



GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

SHER-E-KASHMIR EMPLOYMENT & WELFARE PROGRAMME FOR THE YOUTH (SKEWPY)

An initiative of Government of Jammu & Kashmir for the Youth



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Preamble:

1.1 The problem of unemployment in the State, especially that of the educated unemployed has reached alarming proportions and deserves immediate focused and coordinated attention with new policy initiatives, sound institutional arrangements and effective operational strategies for creating employment opportunities and enhancing employability.

1.2 A collective, comprehensive and holistic endeavour is required to address this gigantic problem in a principled manner. Hence, the Government announces this 'State Policy on Employment' to simultaneously and comprehensively address all issues relating to the problem of unemployment in the State.

1.3. The policy document is being launched on the 5th December, 2009, the 105th birthday of the great visionary of the State, the Sher-e-Kashmir, Jenab Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah Sahib and hence named as "***The Sher-e-Kashmir Employment and Welfare Programme for the Youth***" (SKEWPY).

2. Statistical Base:

2.1 The District Employment Exchanges maintained qualification wise data of job seekers, which (in respect of matriculates and above), as of 31.12.2008, was as under:

S.No.	Category	Number
1	Matric and above	38,275
2	Graduates	15,472
3	Post Graduates	5,133
4	Degree Holder Engineers	3,112
5	Diploma Engineers	6,129
6	ITI trained	9,620
7	Other skilled	2,788
	Total	80,529

2.2 The above data, however, had mainly two limitations. Firstly, all the unemployed persons did not register themselves with the Employment Exchanges. Secondly, those registered might also not have been totally unemployed and been only in the process of seeking better jobs. Since process of placements by the Employment Exchanges had vanished altogether, over the course of time, there had been a marked decrease in the registration level at the Exchanges.

2.3 In order to adopt a well conceived strategy for alleviating the problem of unemployment in the state, there is a fervent

requirement of a sound statistical base. This is more so for the reason that there is a lot of equivocation about the very extent and nature of unemployment.

2.4 For this purpose, it has become imperative to build a sound and dependable data base so that plausible remedial measures are explored and adopted to suit our needs and suitable policy interventions are devised from time to time to create/retrain the available human resources as per changing needs of the economy and job market.

3. District Employment & Counselling Centers:

3.1 For operationalizing the mechanism of data collection at the ground level, the Government decided to revamp the erstwhile Employment Exchanges and enhance their role, both quantitatively and qualitatively. They have been renamed as District Employment and Counselling Centres (DECCs). These District Centres shall develop a reliable statistical base in the formats of skill inventory and skill deficiency mapping.

3.2 The number of such District Employment & Counseling Centres has been increased from 14 to 22 so that all the districts have a well placed independent institutional arrangement for information generation on the subject. It shall be mandatory –for all practical

purposes- for all the unemployed educated youth to get themselves registered with the concerned District Employment and Counselling Centre.

3.3 Necessary formats for registration shall be prepared by the Department of Economics and Statistics. The requisite software for on line digital format is being developed by the Government through the Labour & Employment Department.

3.4 The information collected by the DECCs shall be available *on line* to the Divisional & State offices in the Directorate of Employment and to the relevant offices in the Secretariat and shall be compiled in suitable formats from time to time.

3.5 While maintaining confidentiality of the personal data of registered unemployed youth, to the extent technically feasible or desirable, the compiled collective data and abstracted information for individual districts, administrative divisions and the State shall be periodically published/displayed on the website of the Department.

3.6 Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to also set up Credit Counselling Centers to increase appetite and actual off-take of credit for self-employment ventures. The District Employment and Counseling Centers shall dovetail the efforts of such Credit Counseling Centers of RBI in a mutually rewarding manner.

3.7 The District Employment and Counseling Centers shall also have a dedicated cell for fore-casting the requirement of skilled manpower in the context of various developmental initiatives of the State Government and major projects to be taken up under the various Flagship Programmes of the Central Government. This will help in re-aligning the content of capacity building programmes, on a dynamic basis, to make skill transfer initiatives and efforts more and more market-relevant.

