



Protect natural systems to safeguard future: LG Sinha

Calls on scientists, experts to use modern tech to track glacier retreat, spring flow, soil health, forest cover



Jahangeer Ganaie

Awantipora, Aug 03: Urging people to protect the natural systems to safeguard the future, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday called on scientists and experts to use modern technologies like remote sensing, geospatial mapping, and AI to track glacier retreat, spring flow, soil health, and

forest cover.

Addressing a conference on 'Strengthening Climate Resilience and Livelihoods in the Himalayan Region through Nature-based Solutions' at the Islamic University of Science & Technology (IUST) here in South Kashmir LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "I believe that when we destroy

natural systems, we are playing with the future. But when we conserve and restore these natural systems, we are investing in a bright future."

The Lieutenant Governor urged the scientists and domain experts to bring 'nature-based solutions' out of the margins of development planning and place them at its Centre.

6 MAJOR | More on P6

Two die as multiple cloudbursts, flash floods wreak havoc across J&K

Dozens rescued from flood-hit Shopian

Houses, roads, bridges, orchards suffer extensive damage

Traffic suspended on NH-44

MeT warns of more heavy rain over next 5 days

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Aug 03: Two persons were killed as multiple cloudbursts and intense rainfall battered several parts of Jammu and Kashmir on Monday, triggering flash floods, damaging roads, bridges, houses and agricultural land.

Meanwhile, the traffic on the strategic Jammu-Srinagar National Highway was suspended, while as rescue teams evacuated dozens of stranded residents in different areas.



File Photo

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) a woman was killed after a cloudburst triggered flash floods in the Himli area of Lolab in North Kashmir's Kupwara district, while another man drowned in a water body in Singhpora area of Baramulla amid the inclement weather, officials said. The deceased were identified as Naseema Begum, wife of Mohd Ayub, a resident of Warnow and Murtaza Bashir

son of Bashir Ahmad Lone a resident of Boniyar area of Baramulla district.

The worst-hit district in Kashmir was Shopian, where cloudbursts in the upper reaches triggered flash floods in Zawoora, Badrham and Kijarsinda villages.

Officials said floodwaters entered several residential houses in Badrham within minutes, forcing residents to flee to safer places. Household belongings were damaged and agricultural | More on P6

In 2026, 35 cloudbursts claimed 31 lives across J&K

Chenab Valley worst hit; experts call for stronger early warning systems

Sajid Raina

Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed at least 35 cloudburst incidents this year so far, claiming around 31 lives and causing widespread destruction to homes, roads, bridges and public infrastructure. Official data accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) shows that at least 22 cloudbursts were reported between June 1 and mid-July, while persistent heavy rainfall during the second half of July and the beginning of August triggered several more incidents, pushing the total number of reported | More on P6

Cabinet to meet today



Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Aug 03: The Jammu and Kashmir cabinet will meet on Tuesday afternoon to discuss various administrative proposals, sources disclosed.

Sources told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that Chief Minister Omar Abdullah will chair the cabinet meeting at 4:00 PM to deliberate on 17 proposals submitted by different departments.

The meeting will be held at the Civil Secretariat in Srinagar. (KNO)

CM to preside over main I-Day function at Bakshi stadium

Ministers, CM's Advisor, DCs to lead celebrations across districts

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Aug 03: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah will preside over and take the salute at the main Independence Day function to be held at Bakshi Stadium, Srinagar.

According to a communiqué issued to divisional commissioners by the General Administration Department, a copy of which is in possession of news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the Chief Minister will lead the proceedings in the summer capital.

As per details, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary will



take the salute at the main Independence Day function in Jammu, while Sakina Masood Itoo will preside over the event in Anantnag.

Cabinet ministers Javid Rana, Javid Dar, and Satish

Sharma will respectively take the salute at Independence Day functions in Poonch, Baramulla, and Kathua.

Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, who holds | More on P6

Amarnath Yatra crosses 4.64 lakh, fresh batch of 1,056 leaves Jammu

7,507 pilgrims perform darshan
Umair Gull Ganie

Srinagar, Aug 03: The Amarnath Yatra tally crossed 4.64 lakh on Monday as 7,507 pilgrims paid obeisance at the holy cave shrine, while a fresh batch of 1,056 pilgrims left the Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas in Jammu for the Baltal base camp under tight security arrangements.

Figures available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), show that 7,507 pilgrims, including 5,623 men, 1,344 women, 106

children, 36 sadhus, 14 sadhvis, five transgender devotees and 379 security personnel, performed darshan on Monday, taking the cumulative number of pilgrims since the commencement of the Yatra on July 3 to 4,64,697.

The figures further show that the 26th batch of pilgrims departed from Bhagwati Nagar at 2:49 a.m. The batch comprised 832 men, 205 women, two children, 15 sadhus and two sadhvis. No convoy was dispatched via the Pahalgam route.

"The pilgrims travelled in a convoy of 46 vehicles, comprising 24 buses, seven medium motor | More on P6

ASI dies after collapsing on duty in Handwara

KNO Correspondent

Kupwara, Aug 03: An Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) of the Jammu and Kashmir Police died after suffering a suspected cardiac arrest while on duty in the Mawar area of Handwara in north Kashmir's Kupwara district on Monday.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the ASI collapsed while performing his duties in Mawar.

He said the policeman was shifted to a hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival.

The official said the ASI is suspected to have suffered a cardiac arrest | More on P6

J&K sees sharp rise in bank fraud amount

Surges to Rs 193.49 crore in FY 2025-26

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Aug 03: Jammu and Kashmir recorded 103 financial fraud cases involving Rs 193.49 crore during the financial year 2025-26, with Rs 6.92 crore recovered, the Ministry of Finance informed the Lok Sabha on Monday.

According to State/UT-wise data provided by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), J&K reported 467 fraud cases involving Rs 47.55 crore in FY 2023-24, of which Rs 3.23 crore was recovered. The number of reported cases declined to 298 in FY 2024-25, while the amount involved rose to Rs 81.27 crore. Of this, Rs 2.65 crore was recovered, the data, accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News



Observer (KNO), showed. In FY 2025-26, the number of reported fraud cases stood at 103, but the amount involved surged to Rs 193.49 crore, with Rs 6.92 crore recovered.

