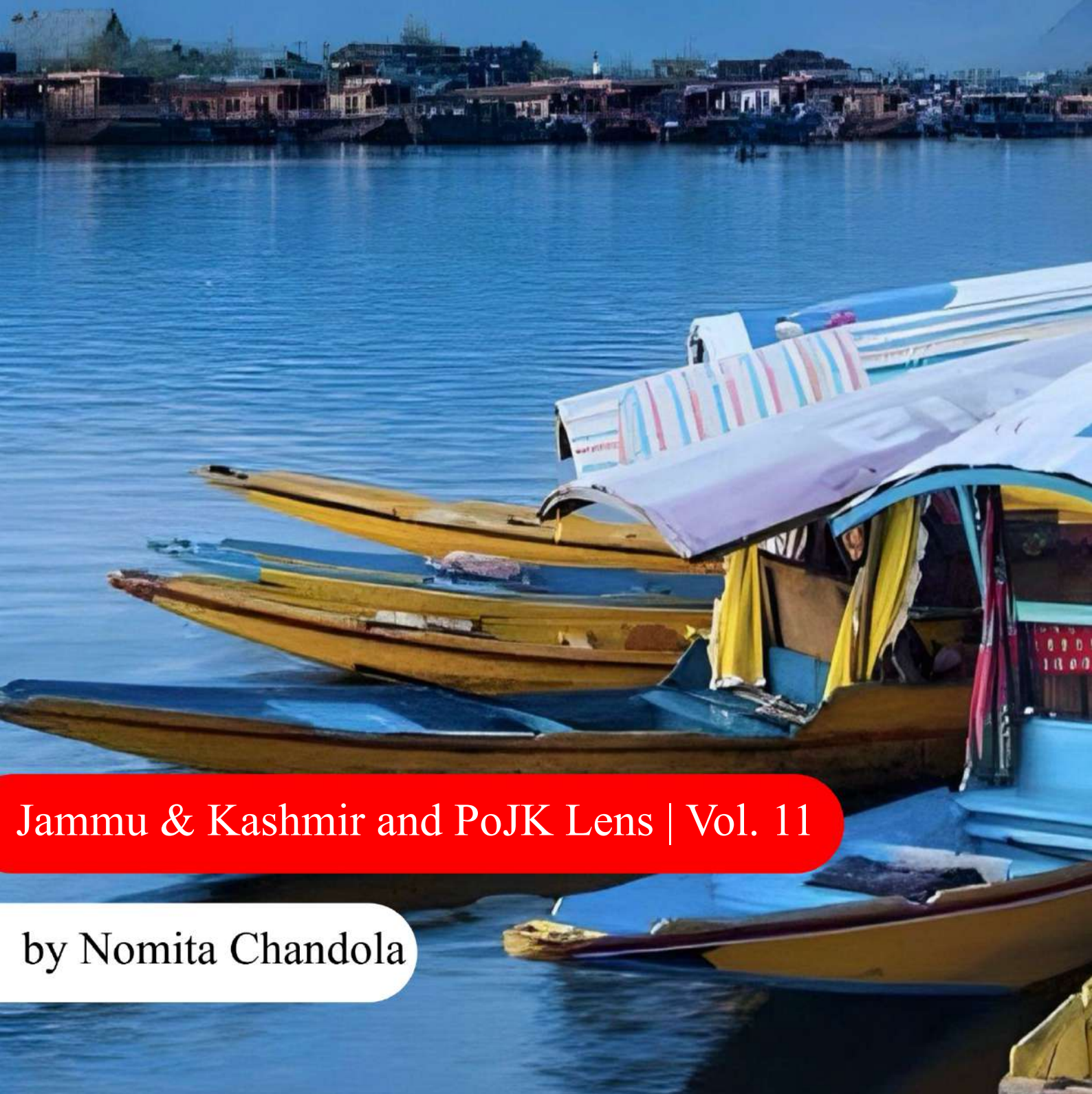


CLAWS Newsletter



Jammu & Kashmir and PoJK Lens | Vol. 11

by Nomita Chandola

JAMMU AND KASHMIR NEWS

1. Centre Approves 20 New CRPF Battalions for J&K Post Pahalgam Attack

[\(News On Air, 16th July 2025\)](#)

In response to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack and subsequent 'Operation Sindoor', the Ministry of Home Affairs has approved the creation of 20 new CRPF battalions—adding over 20,000 personnel—for deployment in Jammu and Kashmir. While the CRPF had initially sought 35 battalions, 20 have been cleared as an immediate measure, with Finance Ministry approval in place and final Union Cabinet nod pending. These units, tailored for J&K's terrain and security demands, will support local police in anti-militancy operations, law enforcement, and high-alert duties such as checkpoints, frisking, and rapid response.