3.8 The initiative of the State Government has evoked good response from the unemployed youth. They have enthusiastically come forward to register themselves with the District Employment and Counseling Centres. From the previous number of registration (80,529 for all categories: matriculates and beyond), the number has increased to 4.47 lac. The district-wise break-up of the registered unemployed youth as of November 15, 2009 is as under:

Kashmir Division	
Srinagar	50829
Ganderbal	7659
Budgam	18865
Anantnag	34062
Kulgam	27599
Pulwama	27757
Shopian	8540
Baramulla	28726
Bandipora	18916
Kupwara	26767
Leh	2946
Kargil	2323
Total Kashmir Division	254989

Jammu Division	
Jammu	32487
Samba	11850
Udhampur	15503
Reasi	5420
Kathua	25138
Doda	30219
Ramban	8930
Kishtwar	12995
Rajouri	19767
Poonch	30355
Total Jammu Division	192664
Grand Total	447653

3.9 For the state as a whole, qualification-wise break-up of the registered members is indicated below:-

Illiterate	4033
Middle	67100
Matric	104777
PUC	14709
TDC	125054
Graduate	76322
Post Graduate	18768
Diploma Holders	14311
Degree Holders	6434
Draftsman	945
Skilled other than ITI	3042
ITI trained	12158
Total	447653

3.10 The over-whelming response of the unemployed youth and the confidence shown by them in the sincerity of the State Government to find a set of working solutions to this ever growing problem cast heavy responsibility on the State Government. The Government's response in the shape of strategies and the plans of action as of now get unfolded through this document, in the succeeding paras, to be kept under a dynamic review mechanism for amplification and modification as per emerging needs.

4. Infrastructure:

4.1 Buildings and other infrastructure for the District Employment & Counselling Centres shall be provided in all the districts in a phased manner.

4.2 All the District Employment Exchanges, now renamed as District Employment & Counselling Centres, were working from hired buildings. The 8 new District Employment and Counseling Centres shall also function from make-shift arrangement /hired buildings for the time being. All the 22 'District Employment and Counselling Centers' shall be provided with proper accommodation in due course of time.

4.3 The requirement of accommodation has been provisionally worked out at 2240 sft. The total cost of land and building is estimated at about Rs.50 lakh per Centre. Two such buildings shall be constructed in the current financial year. The remaining districts shall

be provided with modern buildings of their own, in the next two to three year's time.

4.4 The design of the buildings will be carefully worked out so as to keep maximum open land available for meeting future requirements of the Centres. The Centres shall be provided with a library, a reading room, an internet kiosk, a canteen, some recreational facilities, training hall-cum-auditorium and public conveniences for the exclusive use of registered unemployed youths of the Centre.

4.5 The Centers shall have facilities for use by the J&K Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JK EDI) for conducting their district level training programmes of skill promotion, re-training and entrepreneur development for prospective/existing entrepreneurs.

5. Synergy of the District Centres:

5.1 The Employment Exchanges had acquired a static approach in their functioning. In contrast, the DECCs shall have a dynamic and pro-active approach in dealing with ever-changing scenario of unemployment at the district and the State level, continually offering the latest adoptable solutions to the youth.

5.2 The existing staffing pattern shall be overhauled to meet the requirements of a dynamic organization geared to meet the current challenges. The staff structure of 18 persons for the existing District Employment Exchanges in its present form is conventional and does

not suit to the requirements of a modern, business like, dynamic organization. This structure will be given a fresh shape. Instead of having a hierarchy of clerical staff and accounts personnel, more executive staff shall be added in their place. Each executive functionary should be assigned independent, well defined responsibilities.

5.3 The Centres shall encourage the unemployed youth to voluntarily enroll themselves by offering facilities built in with the registration with the Centre. A registered unemployed youth will be called a *member* and assigned a *unique membership code*.

5.4 The process of registration shall be made simple, easily accessible and user friendly.

5.5 Updated printed information shall be kept at the DECCs as also made available *on line* on the latest self-employment Schemes, available jobs and skill up-gradation programmes.

5.6 Easy and quick access to all the relevant schemes & programmes shall be provided in a transparent manner to prospective entrepreneurs and job seekers through internet service maintained by the Centre on 'first come first served' basis.

5.7 Selection for training and skill up-gradation programmes shall be finalized at the level of the District Centre on a regular, ongoing basis.

5.8 For 'cluster' programmes (setting up of a number of similar units in a cluster within limited geographical area), programmes for the entrepreneurs for development of managerial and accounting skills, quality up-gradation, marketing updates, infusion of latest technologies etc shall be organized in the DECCs.

5.9 Information on all self employment schemes of the State Government and the Central Government alongwith the available financial support, incentives and subsidies together with eligibility conditions would be downloadable at these Centres.

5.10 Information regarding all government jobs, advertisements issued by J&K Public Service Commission (PSC) / J&K Services Selection Board (SSB), J&K Police Recruitment Board etc. shall also be made accessible at these Centres.

5.11 Information regarding overseas jobs along with the information on emigration laws, formats and additional relevant information collected by J&K Overseas Employment Corporation on the relevant subjects shall also be made available at these Centres.