The Ministry said banks are required to immediately report fraud incidents to concerned

law enforcement agencies, including State/UT Police, SPIO, and CBI, depending on the amount involved. It added that there are no defined timelines for recovery due to the complexity of fraud cases and the involvement of multiple agencies, institutions. | More on P6

'J&K Govt school teaching staff plummets by over 4,800'

Riyaz Bhat

Srinagar, Aug 03: In Jammu and Kashmir, 'the teaching staff in government-run schools have dropped by over 4800 in the past three years.'

According to the official figures available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Jammu and Kashmir has recorded a reduction of 4811 teaching staff since the academic year 2023-24 to 2025-26.

The figures reveal that in the academic year 2023-24, Jammu and Kashmir had a total of 96,370 teachers in government-run schools that reduced to 94,202 in the academic year 2024-25.

Furthermore, the figures tabled by the Government of



India (GoI) in the Lok Sabha states that in the academic year 2025-26 Jammu and Kashmir had only 91,569 teachers in government schools.

The GoI however clarified that the recruitment of teachers is a continuous process undertaken by the respective

State Governments, UT Administrations in accordance with their recruitment rules and procedures.

"Vacancies arise from time to time due to factors such as retirement, resignation, creation of new posts consequent to enhanced | More on P6

Youth found dead in Sopore, probe begins

KNO Correspondent

Sopore, Aug 03: A youth was found dead under mysterious circumstances at his residence in the Dangerpora area of Sopore in north Kashmir's Baramulla district on Monday, officials said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that the youth was found unconscious at his residence in Pal Mohalla, Dangerpora.

He said a police team immediately reached the spot, took the body into custody and shifted it to a hospital for medico-legal formalities.

The official said inquest proceedings have been initiated to ascertain the cause and circumstances of the death.

He added | More on P6

J&K speedster Auqib Nabi gets India Test cap call-up

Proud moment for J&K: LG Sinha | Will inspire aspiring sportspersons: CM Omar

Mubashir Alam Wani

Srinagar, Aug 03: In a landmark achievement for Jammu and Kashmir cricket, fast bowler Auqib Nabi has received his maiden call-up to the Indian Test squad after replacing injured pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah for the upcoming series against Sri Lanka.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), as reported by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), on Monday announced

Nabi's inclusion after Bumrah was ruled out due to an incomplete recovery from a left knee injury, rewarding the UT pacer for his exceptional domestic performances that helped J&K clinch its first-ever Ranji Trophy title last season.

BCCI's Men's Selection Committee named Auqib Nabi as Bumrah's replacement. The Jammu and Kashmir fast bowler earns his maiden call-up to the senior national team. Nabi claimed 104 wickets across the last two Ranji Trophy seasons,



including 60 wickets in the 2025-26 campaign, playing

a pivotal role in Jammu and Kashmir's maiden Ranji Trophy triumph. He was also part of the India A squad that toured Sri Lanka recently, where he claimed six wickets in two first-class matches.

India's updated squad for the Test series against Sri Lanka: Shubman Gill (Captain), KL Rahul (Vice-Captain), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Rishabh Pant (WK), Sai Sudharsan, Dhruv Jurel (WK), Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav, Manav Suthar, Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh

Krishna, Gurnoor Brar, Devdutt Padikkal, Saransh Jain, Auqib Nabi.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah congratulated Auqib Nabi.

"Congratulations to cricketer Auqib Nabi on his selection to the Indian squad for the upcoming Test series against Sri Lanka. It is a proud and joyous moment for Jammu Kashmir. I extend my best wishes to him and hope he achieves great success while representing the

nation," LG Sinha said on X.

CM Abdullah described the achievement as a proud milestone for J&K and a testament to the growing sporting talent emerging from the region.

In his congratulatory message, the Chief Minister said Auqib Nabi's inclusion in the national Test squad is a moment of immense pride for the people of Jammu & Kashmir and reflects the dedication, perseverance and hard work that have marked his journey in the sport. | More on P6

Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan

CBC Srinagar organises outreach programme at GHSS Chandiloora, Tangmarg

KT News Desk

Srinagar, August 03: As part of its sustained efforts to promote awareness against substance abuse, the Central Bureau of Communication (CBC), Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Field Office Srinagar, Monday organised an Integrated Outreach and Communication Programme (IOCP) on Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan at Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS), Chandiloora, Tangmarg.

The programme, as per a PIB statement, witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, teachers, officials and members of the local community. Experts and resource persons from the Police Department, Health Department, Social Welfare Department, Education Department and the local administration delivered informative lectures highlighting various dimensions of drug addiction, its prevention, rehabilitation and the objectives of the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan.

Welcoming the participants, Field Publicity Officer, Shahid Mohammad Lone, highlighted the mandate of the Central Bureau of Communication in disseminating information on flagship initiatives and welfare programmes of the Government of India. Stressing the growing challenge of substance abuse, he said that the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan assumes greater significance in the present scenario. He emphasised that the Hon'ble Prime Minister has accorded high priority to the campaign and that timely dissemination of authentic information is essential for building awareness and encouraging community participation in combating drug addiction. In his address,



Field Publicity Officer, CBC Srinagar, Naseer Ahmad Rather, reiterated the commitment of the Central Bureau of Communication to taking the message of the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan to every village, school and community through awareness campaigns, outreach programmes and exhibitions. He said that Monday's programme was aimed at educating, inspiring and motivating people, particularly the youth, to become ambassadors of a drug-free society. He also observed that the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan has made

a positive impact and noted a significant decline in drug peddling since the campaign was intensified.

Speaking on the occasion, the Zonal Education Officer (ZEO) emphasised that the Education Department remains committed to creating awareness among students regarding the dangers of substance abuse. He described the youth as the nation's greatest asset and called upon them to stay away from drugs. Addressing the gathering, resource person from the Health department Dr Tahir spoke extensively on the causes, consequences and rehabilitation of drug addiction. He observed that addiction often begins with peer pressure and gradually destroys individuals, families and society. He underlined the importance of resilience and social support in helping victims overcome addiction. Highlighting the importance of counselling, he informed the audience about the Government of India's Tele-MANAS initiative and its toll-free mental health helpline 14416, besides explaining the significant role played by rehabilitation centres in helping addicts reintegrate into mainstream society.