2. Drones Replace OGWs in J&K Terror Operations [\(PTI, 16th July 2025\)](#)

Drones have become the new “Over Ground Workers” for terror groups in Jammu and Kashmir, replacing human operatives amid intensified security crackdowns. Officials say Pakistan's ISI is now using UAVs for infiltration and logistics across the LoC, marking a shift in asymmetric warfare tactics and raising new security concerns.

3. India Fast-Tracks Indus Hydropower Projects After Treaty Suspension

[\(Hindustan Times, 18th July 2025\)](#)

Following the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty after the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, India has accelerated work on four key hydropower projects in Jammu and Kashmir—Ratle, Pakal Dul, Kiru, and Kwar—collectively capable of generating 3,014 MW. The Ratle project, strongly opposed by Pakistan, is set to be completed first in May 2026. India has stopped sharing project data with Pakistan and is also revisiting the long-stalled Tulbul (Wular) navigation project, with work likely to begin early next year. Meetings between key ministries and agencies have focused on expediting construction, labour supply, and design approvals. The suspension of the 1960 treaty is tied to India's demand that Pakistan end support for cross-border terrorism, with the long-term plan aiming to harness 20,000 MW of hydropower in the region.

4. Bilal Gani Lone Joins Mainstream Politics, Rejects Separatism [\(The Kashmiriyat, 19th July 2025\)](#)

Former Hurriyat leader Bilal Gani Lone has joined mainstream politics, vowing to uphold the peaceful legacy of his father, Abdul Gani Lone, and rejecting the separatist path he once followed. Criticising the misuse of his father's ideology, Bilal subtly distanced himself from his brother Sajjad Lone's political approach. Emphasising reconciliation, he called for rebuilding trust with Kashmiri Pandits and focusing on youth welfare, education, and employment. He ruled out contesting for high office and pledged a sincere, truth-driven political journey. His move follows a broader trend of former separatists entering mainstream politics, with groups like JKPM and JKDPM formally renouncing separatism, signalling a shift toward democratic participation in Kashmir.

5. BRO Upgrades Roads in Pir Panjal to Boost [Connectivity \(Construction Week, 22nd July 2025\)](#)

The BRO is enhancing road infrastructure in Rajouri's Pir Panjal region, focusing on Kotranka, Samote, and Budhal to improve travel and economic activity. Concrete pavements are being built to resolve waterlogging issues in market areas, aiming to prevent road damage and reduce maintenance, benefiting commuters and local businesses.

6. Ladakh to Get Five New Districts Ahead of Key Elections [\(The Kashmiriyat, 22nd July, 2025\)](#)

The Union Territory of Ladakh is set to gain five new districts—three in Leh and two in Kargil—ahead of the September–October elections. This move addresses long-standing demands for better governance and local access to public services in remote areas like Nubra, Changthang, Zaskar, and Drass. The proposal, supported by political and administrative bodies, aims to decentralise power and improve infrastructure. A delegation from LAHDC Leh will soon meet Union Home Minister Amit Shah to discuss legal sanction, district reorganisation, delimitation, and updated electoral rolls, urging swift action before the polls.

7. No Flood Threat in Kashmir, Flash Flood Risk in Jammu ([Kashmir Life, 23rd July 2025](#))

Officials have confirmed that water levels in the Jhelum River and its tributaries across Kashmir remain well below danger marks, indicating no immediate flood threat. However, the Meteorological Department has forecast intense rainfall in parts of the Jammu region, raising concerns about potential flash floods in vulnerable and low-lying areas. Independent forecaster Faizan Arif noted that while recent rainfall is beneficial after a dry spell, persistent showers in Jammu's hilly terrain could escalate flood risks. Caution has been advised in the region.

8. J&K Faces Deepening Drug Crisis as Over 1.12 Lakh Kg Narcotics Seized in Five Years ([The Kashmiriyat, 24th July 2025](#))

Jammu and Kashmir is grappling with a worsening drug crisis, with over 1.12 lakh kilograms of narcotics seized between 2018 and 2022, as per data from the Ministry of Home Affairs. Seizures peaked in 2020, followed by a decline in 2021 and 2022. Despite this, massive quantities—over 29,000 kg—were destroyed in 2023, with additional seizures continuing into 2024. Over 6,800 arrests were made under the NDPS Act during the five-year span, and since 2023, 3,190 more cases and 4,536 arrests have been recorded. Authorities have also issued 463 detention orders under the PIT NDPS Act to target major traffickers, as efforts intensify to dismantle supply chains and curb narcotic abuse in the region.