5.12 Efforts shall be made to link the Centres with PSC, SSB and other recruiting agencies for e-filing of applications by registered unemployed youth through these Centres, thereby ensuring hassle free, speedy and fool-proof mode of filing such applications and doing away with repeated filling of forms, filing of documents and their verification on each such occasion.

5.13 The Centres shall generate useful unemployment data for dynamic planning by the government in the field of recruitment in government services, creation of job opportunities in private sector, modifications in the existing and creation of new self employment schemes, providing appropriate skill development and upgradation facilities and providing links with the credit, finance and infrastructural support and available technological inputs.

6. Skill Upgradation:

6.1 The Fifth economic census of 2005 indicates that there are 3.24 lac establishments in the state in different economic activities engaging a total of 7.52 lac persons. There is a great potential for up scaling the employment per establishment in the decentralized household/farm levels, through a massive effort of skill transfer, skill upgradation and multi-skilling.

6.2 In the recent past (February, 2009) a number of initiatives have been undertaken at the national level to enhance the skill endowment base in the country. Jammu and Kashmir State while taking its share has to create about 50 lakh skilled persons by 2022 with emphasis on exclusivity. The average annual target works out to be 3.85 lakhs which indeed is a huge task. In order to address ourselves to this challenge, the Government is separately formulating 'State Policy on Skill Development' with an objective to create 'workforce empowered with improved skills, knowledge and internationally recognized qualifications to gain access to decent employment'.

6.3 In more specific terms, the Government shall set up a 'State Council of Skill Development' for formulating policy, giving direction and carrying out review of the activities undertaken in the area of skill promotion in harmony with the Modular Skill Development Programme of the Central Government. All Industrial Training Institutes at the district level have been designated as nodal centers for registration for training. Under the skill development initiative, identification of courses has been done as part of training to the unemployed youth. The scheme will be subsequently extended to blocks in a phased manner. In order to coordinate activities of the various departments to achieve the target of training of 50 lakh youth by the year 2022, skill mapping at macro and micro level to assess the

actual requirement of skilled force in the local, state and national employment market is being carried out.

6.4 At the operational level the Government commits itself to initiate and expedite the process of establishing 22 district level 'Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs)' in cooperation with the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India and Public/Private Sector Banks.

6.5 This institutional arrangement shall start taking place by the end of the current financial year by which time five such institutes shall be set up in coordination with J&K Bank and two with the SBI.

6.6 To ensure that skill upgradation leads to discernible enhancement in production and consequent wage increase due to higher and better output – both quantitatively and qualitatively – it will be necessary to also equip the trainees with core minimum where-with-all (tool kits etc.) upon completion of the training programmes. Appropriate financial provision for such support shall be inbuilt in the training costs.

6.7 The Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12) lays emphasis upon the Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode of investment to provide additional sources of employment. The PPP would be used for maintenance of capital assets and implementation of various

development activities. In an ongoing initiative, 21 ITIs are proposed to be converted into “centers of excellence” with the active participation of Industry under a specially designed scheme at a cost of Rs.67.50 crore. Under the PPP framework, the Industry shall provide consultancy, advisory services and on-the-job training. An ambitious programme of setting up of 18 Polytechnics in the State under central funding is under way. These initiatives will equip the available human resource with market relevant skills and enhance their employability in Industry and Business.

7. NREGS

7.1 The geo-climatic extremities in the State cause a high incidence of seasonal unemployment particularly in the countryside snowballing into out-migration of labour force. In order to address this phenomenon and ensure livelihood security to the rural people, Government intends to strengthen the premier Wage Employment Scheme under ‘National Rural Employment Guarantee Act’ by extending its scope and enhancing wages.

7.2 For this purpose ‘State Employment Guarantee Council’ has taken up the matter with the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India for extending the scope of the scheme by incorporating relevant activities in the list of already available ‘Permissible Works’.

7.3 Lot of potential exists for meaningful utilization of knowledge, skill and talent of our educated unemployed youth under NREGS. Last year 350 persons were engaged as supporting staff to work as Computer Operators, Accounts Assistants, Technical Assistants, Rozgar Sevikas as well as Block level Programme Officers. With the targeted increase in person-days of employment taking it to 5 crore person-days a year, we shall be generating potential for absorption of nearly 3000 persons in such jobs.

8. Self Employment:

8.1 Conventionally, government has been perceived as the sole employer and remedy has unfortunately been invented in over-sizing the administrative machinery. Even when this convenient option has been over exhausted, the problem of unemployment has actually proliferated. This conventional approach has, in fact, proved counter productive.

8.2 This mindset needs to be changed and new entrants to the labour market motivated to adopt self employment ventures.

8.3 A host of Central Schemes presently in place for the promotion of self employment shall be amplified with innovative self employment projects under various sectors.