Resource person from the Police Department, Sub-Inspector Faheem Aijaz elaborated on the role of Jammu and Kashmir Police in tackling the drug menace. Speaking about the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan and the provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, he said that law enforcement agencies are taking stringent action against drug peddlers, traffickers and suppliers. He also sensitised students about emerging trends in drug trafficking, including parcel-based deliveries and cyber-enabled drug networks, cautioning them against becoming unknowingly involved in such criminal activities.

The Principal of GHSS Chandiloora appreciated the initiative of the Central Bureau of Communication in organising the awareness programme. He said that educational institutions, parents and teachers have a shared responsibility in protecting young minds from the menace of drugs through continuous guidance, counselling and value-based education.

Tehsil Social Welfare Department resource person, Zubair Ahmad, stressed that drug addiction is a societal issue requiring collective action. He highlighted the role of families, Panchayati Raj Institutions, youth clubs, religious organisations and community members in preventing substance abuse and supporting rehabilitation. He urged parents to maintain close communication with their children, monitor their activities and provide timely guidance and emotional support.

Students of the institution also expressed their views through speeches on the ill effects of drug abuse, the objectives of the campaign and the crucial role of youth in making society free from drugs.

Adding colour to the programme, the City Cultural Troupe, empanelled with the Central Bureau of Communication, presented skits depicting the devastating consequences of drug addiction and drug trafficking while spreading the message of a healthy, drug-free society.

To encourage active participation, the Bureau organised speech, painting and drawing competitions, along with an open quiz on the theme of drug de-addiction. Winners and participants were felicitated with certificates and mementoes.

Following the programme, students, teachers, officials and members of the public participated in an awareness rally through Chandiloora and Tangmarg, carrying banners and placards carrying anti-drug messages and appealing to society to support the Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan.

CAO Srinagar flags off 60 progressive farmers for exposure visit under PKVY

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 03: In a significant initiative to promote organic farming and strengthen farmers' capacity through experiential learning, the Department of Agriculture, Srinagar, Monday flagged off a contingent of 60 progressive farmers and field officials for an exposure visit under the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY).

The group, as per an official statement, was flagged off by the Chief Agriculture Officer (CAO), Srinagar, Mir Ajaz Hassan, who highlighted the importance of exposure visits in equipping farmers with practical knowledge of successful organic farming models, sustainable agricultural practices, and innovative technologies. He said such visits provide an excellent platform for farmers and field functionaries to interact with experts, progressive growers, and leading institutions, enabling them to replicate proven practices in their own areas.

DC Budgam reviews preparations for Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign 2026

KT NEWS DESK

BUDGAM, AUGUST 03: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, Monday chaired a meeting at the Conference Hall to review preparations for the smooth and successful implementation of the Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign 2026 across the district.

The Deputy Commissioner, as per an official statement, reviewed the arrangements being made by the concerned departments and stressed the importance of coordinated efforts for the successful observance of the campaign. He said the initiative aims to strengthen the spirit of patriotism, national unity and respect for the National Flag. He directed all departments to ensure effective



inter-departmental coordination, wide public outreach and timely execution of activities to encourage maximum public participation and celebrate the campaign with enthusiasm across the district.

The DC reiterated the District Administration's commitment to the successful implementation of the campaign and expressed confidence that, through collective efforts, it would be celebrated in its true spirit across Budgam.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Budgam Vivek Agarwal, PO ICDS, JD Planning, CEO, CMO, CHO, all Tehsildars, Principals of Higher Secondary Schools and other concerned officers

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

PWD(R&B) DIVISION ANANTNAG

Email: xen-pwdrnbanantnag@jk.gov.in Phone and Fax: 01932-222221

CORRIGENDUM

Subject: Construction of Sewerage Treatment Plant at MMABM AH GMC Anantnag.
Ref: FRESH NIT 55 (2nd NIT NO 40) OF R&B/Anantnag/2026-27/E-TENDERING/4628-37 DATED 28-07-2026

Kindly read Updatons/Amendments made in above referred NIT/SBD as under:

Please Read	Instead of
The Bidders who have prepared Treasury Challan and/or Earnest Money for the same work advertised earlier vide this Office NIT No 40, dated 06.07.2026 shall be entertained/ considered.	The Bidders who have prepared Earnest Money for the same work advertised earlier vide this Office NIT No 40, dated 06.07.2026 shall be entertained/considered.

All other terms and conditions shall remain unchanged.

No. 5073-78

Dated: 03.08.2026

DIPK-4033/26

Dated: 03-08-2026

Executive Engineer,
R&B Division Anantnag

ADDC Shopian reviews Youth Engagement Programme

KT NEWS DESK

SHOPIAN, AUGUST 03: Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone Monday chaired a comprehensive review meeting on the implementation of the Youth Engagement Programme in the district.

The meeting reviewed the progress of activities being undertaken by various departments and deliberated on the roadmap for ensuring greater youth participation across the district.

During the meeting, the ADDC directed all departments to prepare and implement systematic, well-coordinated and time-bound action plans. He emphasized that youth engagement initiatives should be decentralized and organized at the zonal and grassroots levels to ensure maximum outreach. The ADDC stressed the need for establishing facilitation centres and ensuring active coordination among line departments. He called upon officers to involve teachers, AWWs, ASHAs, Panchayat representatives and other grassroots functionaries in mobilizing youth for different activities.

He instructed departments including Education, Social

Welfare, Agriculture, Horticulture, Sheep Husbandry, Skill Development, Youth Services & Sports, DIC and other stakeholder departments to work in close coordination for effective implementation of the programme.

The meeting also discussed scheduling of sports, skill development, awareness and career-oriented activities. Departments were directed to upload event details regularly and maintain proper documentation of all activities.

The ADDC emphasized that every youth should be meaningfully engaged through constructive activities aimed at building skills, leadership qualities and positive community participation. He underscored that the programme should serve as an effective platform to channelize the energy of youth towards nation-building while protecting them from drug abuse and other social evils. The meeting concluded with a resolve to ensure coordinated efforts by all departments for the successful implementation of the Youth Engagement Programme across District Shopian.

The meeting was attended by CEO, Shopian Development Authority, GM, DIC, ACD, Principal, GDC Shopian/Zainapora, CEO, CMO, CHO, CAHO and other concerned.