9. SIA Files Chargesheet in 46 Kg Cross-Border Narco-Terror Case Linked to LeT ([PHQ Media Centre, 27th July 2025](#))

The State Investigation Agency (SIA) has filed a chargesheet in a major cross-border narco-terrorism case involving over 46 kg of heroin seized in Jammu and Punjab. The case began with the arrest of Sartaj Singh in Jammu's Bus Stand area, where 33.580 kg of heroin was recovered. Follow-up action led to the arrest of Amritpal Singh alias Fouji in Punjab, with another 12.626 kg seized. Investigation revealed direct links between Amritpal and a Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Toiba handler. The chargesheet, filed under the NDPS Act and UAPA, marks a significant step against narco-terror networks funding terror activities in Jammu and Kashmir and beyond.

10. Op Mahadev [\(NDTV, 28th July 2025\)](#)

In a swift and precisely coordinated operation codenamed 'Mahadev', Indian security forces neutralised three Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists, including the Pahalgam attack mastermind Suleiman Shah alias Hashim Musa, in Srinagar's Dachigam forests. A former Pakistani Army SSG commando turned LeT operative, Shah was tracked over several days. The group activated a T82 encrypted device at 2 am, revealing their location. A drone confirmed visuals at 8 am, and by 10 am, Para SF and Rashtriya Rifles closed in. The encounter began at 11 am, killing all three terrorists by 11:45 am. Weapons including AK-47s and rifle grenades were recovered, and forces suspect a major attack was being planned. Days earlier, India had launched 'Operation Sindoor'—precision airstrikes on nine terror sites in Pakistan and PoK in retaliation for the Pahalgam attack, targeting bases linked to LeT, JeM, and Hizbul Mujahideen.

11. NIA Probes Killing of Pahalgam Attack Mastermind in Srinagar Encounter [\(Business Standard, 29th July 2025\)](#)

The NIA has launched a probe into the killing of Sulieman alias Asif, the alleged mastermind of the April 22 Pahalgam attack, and two associates in an encounter near Srinagar. The operation, codenamed 'Mahadev', was initiated after satellite phone signals were traced. The slain terrorists included Jibrán, linked to the Sonamarg tunnel attack, and Hamza Afghani. The April attack claimed 26 lives, mostly tourists, prompting major counterterror operations. Arms and ammunition were recovered, and a search for more militants in the area continues.

12. 500g Heroin Dropped by Pakistani Drone Seized Near IB in Hiranagar [\(Daily Excelsior, 30th July 2025\)](#)

Security forces in Kathua's Hiranagar sector seized a 500-gram heroin packet worth over ₹2 crore, dropped by a Pakistani drone near the International Border at village Chhan Tanda. A local resident spotted the drone activity and alerted BSF and police, who swiftly recovered the consignment. This marks the second drone-based heroin drop in the Jammu region within four days, following a similar incident in Samba district on July 26.

13. Operation Shivshakti ([Pragativadi, 30th July 2025](#))

In a late-night encounter under Operation Shivshakti, Indian Army troops eliminated two terrorists attempting to infiltrate across the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir's Degwar sector of Poonch district. The gunfight began in the Kalsian-Gulpur area after suspicious movement was detected by the Army's 16 Corps. Prompt action, aided by coordinated intelligence from the Army and J&K Police, led to the swift neutralisation of the infiltrators. Three weapons were recovered, and search operations continue to ensure no other threats remain in the area.

14. Modi Criticises Indus Waters Treaty, Cites Harm to Farmers and National Interest ([Times of India, 30th July 2025](#))

PM Narendra Modi has strongly criticised the Indus Waters Treaty in the Lok Sabha, claiming it barred India from desilting its dams without Pakistan's approval — a clause he said has hurt Indian agriculture and power generation for decades. He blamed Nehru for accepting such terms, alleging it led to silt buildup and welded dam gates, especially affecting Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Delhi. Modi called the treaty a betrayal that gave away 80% of India's river water to Pakistan and revealed India had even funded Pakistani canals. He announced new plans to redirect river water to Rajasthan and Gujarat through a canal network, aiming to fix what he called "historic blunders."