8.4 The Government shall emphasize on mass awareness programmes to apprise youth of the State about the bright prospects in self employment privileges through J&K Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JK EDI).

8.5 The government also proposes to simultaneously adopt a pro active approach for creating **service related self employment units** which may be utilized to meet the requirements of government departments to start with. Some of the potential areas are plumbing, electrical services, repairing of motors, maintenance of gadgets, repair of electronic items etc which are highly in demand in most of government offices. The service units promoted by technically trained and qualified youth can be notified for providing such services to government departments on charges per visit basis, actual cost of replaced parts plus wages at notified rates. It is hoped that in due course of time, private sector and the general public shall be benefited by such services. Such units may be stationary or mobile. The requisite support for setting up of such service units as also a transitional support mechanism for sustaining them during the initial years shall be worked out by the government.

9. Women Welfare:

9.1 Amongst various welfare measures which the government intends to initiate for socio economic upliftment of women, a special

scheme has been devised for their economic empowerment. Under this scheme, 100 women entrepreneurs shall be selected from each district taking the total to 2,200 in the first phase. They will be granted direct loans upto Rs.3 lakh at a very low rate of interest (6%) through the State Women Development Corporation.

9.2 The scope of the scheme shall be later extended to tehsil level. For this purpose, the government shall provide a revolving fund of Rs.10 crore to the State Women Development Corporation, in suitable installments depending upon the progress of the proposed scheme.

9.3 The State Women Development Corporation shall be advised to ensure the techno economic viability and profitability of the enterprises and develop a scientific monitoring mechanism for timely interventions to ensure success of the assisted units.

9.4 The fields identified for this purpose include health care and pharmaceuticals; restaurants, computers and information technology, agro based industries, floriculture, cosmetics, perfumery and parlors; hosiery, ceramics, tailoring, leather and food products etc.

9.5 The Directorate of Employment, JKEDI, Registrars of Cooperative Societies and various other Directors incharge of economic development through private sector, shall ensure that

adequate representation is given to women entrepreneurs in all fields and in the self-employment schemes promoted by them.

10. J&K EDI and Seed Capital:

10.1 Financial institutions have been generally found to be reluctant to extend credit facility to the first generation entrepreneurs in view of their risk perception. This has negative implications on the development of entrepreneurship.

10.2 Such an equivocation warrants an immediate State intervention to ensure that the motivated and trained prospective entrants to the field of entrepreneurship/self employment are nurtured and insulated from frustration and mental agony.

10.3 To address this problem, the State Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) has been asked to offer 'Entrepreneurship Development Programme/s (EDPs)' as a package which apart from sensitization, training and consultancy inputs shall include an incentive in the form of non-refundable Seed Money to enable prospective entrepreneurs to kick start their ventures and make their projects bankable.

10.4 For this purpose, Government have decided to create an 'Entrepreneurship Development Fund' with an initial corpus of Rs. 50 crore. The corpus shall be utilized under a well conceived State

Scheme for the prospective motivated, trained and provisionally registered first generation entrepreneurs to start environment-friendly ventures relating to certain core areas which inter-alia include:

- i) horticulture, floriculture, cultivation of medicinal and aromatic plants (including cultivation on government form lands);
- ii) food-processing at the household/village level;
- iii) establishment of facilities for storage of food products/horticulture products: particularly cold chains;
- iv) handloom, handicrafts and other artisanal products: particularly design improvement, technology-transfer and marketing;
- v) ventures in poultry, sheep-breeding and production, collection, storage and marketing of milk: aimed at import substitution;
- vi) setting up of computer literacy/training institutes in villages/habitations particularly with a population of less than 3000 souls;
- vii) setting up of Fair Price Shops at small habitations across the State;
- viii) Tourism-related enterprises covering houseboat owners, setting up of Paying Guest facilities, small dhabas and restaurants with a capacity of 20 seats;

10.5 Special attention will be given at the time of selection of prospective entrepreneurs to remote, difficult and backward areas and vulnerable sections of the population including members of Scheduled Castes/Tribes, Gujjars, Bakerwals and other backward communities/groups.

10.6 The Government intends to build complete synergy in different Self Employment Schemes presently in vogue and ensure that the first generation entrepreneurs are actually benefited by these Schemes. National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC), a Government of India undertaking under the Ministry of Minority affairs provides loan/credit facilities to the first generation entrepreneurs belonging to the minorities on very low (3-6 per cent) interest rates. In order therefore to ensure that these benefits effectively reach the identified clientele group, the Government has decided to nominate JK EDI an additional State channelizing Agency of NMDFC for providing loans/credit facility to the entrepreneurs motivated, trained and promoted by the Institute.