Govt approves Rs 10.95 crore for restoration, upgradation of Ziyarat Sharief Khiram, Shiv Mandir Thajiwara in Anantnag

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 03: The Government of Jammu & Kashmir has approved two projects worth ₹10.95 crore for the preservation, restoration and upgradation of two prominent religious sites in Anantnag district.

An amount of Rs 5.03 crore has been approved for the restoration and renovation of Ziyarat Sharief Khiram, while 5.92 crore has been sanctioned for the repair and renovation of Shiv Mandir, Thajiwara, Bijbehara. The projects, as per an official statement, aim to preserve the sanctity, heritage and architectural character of these revered places of worship while upgrading essential infrastructure to provide a better experience for devotees and visitors.

The approvals are part of the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah led Government's sustained efforts to conserve religious and heritage sites across Jammu and Kashmir through focused investments in restoration, preservation and infrastructure development. By protecting these sites and enhancing public amenities, the Government seeks to ensure that future generations continue to benefit from the region's rich spiritual, cultural and historical legacy.

Recently, the Government has approved a series of heritage conservation initiatives across Jammu and Kashmir. These include projects for the restoration and revival of the historic heritage site of Purmandal in Samba, the conservation and upgradation of the historic Imambara Zadibal in Srinagar, the development of the revered holy spring of Khoo Sahib at Yarwan in Pulwama, and the restoration of the historic Jamia Masjid Sharief in Shopian along with the revered Sarvadhara Chaumanda Mata Mandir in Ramban.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER IRRIGATION & FLOOD CONTROL DIVISION KUPWARA

019551-3221002

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

e-NIT No. IFCDK/ 03 of 2026-27 Dated: 03-08-2026.
For and on behalf of Lieutenant Governor, Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, e-tender (in Single Cover System) on Percentage (%) basis is invited from approved and eligible contractors for the following works to be opened in the office of Executive Engineer Irrigation & F C Division Kupwara:

(Amount in ₹)

S No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost	Earnest Money or Bid Security	Cost of T. Doc	MH of Account	Time for completion	Class of Contract	T.S No & Date
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
01.	Construction of Irrigation Drain from Graveyard to Bangla Mohalla Drugmulla "A" Chayalpati.	₹242650.00	₹4853.00	₹200.00	APDS-Grants	15 Days	DEE	This office No. 12/TS/ Kupl/2026-27 Dated: 23-07-2026
02.	Construction of irrigation drain from Sher Mohd to Lal Din Deedad at Ward 02 Drugmulla "A" Chayalpati.	₹242634.00	₹4853.00	₹200.00	APDS-Grants	15 Days	DEE	This office No. 12/TS/ Kupl/2026-27 Dated: 23-07-2026

Position of AAA: Accorded vide District Development Commissioner Kupwara's order No. 251-DDCK of 2026, Dated: 20-07-2026 issued vide endstt. No. DDCK/D. Capex/AA/2026-27/3374-78 Dated.20.07.2026.
Position of Funds: Approved under current years (2026-27) APDS-Grants Plan.
The Bidding document consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, set of terms and conditions and other details can be seen/ downloaded on e-procurement portal <https://www.jktenders.gov.in>, as per schedule of dates given below:

01.	Date of issue of Tender Notice	03-08-2026
02.	Date of start of downloading bid	03-08-2026 from 16:00 Hrs.
03.	Bid submission start Date Technical/ Financial	03-08-2026 from 16:00 Hrs.
04.	Bid Submission end Date	24-08-2026 upto 16:30 Hrs.
05.	Date and time of opening of Tender	25-08-2026 at 11:30 AM

Note: The Department shall not be responsible for any delay in the online submission of bids due to any reason whatsoever. Prospective bidders are advised to thoroughly read and understand the instructions provided in Annexure-A as well as the General Conditions of Contract detailed in Annexure-B prior to submitting their bids. Submission of the tender shall be deemed as conclusive evidence that the bidder has read, understood, and accepted all terms and conditions stipulated therein.

No: IFCDK/CS/1752-63
Dated: 03-08-2026.

DIPK-4056/26
Dated: 03-08-2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Irrigation & F C Division

From The Parliament

J&K reports 6 fatal factory injuries in 2022-23

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Aug 03: Jammu and Kashmir reported six fatal and 87 non-fatal injuries in registered factories during 2022 and 2023, while data for 2024 was not reported by the Union Territory, according to details furnished by the Ministry of Labour and Employment in the Lok Sabha.

According to the State/UT-wise data, J&K recorded three fatal injuries in factories in 2022 and another three in 2023. The corresponding number of non-fatal injuries stood at 20 in 2022 and increased to 67 in 2023. For 2024, the data has been marked as "#", which, according to the Ministry, means the information was not reported by the concerned State/UT.

The Ministry said the major causes of industrial accidents include persons falling from height, fire, explosion, machinery moved by mechanical power, electrocution, and workers being struck by falling bodies. The Directorate General Occupational Safety and Health (DGOSH) collects data on accidental deaths and injuries from States and UTs in respect of factories registered under the Factories Act, 1948, now subsumed under the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH&WC) Code, 2020.

Regarding enforcement, J&K had 41 prosecutions pending from the previous year in 2022, with 13 prosecutions launched during the year. The details of cases decided



and penalties for J&K were not reported in the table for that year. In 2023, J&K had 54 prosecutions pending from the previous year, while three prosecutions were launched during the year and three were decided. A total fine of Rs 2,500 was imposed, as per the data furnished by the Ministry. For 2024, the Ministry has not reported figures for J&K relating to prosecutions, convictions, or penalties. The entry for the UT has been marked, which the Ministry states represents data not reported or NIL data.

The Ministry said 64,176 factories were inspected across the country in

2022, 67,674 in 2023, and 74,426 in 2024. It clarified that the compensation-related issues under the Code on Social Security, 2020 are dealt with at the State/UT level. The Centre further informed the House that the OSH&WC Code, 2020 came into force on 21 November 2025 to regulate occupational safety, health, and working conditions of persons employed in establishments, including factories. The data of Ladakh separately shows NIL prosecutions, convictions, and penalties for Ladakh in 2022 and 2023, while the 2024 entries are also marked NIL—(KNO)

J&K registers 5,908 new small companies in 5 years

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Aug 03: Jammu and Kashmir registered 5,908 small companies during the last five financial years, including 1,558 in 2025-26, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs informed the Lok Sabha on Monday.

