the bridge the programme needed to make: from an interesting idea to a testable problem, from a pitch to a user and from a prize to a next experiment.

EDUCATION - EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Summer Became a *Startup Lab*

A 60-hour internship replaced passive career talk with business planning and practical assignments.

BY MANIK GUPTA • 2 MIN READ

By late July, 221 students had completed JKEDI's Summer Internship Programme across seven concluding batches - 181 at Bari Brahmana and 40 at the Jammu district centre.

The ten-day, 60-hour module covered entrepreneurship, innovation, business planning, problem-solving and government support. Participants came from degree colleges across the Jammu division rather than only specialist business schools.

The programme did not turn every participant into a founder. It did something more realistic: it gave students a first structured test of whether self-employment suited them and made the region's enterprise support system easier to approach.

An earlier set of eight batches had already trained about 229 students, including participants from GCW Gandhi Nagar, SPMR College of Commerce, MAM College, GCW Parade and GDC Akhnoor. The July completions therefore belonged to a broader summer run.

The internship mixed sessions with practical assignments and expert interaction under the experiential-learning direction of NEP 2020. Its best outcome was not a certificate count but a few students leaving with a problem, customer and first workable plan.

That first plan could be small: a local food brand that needed packaging, a service that solved a college problem or a repair business that understood one neighbourhood well. Practical work made entrepreneurship less theatrical and easier to question before money was borrowed.

The programme's follow-through would decide its value. Students needed a route to mentors, registration help and finance after the final session, otherwise a useful summer experiment would end exactly when the harder work of starting began.

The strongest alumni story would not necessarily be a registered company. It could be a student who learned to test an idea, reject a weak one and return to college with a clearer sense of how work was made.

EDUCATION - AFFORDABILITY

Who Set the *Fee?*

A reconstituted committee put private professional-college charges back under active review.

BY JAMMUBEAT EDITORIAL • 5 MIN READ

On 15 July, the J&K government reconstituted the committee that fixed fees for private and self-financing professional colleges. Retired Justice Mohammad Yaqoob Mir was appointed chair for a one-year term or until further orders.

The panel brought together education and health officials, representatives of national regulators and a chartered accountant. Its task was to examine institutional costs and prevent arbitrary or capitation fees.

For families comparing engineering, medical, nursing and B.Ed seats, the committee's work could decide whether an offer was affordable. July restored the watchdog; timely, published decisions would determine whether students felt the effect.

The committee included administrative secretaries from relevant departments, representatives of the National Medical Commission and AICTE, and a chartered accountant able to test the cost claims colleges placed before it.

Its legal purpose followed the Supreme Court framework that allowed a reasonable institutional surplus but rejected arbitrary fees and capitation. The useful public outcome would be fee decisions families could find before counselling, not after payment.

That timing mattered because a family comparing seats often committed money before it had a complete picture. Published fee tables, approved increases and a clear complaint route could turn the committee from a formal body into a practical protection.

July restored the question of who set the price. The next test was whether students could see the answer early enough to choose with information rather than pressure.

Fee regulation was therefore part of student support, not a separate administrative story. The number on an offer letter shaped which futures a family could safely consider.

SECTION 06

Jobs & Career

July's opportunity story moved beyond vacancies: enterprise finance, skill competition and industry-linked training offered different routes into work.

IN THIS SECTION

01 **From Idea to Income** — the Rs 1,830-crore founder pipeline 29

02 **Talent Was the Credential** — a route to the Skills Olympics 30

03 **From Lecture Hall to Factory Floor** — a five-year industry link for SKUAST 30

JOBS & CAREER - MISSION YUVA

From Idea to *Income*

July's clearest enterprise guide unpacked how Mission YUVA aimed to move young applicants from registration toward a bankable business.

BY JAMMUBEAT EDITORIAL • 5 MIN READ

IMAGE · DAILY EXCELSIOR

Across Jammu in July, the same career anxiety appeared in admissions queues, coaching centres and recruitment forms: a degree did not guarantee work. Mission YUVA offered a different answer by trying to help young people build enterprises instead of waiting only for vacancies.

The programme carried a public outlay of about Rs 1,830 crore, with wider bank lending expected around it. Its five-year ambition was roughly 1.37 lakh enterprises and 4.25 lakh jobs across J&K - targets large enough to require scrutiny as well as attention.

1.37 lakh

ENTERPRISE TARGET

Mission YUVA set a five-year goal of helping create about 1.37 lakh enterprises and 4.25 lakh jobs across J&K.

The pipeline was designed to move an applicant from registration and idea assessment through training, a business plan and bank finance. It covered nano and micro businesses alongside larger ventures, with emphasis on first-generation founders, women and people from remote or border areas.

That range mattered in Jammu, where a first enterprise was more likely to be a food unit, repair service, design studio, farm processor or local digital business than a venture-capital startup. The scheme's value would be measured in small firms that survived, not launch-stage language.