10.7 JK EDI has already advertised for receiving applications from prospective entrepreneurs already trained by JK EDI in the past, as may be desirous of taking benefit of the Seed Capital Scheme. Last date of receipt of applications was 21-11-2009. The notice has

also been published in the newspapers and has evoked good response.

10.8 A Steering Committee has been constituted by Director, JK EDI to manage all aspects and to screen the applications, interview the candidates, select a suitable field of operation by the applicant and provide a feasibility report to him by/before end December 2009. The Steering Committee will be made broader based.

10.9 As per the guidelines, the prospective entrepreneurs are to be provided with seed capital equivalent to 35 % of the project cost upto a maximum of Rs. 3 lakh in respect of undergraduates and Rs. 5 lakh in respect of post-graduates and Rs.7.5 lacs in respect of technically qualified persons such as engineers, doctors and computer science & technology graduates. For group initiatives, as also in deserving individual cases, the upper limit will be relaxable as may be prescribed. In terms of the extant guidelines of RBI, no collateral security shall be insisted for bank loan upto Rs. 5 lacs. The State Government shall facilitate a tie-up between JK EDI and financial institutions particularly the J&K Bank for availability of adequate and timely credit - wherever required. The existing capacities in JK EDI will be strengthened to enable them to play a single-window/coordinating role for this initiative.

10.10 J&K Bank has agreed in principle to act as the debt syndicator for the above scheme. To such an effect, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is being signed between Government of J&K and the J&K Bank wherein the terms and conditions of credit disbursement have been outlined. Consequent upon the Government earmarking a minimum provision of Rs. 50 crore per annum in the Plan for the Scheme, which is expected to progressively increase to Rs. 100 crore, the expected proportionate credit flow from the J&K Bank will be in the range of Rs. 100-200 crore annually. As a part of the MoU, the rate of interest for all these loans, which will qualify for priority sector lending, would be 9% per annum. There shall be a one year moratorium on repayment of principle and interest.

10.11 With a view to ensuring timely and adequate credit flow to the potential entrepreneurs, the maximum time period (after he/she completes the training programme with JK EDI), for finalization of project report, appraisal of the project and actual disbursement of the loan will be three months.

11. Overseas Employment Corporation:

11. An Overseas Employment Corporation is being created to liaise with the placement agencies, foreign embassies, Ministry of Labour and Department of Overseas Employment etc. The proposed

Corporation shall create a knowledge bank for aspirers of overseas employment, particularly on matters of legal requirements for migration, work environment in various foreign lands, mandatory formalities and formats prescribed by employer countries and organizations etc. The Corporation shall also handle matters of employment opportunities within the Country. We hope that its role shall grow further after global recession starts receding.

12. Review of existing Self Employment Programmes:

12.1 A number of employment generation and poverty alleviation self employment schemes are in place in the state with incentives like interest subsidy, capital subsidy and margin money. In view of the decreasing response to such schemes from both the financial institutions as well as the un-employed educated youth, it is necessary to carry out a comprehensive review of all the schemes by a High Level Committee to be set up by the State Government to make them relevant to the changed circumstances and emerging challenges and to bring about much-needed convergence in the efforts under various initiatives. The basic thrust of such a revision will be to incentivize the existing schemes further to make them attractive. The incentive structure will be specially modified in case of technically trained/ITI trained youth.

12.2 More specifically, the State schemes will be re-designed to cover about 30,000 youth every year i.e. 1.50 lac unemployed youth over the next five years.

13. Recent initiatives by the Central Government:

13.1 Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, in a high level meeting held at Srinagar on October 28, 2009 observed that the Central Government was keen to work shoulder to shoulder with the State Government on issues related to the educated unemployed.

13.2 As announced by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, it is proposed to get 8000 educated unemployed of the state trained every year in ITIs located outside the state to promote their employability at the national and international level, in view of the increased demand for highly technically trained manpower in the IT sector and such other sectors.

13.3 A total of 8000 young men and women in the age group of 18-35 years will also be mobilized as J&K Youth Volunteer Core (JKYVC) to engage them in nation/State building activities such as cleaning of the Dal and Nageen lakes, disaster management, environmental protection, health and sanitation and tourism.

14. Innovations:

14.1 It is known world over that the human civilization has progressed on the foundation of human creativity and innovations. While some of the innovations get recognized, many others go unnoticed. In a knowledge society, it is important for us to scout 'innovations' and 'traditional knowledge practices' and popularize them for the advantage of the whole society. Jammu and Kashmir too has wealth of creative minds and talent. It is time for the state and its people to celebrate creativity and channelize benefits emanating from it for the advantage of the whole society.