J&K registered 923 small companies in 2021-22, 886 in 2022-23, 1,301 in 2023-24, 1,240 in 2024-25, and 1,558 in 2025-26. The figures are as of 27 July 2026. The UT also recorded 585 Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs) during the five-year period. The year-wise figures were 64 in 2021-22, 63 in 2022-23, 101 in 2023-24, 141 in 2024-25, and 216 in 2025-26.

In the startup ecosystem, Jammu and Kashmir recorded 1,231 startups during 2021-2025, according to data provided by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). The number of startups rose from 131 in 2021 to 170 in 2022, 246 in 2023, 273 in 2024, and 411 in 2025.

The Ministry said the thresholds for classification of small companies have

been revised over the years. The paid-up capital threshold was increased from Rs 50 lakh in 2014 to Rs 2 crore in 2021, Rs 4 crore in 2022, and Rs 10 crore from 1 December 2025. The turnover threshold was raised from Rs 2 crore in 2014 to Rs 20 crore in 2021, Rs 40 crore in 2022, and Rs 100 crore from 1 December 2025. The Centre said these changes have enabled more companies to fall under the "small companies" category and benefit from reduced compliance-related disclosures.

For small companies, the Ministry has provided several compliance relaxations, including optional cash-flow statements, abridged annual returns and Board reports, exemption from mandatory auditor rotation, lesser penalties, and lesser fees. Small companies are also exempted from certain pre-certification requirements for forms. The Ministry further said zero filing fee is charged for incorporation of companies having authorised share capital up to Rs 15 lakh, or companies without

share capital having up to 20 members.

The Centre said simplified filings for small companies are applicable across the country, including Tier-II districts. Businesses can use the MCA21 electronic portal, which provides step-by-step e-form filing manuals, video guides, FAQs, and system prompts. A central helpdesk with toll-free, email, and live-chat facilities is also available to assist stakeholders. The latest data indicates that J&K saw the highest number of small-company registrations in the five-year period in 2025-26, while the number of LLP registrations also increased to 216 during the same year. Startup registrations likewise reached their highest annual figure in the available 2021-2025 data, with 411 startups registered in 2025. The Ministry's response was given in reply to a Lok Sabha question on the status of small companies, startups, and LLPs registered across States and Union Territories and measures taken to simplify compliance for businesses in Tier-II districts—(KNO)

J&K sees 1,935 women directors in companies

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Aug 03: A total of 1,935 companies registered under the Companies Act, 2013, having women directors, were recorded in Jammu and Kashmir during the last three financial years, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs informed the Lok Sabha on Monday.

According to the data

placed before the House, J&K had 643 such companies with 819 women directors in 2023-24. The number stood at 561 companies with 676 women directors in 2024-25, while 731 companies with 856 women directors were recorded during 2025-26.

The Ministry clarified that the Companies Act

does not specifically use the term "leaders of companies." However, under Section 149, certain listed and public companies are required to appoint at least one woman director. The Centre said no specific initiative has been undertaken by the Ministry exclusively for women entrepreneurs in rural and semi-urban areas.

However, measures aimed at promoting ease of doing business, including simplified incorporation and compliance procedures, are applicable to all entrepreneurs, including women.

The Ministry also informed that no specific programme had been organised by it in Maharashtra's Akola

district for promoting women-led enterprises. Among the measures to simplify business incorporation, the Ministry has introduced the SPiCe+ and AGILE-PRO-S integrated web-based system, enabling applicants to obtain multiple registrations through a single-window platform—(KNO)

Ladakh gets two tourism projects under Swadesh Darshan 2.0

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Aug 03: The Union Territory of Ladakh has been sanctioned two tourism projects under the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme, with a combined sanctioned cost of Rs 35.08 crore, according to the Ministry of Tourism.

According to the details placed before the Lok Sabha, a project for the development of the Julley Leh Biodiversity Park was sanctioned at a cost

of Rs 23.17 crore, while Exploring LOC & Hundarman Village Experience in Kargil was sanctioned at a cost of Rs 11.91 crore.

The Ministry said Swadesh Darshan 2.0 has been revamped with the objective of developing sustainable and responsible tourism destinations through a destination and tourist-centric approach. The scheme

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UT Govt defying odds for people: Javed Dar

Waris Fayaz

Baramulla, Aug 03: Cabinet minister Javed Dar on Monday said the Union Territory (UT) government was working under challenging circumstances to fulfil the people's expectations and restore governance after a prolonged gap.

Addressing a gathering here, Dar said the government was committed to delivering on its responsibilities despite facing multiple challenges.

"We acknowledge that people have expectations from the government. We assure you that we are not stepping back from our responsibilities. We are working to reform departments, especially the Social Welfare Department," he said.

The minister highlighted welfare initiatives taken by the government, including increasing marriage assistance from Rs 50,000 to Rs 75,000 despite financial constraints.

"Even with limited resources, we took decisions for the benefit of people in need," he said.

Dar said the present political environment was different as the

Continued on
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CM lauds Owais Yaqoob's historic MMA win



KT News Desk

Srinagar, Aug 03: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday congratulated Jammu & Kashmir's talented Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) fighter Owais Yaqoob on his remarkable victory at BRAVE CF 107 in Bulgaria, where he defeated an unbeaten two-time IMMAF World Champion in a stunning display of skill, determination and grit.

Describing the achievement as a proud moment for Jammu & Kashmir and the nation, the Chief Minister lauded Owais Yaqoob for bringing international recognition to the region through his outstanding performance on the global stage.

"Heartiest congratulations to Owais Yaqoob on this remarkable achievement. Defeating an unbeaten two-time IMMAF World Champion at BRAVE CF 107 is an extraordinary feat and a testament to his hard work, dedication and exceptional talent," the Chief Minister said.

He said Owais's success would inspire countless young sportspersons across Jammu & Kashmir to pursue excellence and believe in their potential.

The Chief Minister wished the young fighter continued success in his career and expressed confidence that he would bring many more laurels to Jammu & Kashmir and the country in the years to come.