Applicants still needed to do ordinary homework: identify a customer, price equipment and working capital honestly, understand repayment and avoid borrowing simply because subsidy made the loan sound painless. Support could lower a barrier; it could not replace a viable plan.

July's guide turned Mission YUVA from a slogan into a sequence of decisions. The programme remained active beyond the month, so current applicants needed to use official district and Mission YUVA channels for live eligibility, forms and support desks.

The most important handoff was from a form to a customer. A founder who could describe who would pay, how often they would return and what the first month would cost had a stronger starting point than someone who only repeated the scheme's headline target.

Mission YUVA could widen the definition of a successful career in Jammu, but it could not remove risk. Its public value would show up in enterprises that opened carefully, hired locally and survived the first difficult year after the approval letter.

JOBS & CAREER - INDIASKILLS

Talent Was the *Credential*

IndiaSkills opened a no-fee, degree-free competition route across more than 50 trades.

BY RUPALI GUPTA • 3 MIN READ

At the end of July, IndiaSkills 2026-27 registration was open to J&K youth across more than 50 trades, from welding and baking to web technology and cyber security.

Entry depended on age and skill rather than a formal degree. The government-sponsored route moved from UT selection to regional and national competition, with WorldSkills as the final stage and training, travel, stay and food covered for participants who advanced.

The closing date had not been fixed publicly in the July listing, so the opportunity remained present-tense for August. Applicants needed to register through the Skill India Digital Hub and verify the age rule for their chosen skill.

Standard-skill entrants generally had to be born on or after 1 January 2006, while advanced fields such as cloud computing, cyber security, mechatronics and robot integration used a 1 January 2003 threshold.

Participants who advanced were offered government-sponsored training, travel, stay and food. That support made the competition unusually accessible, but candidates still had to choose one skill carefully and demonstrate it under pressure.

The degree-free route was useful precisely because it made practice visible. A baker, welder, web designer or cybersecurity learner could show work rather than explain why a certificate should be trusted. Competition still required discipline, but it did not begin with an automatic academic disadvantage.

For August applicants, the practical next step remained verification: check the age category, choose the trade that matched actual skill and save proof of registration. The opportunity was open, but the standard was real.

The route also gave families a useful alternative to treating a degree as the only respectable signal of ability. A skill became easier to discuss when the competition, training and progression were visible rather than informal or hidden.

JOBS & CAREER - AGRI-FOOD

From Lecture Hall to *Factory Floor*

SKUAST-Jammu's agreement with VKC Nuts put internships, applied research and industry mentors into one pipeline.

BY MANIK GUPTA • 3 MIN READ

In July, SKUAST-Jammu signed a five-year agreement with VKC Nuts covering student internships, industrial training, sponsored postgraduate research, product testing and technology transfer.

VKC Nuts director Gagan Jain was also designated a Professor of Practice, bringing operating experience into teaching and mentoring rather than leaving industry outside the campus gate.

For agriculture and food-science students, the value was practical exposure to processing and business. The agreement created the route; the number, quality and openness of actual placements would show how useful it became.

The five-year MoU also covered industry-sponsored master's and doctoral research, collaborative product testing and technology transfer. It gave postgraduate work a chance to start with a live processing problem rather than an isolated topic.

VKC Nuts director Gagan Jain was designated a Professor of Practice, bringing factory-floor decisions into teaching and mentorship. In a region built around walnuts, almonds and other high-value produce, that bridge between university and processor was especially direct.

The strongest version of the agreement would let students see the whole chain: grading, storage, packaging, quality control, branding and the route from a farm gate to a buyer. That context could make research questions more useful and career choices less abstract.

As with any MoU, the calendar would matter more than the signing photograph. Named internships, supervised projects and published calls would show whether the factory floor had actually become part of the learning environment.

For the region's young agri-food workforce, that bridge could make local employment more skilled without making it less local. Students could learn the commercial side of a crop while still seeing the farmers, processors and markets connected to it.

What to *Apply For*

The July stories that still required action in August - jobs, admissions and skill routes with live or imminent windows. Read the official notification before submitting anything.

University of Jammu PhD admissions 2026-27

BY 3 AUG

University of Jammu · Jammu · **Entrance test 8 Aug** · Research admission

IIT Jammu non-teaching recruitment

BY 14 AUG

Indian Institute of Technology Jammu · Jagti, Jammu · Direct recruitment / deputation

SMVDU counselling admits reporting

BY 18 AUG

Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University · Katra · **Programme dates vary** · Admission reporting

JKSSB Warder - 288 posts

BY 25 AUG

J&K Services Selection Board · Jammu & Kashmir · **Level 2** · Government

JKSSB PWD - 357 Draftsman and Works Supervisor posts

BY 30 AUG

J&K Services Selection Board · Jammu and Kashmir divisions · **SL-2 to Level 4** · Government

IndiaSkills 2026-27 registration

J&K Skill Development Mission · Jammu & Kashmir · **Free participation** · Skill competition

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