14.2 Under the guidance of Jenab Omar Abdullah Sahib, our young and dynamic Chief Minister, the government is extremely keen that the state as well as private sectors join hands in discovering hidden talent of our society engaged in solving local problems without any outside help. It will not only encourage creativity and innovations but will also generate tremendous economic activity and increase our productivity. The Government has decided to institute an award to recognize five best innovations every year in identified fields with prizes of Rs. one lac each. The State will also take every possible step to get these innovations patented and popularized for the common benefit of the Society.

15. Reorganization of Employment Department:

15.1 The Government proposes to revamp the Employment Department, which will serve as the nodal/coordinating agency at all the operation levels, and place it under an Employment Facilitating Agency which shall be created and placed under the charge of a very senior executive officer. The officers selected for all levels of the revamped department shall be hand-picked to take-up the challenge at the district, divisional and state level and deliver with a missionary zeal. There will be a system of award and punishment for good and bad performance of all these officers.

15.2 The proposed Employment Facilitating Agency shall have an empowered Governing Body headed by the Chief Secretary to deal with all matters connected with employment of youth including all the aspects mentioned in this document. It will also oversee the functioning of all employment related organizations and monitor progress of implementation of all their employment generating schemes and programmes. The Agency shall also identify and create opportunities of employment in sectors like Tourism, Horticulture, Floriculture, Fisheries, Health and Sericulture etc where skills rather than education are in greater demand.

15.3 Training of youth, who may not be highly qualified but would be suitable for jobs in these sectors, shall be organized by the

proposed Agency. All the trainees shall be provided suitable stipend during the period of training.

15.4 The Agency shall facilitate setting up of Polyclinics and Consultancies by un-employed and retired doctors and engineers. The government and the financing institutions shall provide package of assistance and loans in a manner similar to that available for industrial units, suitably modified to meet specific requirements of such polyclinics and consultancies.

15.5 The Agency shall lay down norms, prescribe criteria, determine modalities and procedures for all matters connected to registration, training, skill upgradation, selections of candidates, entrepreneurship development programmes under various schemes mentioned in this document and those which may be approved by the government on the recommendation of the Agency from time to time, rates of stipend and all other matters connected with or incidental to the attaining of objectives spelt out in this document.

15.6 The Agency shall apprise the State Cabinet of the progress of their work from time to time and also put up before it all policy matters on which they would need Cabinet orders.

15.7 There is a minimum need for putting in place a regulatory framework with respect to employment opportunities in the private

sector particularly in terms of bench-marking quality of services and the prices of services rendered for providing proper remuneration to persons providing various services. The Agency shall examine the aspect.

15.8 The Agency will also explore the feasibility of setting up of service kiosks which shall have the details of skilled manpower available for various jobs with bench marks of quality and prices. Such kiosks shall make available to the consumers such services at the notified prices; underwriting the quality of service rendered.

16. Employment by the Government:

16.1 While the focus of all efforts and initiatives of the State Government will be the creation of sustainable self-employment opportunities in the productive sectors of the economy, the State Government is committed to filling of all available vacancies in the State Government as of March 31, 2010, on a fast – track basis over a period of twelve months.

16.2 It may be added that since last January, 9188 selections have been made by the Service Selection Board (SSB). The number is expected to go upto 11500 by end of the current financial year. Similarly, the Public Service Commission (PSC) has also made 705 selections since January 2009. By the end of the

current financial year, the PSC is expected to complete the process of selection in respect of over 2249 posts. Police Recruitment Board has also made selections against 1763 vacancies.

16.3 Out of 6871 posts in class IV vacant in various Departments, 2213 posts have been allotted to Divisional Commissioner / Deputy Commissioners for making selections on a Fast Track basis. Further 1845 posts were allotted to Deputy Commissioners to settle the pending militancy-related SRO-43 cases out of which the concerned Deputy Commissioners have utilized 955 posts. Meanwhile, the Departments have been authorized to constitute Divisional / District Level Committees for making recruitment against the available class-IV posts (2813 posts) pending with them on a fast-track basis.

16.4 Statutory Rules have been notified vide SRO 166 under which it has been made mandatory for all the Departments to refer all direct quota vacancies to the Recruiting Agencies by 15th of January every year. The J&K PSC and J&K SSB have been strengthened with a view to complete the selection processes on a fast track basis within a definite time frame.