NC vows to fight on until J&K gets statehood: CM's Advisor

Waris Fayaz

Baramulla, Aug 03: National Conference (NC) will continue its campaign for the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood until the demand is fulfilled, said Chief Minister's Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani on Monday. Speaking to reporters in Baramulla, Wani said the recent protest at Jantar Mantar

in New Delhi was the first step toward reminding the Centre of its commitment regarding statehood restoration. "We went to Jantar Mantar to remind them that the promise made to us has not been fulfilled," Wani said.

He said the sequence of events promised by the Centre included delimitation, elections, and restoration of statehood. While delimitation and Assembly

elections have been completed, he said, statehood is still awaited. Wani said the entire party leadership, including legislators, participated in the protest and the matter would be discussed further by the leadership to decide the future course of action. "This is not a matter of one day. Until we get our statehood back, we will continue our work and efforts," he said—(KNO)

STATE INVERTIGATION AGENCY KASHMIR SRINAGAR

E-mail Id: sspsia-kmr@Jkpolice.gov.in Tel-0194-3100467 Dated: 03-08-2026

Session Judge
In the Court of
Additional Session Judge TADA/POTA
Special Judge Designated Under NIA Act Srinagar
Present: Manjeet Rai

Cr.Misc. Application/228/2026
UTof J&K Through SIA Kashmir
FIR. No. 13 of 2021 Vs Bhat Naseer Ahmad

Annexure A

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS a complaint has been made before me that the accused persons namely:

1. Bhat Naseer Ahmad S/o Abdul Hamid R/o Tulkhan Bijbehara Anantnag.
2. Maroon Rashid S/o Abdul Rashid Ganie Rio Hassanpora Bijbehara Anantnag.
3. Aadil Hussain &to Wali Mohammad Thukroo R/o Curet Thokerpora Bijbehara Anantnag.
4. Mohd Jameel Shergojri S/o Abdul Allah Shergojri R/o Koyil Muqam Badipora A/p Naz Colony Bandipora Ward I.
5. Bashir Rafiq S/o Mohammad Rang Parry R/o Potushay Bandipora.
6. Lone Abid Qayoom S/o Abdul Qayoom Lone R/o Wussan Noorbagh Pattan.
7. Bhat Firdous Ahmad Stu Abdul Salam Bhat Rio Qaimoh Kulgam.
8. Sheikh Abid Hussain S/o Mohammad Ramzan Sheikh WO Chotipora Heerpora Shopian.
9. Mir Mohammad Umer S/o Ghulam Hassan Mir R/o Brath Kalan Sopore.
10. Mir Bilal Ahmad S/o Hamm Mir Rio Brath Kalan Sopore.
11. Sheikh Sajad Gul S/o Dr. Gh Mohammad Rio Kashmir House No. 02 Shalteng HMT Srinagar.

have committed (or are suspected to have committed) the offences punishable under sections 121, 120-13 IPC, 13, 17, 18, 20, 38 and 39 UA(P) Act, 1967 and it has been returned to a warrants of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused persons couldn't be found, and whereas It has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused persons are evading arrest and have absconded (or arc concealing themselves to avoid the service of the said warrants); Proclamation is hereby made that the above mentioned accused persons are required to appear before this Court at 10:00 a.m. on 15-09-2026, failing which further action as contemplated under law shall follow.

Dated, this day of 28-07-2026

DIPK-4034/26
DATED: 03-08-2026

Additional Session Judge TADA/POTA
Special Judge Designated Under NIA Act Srinagar
Present: Manjeet Rai

JKOGC can inspire new generation: CEO Johl

Says PGTI eyes long-term golf revival in J&K

Mubashir Alam Wani

Srinagar, Aug 03: Asserting that revival of the J&K Open Golf Championship (JKOGC) after a gap of several years is expected to boost sport in the Union Territory, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of DP World Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI), Amandeep Johl on Monday said that the tournament would inspire youngsters to dispel the notion that the golf is only meant for the elite.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of the DP World India Championship Lotus Trophy unveiling at the Royal

Springs Golf Course, Johl said one of the biggest challenges facing golf in the region is the misconception that the game is inaccessible to ordinary people. "Many people believe golf is only for the rich or senior officials, but that is not true. Golf courses are open to everyone. Anyone can pay the green fee, rent clubs and enjoy the game," he said.

Johl said the tournament is aimed not only at bringing professional golf back to Jammu and Kashmir but also at encouraging young boys and girls to take up the sport.

Expressing hope that the J&K Open

would become a permanent fixture on the national calendar, Johl said regular tournaments would help identify and nurture local talent.

"Jammu and Kashmir has produced quality golfers in the past. With consistent exposure and annual tournaments, there is every possibility of producing more champions," he said.

The PGTI chief also appreciated the support extended by the Jammu and Kashmir government and Tourism Department in reviving the tournament.

Continued on
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EDITORIAL

‘Drug-Free Youth’ Is Vital For Viksit Bharat

The launch of the ‘Nasha Mukta Yuva for Viksit Bharat Sankalp Abhiyan’ by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a national awakening. A developed India cannot be built on the foundation of a broken, addicted youth. Substance abuse among the young is not merely a personal tragedy. It is a threat to the nation's future. When a young person falls into the trap of drugs, a family suffers, a

community loses a potential leader, and the nation loses a contributor to its progress. The Prime Minister's emphasis on mental and physical fitness as prerequisites for Viksit Bharat is a timely reminder that health and ambition must go hand in hand. The campaign's 100-week Jan Bhagidari approach is particularly significant. It recognises that the fight against drugs cannot be won by

government action alone. It requires the participation of every citizen—parents, teachers, neighbours, and youth themselves. Activities like sports events, walkathons, cultural programmes, and nukkad nataks are not mere publicity stunts. They are tools to channel youthful energy into constructive avenues and to build awareness from the ground up. The results from Jammu and Kashmir are

encouraging. Over 2,600 arrests, 1,500 kilograms of narcotics seized, and properties worth nearly Rs 200 crore attached demonstrate the government's resolve. But enforcement is only half the battle. The true measure of success will be in rehabilitation—helping victims of addiction reclaim their lives and dignity. The proposed three-year rehabilitation scheme, with its focus on medical

treatment, counselling, education, and employment, is a step in the right direction. It acknowledges that addicts are victims, not criminals, and that society has a responsibility to bring them back into the mainstream. The youth are India's greatest strength, and their protection is the nation's highest priority. A drug-free India is an achievable goal if every citizen takes ownership of this campaign.