15. Centre Revives Sawalkote Hydel Project After Indus Treaty Suspension ([The New Indian Express, 31st July 2025](#))

Following the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty after the April 22 Pahalgam attack, the Centre has invited bids for the long-stalled 1,856 MW Sawalkote Hydroelectric Project on the Chenab River in Jammu and Kashmir. Set to be the largest hydel project in the UT, its construction was earlier blocked due to Pakistan's objections. The ₹209.80 crore project, led by NHPC, is to be completed in 113 months. India is also reviving the Tulbul Navigation Project on Wullar Lake, asserting full control

over Jhelum and Chenab rivers. Both J&K's LG Manoj Sinha and CM Omar Abdullah have supported the move, calling the treaty historically unfair to the region.

PoJK and GILGIT- BALTISTAN NEWS

16. Pakistan Imposes 5-Year Ban on Hotel Construction Near Northern Lakes

[\(France 24, 18th July 2024\)](#)

Pakistan has announced a five-year ban on new hotel construction around tourist lakes in Gilgit-Baltistan to curb environmental degradation caused by unregulated development. The region, home to over 13,000 glaciers and major tourist attractions like Lake Attabad, has seen a surge in construction, straining resources and polluting water bodies. The move follows public outcry over a viral video showing wastewater discharge into Lake Attabad. Local officials and residents have welcomed the ban, stressing the need to preserve the area's natural beauty.

17. PoJK High Court Halts ₹16B Road Projects Over Irregularities

[\(Kashmirenglish.com, 18th July 2025\)](#)

The PoJK High Court has issued a stay order halting 990 km of road construction projects worth Rs 16 billion, approved by the Anwar-ul Haq-led government. The order came after a petition alleging serious irregularities, political favoritism, and violations of procurement rules. The petitioners argued that the project funding lacked transparency and disproportionately favored Bhimber district. The court has summoned responses from key departments and paused all tenders and advertisements, marking a significant move towards financial accountability in PoJK.

18. GB Seeks Rs7bn Federal Aid After Rs20bn Flood Losses [\(Geo News, 27th July 2025\)](#)

Flash floods and landslides triggered by intense monsoon rains have caused over Rs20 billion in damage across seven districts of Gilgit-Baltistan, killing at least 10 people and injuring four. CM Haji Gulbar Khan reported the destruction of 300 houses and partial damage to 200 more, along with roads, water channels, and farmland. The GB government has requested Rs7 billion from the Centre for rehabilitation and urged

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to visit affected areas. Relief efforts are underway, with emergency restoration orders and plans for full compensation.

19. Babusar Highway Reopens Partially as Flood Recovery Continues in GB

[\(The Dawn, 28th July 2025\)](#)

The Babusar-Naran Highway has reopened for one-way traffic after flash floods hit Gilgit-Baltistan on July 21, leaving 10 dead and hundreds displaced. Search operations continue for missing persons, including a TV anchor's family, with army sniffer dogs assisting. The NHA has cleared most landslide points on key routes, while the NDMA has issued fresh alerts for more rain and possible floods through July 31.

20. GB Flood Survivors Struggle Amid Worsening Crisis

[\(The Dawn, 28th July 2025\)](#)

Flash floods across Gilgit-Baltistan have displaced hundreds, destroying homes, roads, and utilities. In Kondus alone, over 50 homes were swept away, while residents in Babusar, Danyor, and Shigar face days without clean water, electricity, or aid. Communication breakdowns and road blockages have worsened the crisis. At least 15 tourists, including a TV anchor and her family, are feared dead after being swept away in Babusar; seven bodies have been recovered so far. Rescue operations using drones, sniffer dogs, and army teams are ongoing, with partial clearance of Babusar Highway achieved at several points.

About the Author

Nomita Chandola is a dedicated scholar in International Relations, with a strong academic foundation and a passion for understanding complex global issues. She recently earned her master's degree in International Relations from the University of Leeds, where she focused on modules such as global governance and climate security. Prior to this, she completed her bachelor's degree in Political Science with a minor in Economics from Kamla Nehru College, University of Delhi.

Currently, Nomita is a Research Assistant at the Centre for Land Warfare Studies, where she delves into critical issues of strategic affairs and geopolitical dynamics. Her primary area of interest lies in South Asian studies, emphasising security dynamics and their intersections with global politics. She aspires to pursue a PhD to further explore these themes. With a keen eye for policy analysis and research, Nomita aims to contribute meaningfully to the academic and policy discourse on international security and regional stability.



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