16.5 Further, the State Government is committed to:

- i) providing core minimum permanent employment to approximately one lac persons during its tenure. Taking into account the vacancies which are likely to arise in future, nearly one lac boys and girls are expected to get absorbed in government services during the current and the next five years put together.
- ii) ensuring generation of a minimum of 125 lac mandays of employment annually under various wage schemes of the Government;
- iii) making a public investment (capital expenditure) of Rs. 8,000 crore per annum over the next five years to unlock opportunities of wage employment and self employment in the economy;
- iv) reviewing, on a continuing basis, the terms of engagement of technocrats and other educated persons employed by the Government on a semi-permanent / temporary basis so as to progressively upgrade such terms of engagement in their favour; and
- v) providing suitable stipends, through a major initiative, in respect of such unemployed youth who would undergo any skill upgradation, retraining or advance training programmes so that they can fill the void in all such fields locally, nationally and globally where great potential for employment exists which has not been adequately

exploited because of a mismatch in the existing qualifications and the job requirements. Such a stipend will cover the relevant period of engagement in the pursuit of skill upgradation and will serve as an 'incentive' and a financial 'hand-holding' support from the Government in favour of persons who acquire / upgrade their skill-base and seek self-employment in due course of time.

16.6 A large number of youth in the State are coming forward to join the State Police, particularly in the rapidly changing security context. More often than not, young aspirants coming from certain difficult and remote areas are not able to access the available opportunities on account of educational backwardness and other infrastructural constraints. In view of this, the State Police shall carry out special recruitment drives in such under-represented areas to harness the dynamism and commitment of the youth. In hard cases, the Government shall also consider relaxation of the prescribed eligibility criterion; particularly educational qualification from matriculation to middle for posts at the level of the Constabulary.

17. Voluntary Service Allowance (VSA)

17.1 The State Government shall provide, by way of financial support, a monthly Voluntary Service Allowance (VSA) to all

unemployed educated youth having educational qualification of matriculation and above for the next three years; commencing financial year 2010-11. The VSA will, on the one hand, ensure hand holding support from the Government to the educated unemployed till such time as they are either able to build the requisite capacities for starting self employment ventures or get employed in the Government / the Private Sector. On the other hand, the VSA will serve as a viable mechanism for inculcating in the young men and women of the state a sense of voluntary and community service for larger public good.

17.2 The following shall be the framework of VSA:-

- (a) VSA will be paid to all unemployed educated persons; who:
- (i) have educational qualification of matriculation and above as of March 31, 2010;
 - (ii) have attained the age of 26 years¹ as of 1st January of the year in which application is made²;

1. Age limit reduced from 28 years to 26 years vide Government Order No. 97-L&E of 2010 Dated: 18-08-2010.

2. Words "January 1, 2010" substituted by the words "1st January of the year in which application is made" vide Government Order No. 51-L&E of 2011 Dated: 05-08-2011 with prospective effect for payment of VSA.

and

- (iii) are registered with the District Employment and Counselling Centers as of December 5, 2009 or after this date¹; and are a member of and dependent upon a family having an annual income (from all sources) not exceeding Rs. 1.5 lacs².

(b) Only such youth as fulfill the age and educational criteria, but have not been able to pursue further education, shall be entitled to the allowance. In other words, students/trainees/apprentices and the self employed shall not be eligible for VSA with the exception that those who get engaged in self-employment activities/initiatives shall be entitled to VSA for a period of one year as sustenance support. Further, the spouse of the beneficiary should not be employed. Similarly, dismissed Government employees and persons convicted of an offence involving imprisonment for three months or more shall also not be covered under the Scheme.

-
1. Words “or after this date” added vide Government Order No. 51-L&E of 2011 Dated: 05-08-2011.
 2. Income ceiling raised from Rs. 50000 to Rs. 1.5 lac and condition of family land holding of having not more than 10 kanals of irrigated agriculture land/20 kanals of un-irrigated land deleted vide Government Order No. 97-L&E of 2010 Dated: 18-08-2010.

(c) VSA will be paid, on a monthly basis, through the concerned District Employment and Counselling Centers, on a non-cash basis (through bank accounts); with effect from April 1, 2010 as per the following gradation:-

- (i) Rs. 600/- per month¹ in favour of each eligible person who has passed the matriculation examination but not 10+2 examination;
- (ii) Rs. 650/- per month¹ in favour of each eligible person who has passed 10+2 examination;
- (iii) Rs. 700/- per month¹ in respect of eligible persons who have passed 10+2 examination and possess additional skill based qualifications such as ITI/ and other equivalent qualification;
- (iv) Rs. 850/- per month¹ in case of eligible persons having passed 10+2 examination and who have additional professional qualification (recognized) equivalent to a three year diploma from a recognized Polytechnic institution;
- (v) Rs. 1000/- per month¹ in favour of eligible graduates and above below the post-graduation level; and
- (vi) Rs. 1200/- per month¹ in respect of post-graduates and engineering and medical graduates and equivalent levels in the field of computer science, technology and education.