Naxal-Free India: How Integrated Strategies Defeated Left-Wing Extremism

India has achieved the historic milestone of becoming effectively free from Left Wing Extremism (LWE), with no district in the country remaining LWE-affected. This transformation was driven by an integrated strategy combining security operations, infrastructure expansion, rehabilitation of surrendered cadres, tribal welfare, and improved governance. The coordinated approach sharply reduced violence, restored state presence in remote regions, and accelerated inclusive development, creating a lasting foundation for peace and prosperity.

New Era of Peace and Security

For nearly six decades, India grappled with Left-Wing Extremism (LWE). It was not a distant or abstract challenge, but a lived reality for millions of tribal families, villages cut off from roads, schools, and the broader promise of inclusive development. Violence was persistent, and uncertainty defined everyday life.

On 31 March 2026, this changed, marking a historic milestone in India's internal security journey as the country became effectively free from Naxalism. When the current government assumed office in May 2014, the Red Corridor remained one of the most serious internal security challenges. Earlier approaches were largely fragmented and incident-driven, managing symptoms rather than addressing the structural roots of the problem. A more comprehensive and integrated strategy was subsequently pursued to resolve it.

Over the last twelve years, the transformation was guided by three mutually reinforcing strands of action: restoring trust and faith through strengthened security operations and community outreach; expanding infrastructure through improved physical and digital connectivity; and delivering welfare focused on dignity, inclusive service delivery, and mainstreaming affected communities.

Restoring Faith in the State

LWE grew from the Naxalbari uprising of West Bengal in 1967, inspired by Maoist ideology and the doctrine of armed revolution. Its guiding principle was simple and violent: power flows from the barrel of the gun. Nearly 92 per cent of Naxalites' weapons were looted directly from police armouries. Over time, several extremist organisations merged under CPI (Maoist) in 2004, making it India's biggest internal security challenge.

The decade from 2004 to 2014 was among the most violent in LWE history. Violence peaked in 2010 with 1,936 incidents and 720 civilian deaths in a single



year. The full decade recorded 17,542 violent incidents, 1,913 security force deaths, and 5,019 civilian deaths. There was no consistent national policy. State governments operated in silos.

Policy Shift: From Scattered Response to Unified Strategy

The first decisive action came in 2015 with the approval of the National Policy and Action Plan to address LWE. This replaced the earlier, ad hoc approach with a structured, whole-of-government framework. It deployed Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF), provided specialised training, and allocated funds through various schemes. Till now, approximately 4,289.20 crore have been released since the inception of the Special Central Assistance (SCA) Scheme in 2017.

Under the Special Infrastructure Scheme (SIS), projects worth 1,761 crore have been sanctioned for LWE-affected States. Since 2014-15, 3,805.04 crore has been released under the Security Related Expenditure (SRE) Scheme.

For the first time, India implemented a structured and comprehensive approach based on a three-pronged strategy against LWE: Dialogue, Security, and Coordination.

On 24th August 2024, the Government of India set a target to make the country Naxal-free by 31 March 2026. The target was achieved on schedule through intensified security operations, stronger

coordination, infrastructure expansion, and accelerated development outreach.

Building the Security Grid

The Government systematically filled the security vacuum in Naxal-affected areas through infrastructure expansion, specialised forces, and improved operational coordination.

- 663 fortified police stations were constructed, compared to just 66 before 2014
 - 408 new CAPF security camps were established over the past seven years
 - 68 night-landing helipads were built for rapid deployment
 - 400 bullet-proof and blast-proof vehicles were provided
 - 5 hospitals were constructed for welfare and medical support
- A layered, specialised security architecture was developed, bringing together CoBRA, CRPF, District Reserve Guard (DRG), and elite state units such as Jharkhand Jaguar, Chhattisgarh Police units, and Andhra Pradesh's Greyhounds.

Technology: The Game Changer

After 2014, the Central Government transformed counter-Naxal operations through the extensive use of modern technology. Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV), drones, satellite imagery, and AI-based data analysis enabled real-time monitoring and precise surveillance. Advanced location-tracking systems, scientific call-log analysis, mobile data analytics, and social media monitoring were operationalised.

Landmark Operations to Trace, Target, Neutralise

The Government's "Trace, Target, Neutralise" doctrine delivered remarkable results. A series of coordinated operations, including Operation Black Forest, Operation Octopus, Operation Double Bull, Operation Thunderstorm, Operation Bhimbarg, and Operation Chakrabandha, significantly weakened Maoist networks.

Among them, Operation Black Forest emerged as a major breakthrough, dismantling a key Maoist stronghold, leading to the elimination of over 30 Maoists. Operation Double Bull resulted in Gumla, Lohardaga, and Latehar districts becoming Naxal-free.

Choking the Support System

The Union Government adopted a comprehensive All-Agency approach, targeting not just armed cadres but the entire ecosystem supporting them. A dedicated vertical was established within the National Investigation Agency (NIA) to disrupt Naxal financing networks. As of December 2025, the NIA had seized assets worth over 40 crore. The Enforcement Directorate

attached assets worth 12 crore, while State agencies confiscated an additional 40 crore. By December 2025, 111 LWE cases had been investigated and 98 charge sheets filed.

Red Carpet for Surrender

The Government's firm security response has been complemented by a rehabilitation-focused approach, with a clear message: "For those who lay down their arms, there is a red carpet." Surrendering cadres receive an immediate grant of 5 lakh for higher-ranked cadres and 2.5 lakh for others, along with a monthly stipend of 10,000 for 36 months.

In 2025 alone, 2,337 Naxalites laid down their arms, while 3,927 cadres surrendered between 2024 and March 2026.

On 28 July 2026, under 'Nayi Disha, Nayi Pahal' anti-Naxal campaign, 16 active Maoists surrendered in Ranchi, including one Regional Commander, three Zonal Commanders, and three Sub-Zonal Commanders. On 29 July 2026, eight more Maoists carrying a combined reward of 49 lakh surrendered before the Bijapur Police. On the same day, security forces also arrested a top Maoist leader and Politburo member carrying a reward of 1 crore.

Building a New Future: Infrastructure and Connectivity

The resolve to end Naxalism was never merely about eliminating Naxalites. It was about ensuring that every facility available in big cities reaches the poor tribals of the region.