1. Increase of Rs. 100 for all categories sanctioned vide Government Order No. 97-L&E of 2010 Dated: 18-08-2010.

(d) An additional financial element of Rs. 50/- per month shall be admissible in favour of women across all the five categories mentioned at para (c) above.

(e) VSA will be admissible only for a maximum period of three years or the persons getting employed or attaining the age of 37 years; whichever is earlier.

(f) The release of the VSA will be contingent upon submission of the prescribed declaration/certificate that the beneficiary continues to remain without employment either in the Government or outside it. Any false declaration/certification in this regard shall render the beneficiary ineligible for future Government employment, apart from being liable from punitive action under the relevant provisions of law.

(g) The beneficiary shall, at a future date, be ineligible to apply for a Government employment involving minimum educational qualification higher than the category under which he/she has drawn the VSA; unless such higher qualification has been obtained as a result of enrolment after completion/stoppage of the VSA.

(h) The disbursement of VSA will be regulated under a biometric system, to be specially designed for the purpose, to ensure transparency in distribution and proper tracking of beneficiaries.

(i) The beneficiaries will be required to sign an unconditional undertaking for rendering voluntary work upto a total of 12 hours a week, on any such assignment as may be decided by the Government, for which he/ she will remain in readiness to be summoned by the District Employment and Counselling Center concerned for such engagement at short notice. The beneficiaries will also be required to undergo skill upgradation/self-employment training initiatives as may be prescribed under the guidelines. The beneficiaries may also be assigned, for the purposes of voluntary service, with Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)/Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) for providing various community services.

(j) VSA will not be continued in the following cases:-

- (a) As and when the beneficiary secures employment either in the Government/Public Sector or the Private Sector; either on casual basis/daily wage basis or contractual/permanent basis;
- (b) if and when the beneficiary is able to start a self-employment venture of his/her own except as provided under 17.2 (b); and
- (c) as and when the beneficiary crosses the age limit of 37 years.

17.3 The State Government shall mobilize additional resources of Rs. 250 crore per annum for a period of 5 years starting 2010-11 to sustain the VSA initiative.

17.4 Detailed guidelines will be issued by the Labour and Employment Department with regard to the specific modalities of the operationalization of this initiative by the end of February 2010.

18. The Task ahead

18.1 A large chunk of our GSDP (Rs.34000 crore estimated for 2008-09) flows out side the State for purchase of consumption goods which include such basic items like eggs and poultry birds, sheep for mutton, vegetables, food grains, woolen yarns and fabrics, construction materials and home fittings. By improving competitiveness, a sizeable portion of such purchases from outside the State can be replaced by locally produced goods and commodities. Likewise, there is plenty of scope of value addition in respect of locally produced fruit, vegetables, floriculture, sericulture, wool, fisheries, aromatic plants and herbs etc. The Government's attention shall be focused on exploitation of this huge potential and generation of around 5 lac jobs in the private sector through industrial units, private ventures and self employment enterprises which has been assessed to be a realizable target during the next 5 years. Sector wise, department wise and activity wise physical targets shall be shortly worked out in consultation with all the concerned departments and financial resources allocated accordingly. However, for the purposes of a meaningful implementation of the initiatives announced in this Policy, the Government has set, for itself, the

following broad milestones with regard to creation of employment opportunities and skill upgradation for this purpose for a total of 5 lac persons over the next five years:-

• Core minimum permanent employment in the Government Sector	1,00,000
• 2000 industrial units (including handicrafts, handlooms, food-processing, Leather, Silk, Wool etc.)	20,000
• Women Development Corporation – 5,000 units (10 per unit)	50,000
• JKEDI seed capital scheme – 5,000 units (10 per unit)	50,000
• Overseas employment	7,000
• Skill upgradation, retraining, skill development programmes through NASSCOM (IT)	5,000
• Skill development through, JKEDI, RSETIs, ITIs, Handicrafts and handloom training centres	2,00,000
• PM’s initiative (8000 ITI trainees annually)	40,000
• Poultry sector	10,000
• Sheep and Dairy sector	5,000
• Tourism sector	5,000
• State Volunteers Core	8,000
Total	5, 00,000

18.2 This policy is the first step of the State Government towards a focused and coordinated response to the challenge of unemployment. It shall be the endeavour of the Government to review the various policy initiatives, on a dynamic basis, and take such further measures as may be required; particularly after a precise picture with regard to the extent and nature of the unemployment problem emerges.