Road Connectivity: A total of 15,189 kilometres of roads have been constructed under the Road Requirement Plan (RRP) and the Road Connectivity Project for LWE Affected Areas (RCPLWEA).

Digital & Mobile Connectivity: 9,497 towers have been commissioned. In the areas that were most LWE affected, 96% of villages (44,728 out of 46,592 villages) now have mobile connectivity.

Financial Inclusion: During April 2015 to March 2026, 1,804 bank branches opened, 1,321 ATMs installed, 74,720 banking correspondents appointed, and 6,025 post



offices established.

Education & Skill Development: 259 Eklaya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) have been sanctioned, with 179 made functional. Additionally, 47 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and 49 Skill Development Centres (SDCs) were developed with an investment of nearly 800 crore. Skill training was provided to over 90,000 youth and women.

Under the Tribal Youth Exchange Programme (TYEP), a total of 37,655 tribal youth have participated since 2014.

Civic Action Programmes: Since 2014, 221.88 crore has been released under the programme, helping strengthen trust and bridge the gap between security forces and local communities.

People's Welfare & Dignity

A sustained focus on tribal welfare has played a vital role in reducing LWE's influence. The rehabilitation framework for surrendered cadres has encouraged their integration into mainstream society through skill development, livelihood assistance, housing support under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, and financial assistance for self-employment.

Several targeted initiatives accelerated this transformation: the National Policy and Action Plan, Special Central Assistance, the Aspirational Districts Programme, and the PM-JANMAN initiative for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). The launch of the Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan further strengthened efforts to bridge infrastructure gaps in tribal villages.

Case Study: Chhattisgarh's Journey from Naxalism to Development

For decades, Bastar in Chhattisgarh remained one of the country's most Naxal-affected regions. A key turning point came in 2017 with the formation of the Bastariya Battalion, which recruited 1,143 personnel, including around 400 local youth. More than 3,240 kilometres of roads were constructed, and 889 mobile towers were installed.

In May 2026, the Shaheed Veer Gunda Dhur Seva Dera initiative was launched to convert security gains into lasting development. Around 70 CAPF camps are being transformed into service centres. Cultural initiatives such as Bastar Pandum and the Bastar Olympics strengthened community participation and tribal identity.

Results of a Decade of Transformation

The results of a decade of transformation are clearly reflected in the key indicators of Left Wing Extremism. The number of LWE-affected districts declined sharply from 126 in 2014 to zero by 2026. Similarly, the count of the most affected districts also fell from 35 to zero during the same period. Naxal-related incidents dropped from 870 in 2014 to just 33 in 2026. Fatalities also saw a significant reduction, coming down from 310 to 11 over the decade.

A Defining Chapter in India's Security and Development Story

India's achievement of a Naxal-Free India stands among the most important internal security successes in the country's independent history. It reflects the impact of decisive leadership, sustained policy implementation, and a multi-dimensional strategy combining security, development, and rehabilitation.

The next journey has already begun. The achievement of a Naxal-Free Bharat is not merely the end of an insurgency. It is the beginning of a new chapter of peace, inclusion, and progress for some of India's most vulnerable communities.

Disclaimer: This is an abridged version of the original PIB article. All significant points and key messages have been retained. For complete details, please refer to the full release on the PIB website.

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1st International Film Festival Jammu & Kashmir

Director Information directs fool-proof arrangements
Calls for seamless coordination among stakeholders

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 03: Director Information Shreya Singhal chaired a review meeting at Media Complex here Monday to take stock of the preparations for the forthcoming 1st International Film Festival of Jammu & Kashmir (IFFJK).

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by Joint Director Information (Hqr), Dr. Zahoor Ahmad Raina; Joint Director Information Kashmir, Syed Shah Nawaz Bukhari; Joint Director Information Jammu, Deepak Dubey; Deputy Director Information (PR/AV), Javid Ahmad Rather; Deputy Director Information (PR) Srinagar, Mohd Rafiq Zullah; Deputy Director Information (Hqr) Jammu, Aashu Kumari; Deputy Director Information (PR) Jammu, Moksha Dogra; Deputy Director Information (Hqr) Kashmir, Zubair Ahmad; Film Production Officer, Afaaq Rasool Gadda; District Information Officers of various districts, Information Officers and other officials of the department, either in person or through video conferencing.

During the meeting, the Director conducted a



comprehensive review of the arrangements being put in place for the festival, including venue management, delegate facilitation, hospitality, media management, transportation, cultural programmes, technical support, logistics and other allied arrangements.

Addressing the officers, the Director stressed upon the officers that all preparations should be completed well within the stipulated timelines, leaving no scope for lapses. "Ensure fool-proof arrangements and seamless coordination among all stakeholders for the successful conduct of the prestigious event", she said.

Emphasizing that the

inaugural edition of the International Film Festival marks a significant milestone in Jammu & Kashmir's cultural and cinematic landscape, Shreya Singhal said the event will provide a global platform to showcase the J&K's rich heritage, scenic splendour, artistic excellence and immense potential as a preferred destination for film production and creative collaborations.

The Director Information directed all officers and committees concerned to maintain close coordination and ensure effective synergy among the departments and agencies associated with the festival. "Meticulous planning, prompt execution

and continuous monitoring of preparations are essential for organizing the event in a smooth, professional and befitting manner", she maintained.

Shreya Singhal further instructed the officers to regularly review the progress of works assigned to them and address emerging issues expeditiously through coordinated action. She also laid emphasis on robust media and publicity arrangements to ensure extensive outreach and wider visibility of the festival at the national and international levels.

The Director reiterated the commitment of the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) to host the

festival to the highest professional standards, making it a landmark celebration of cinema that reflects the cultural vibrancy, creative aspirations and growing global profile of Jammu & Kashmir.

During the meeting, officers briefed the Director Information on the status of preparations in their respective sectors and informed that the arrangements are progressing as per schedule.

Pertinently, the 1st IFFJK is slated to be held from 7th September to 10th September, 2026 and is guided by the theme 'Rang-e-Cinema'. The festival aims to bring filmmakers, industry professionals, and audiences together in one of India's most distinctive cultural landscapes.

The festival has received overwhelming response with more than 1100 film entries received from around 50 countries under categories like International Competition, Short Film, Bharat Panorama J&K Select, etc. The festival has also received tremendous response from the filmmakers of Jammu and Kashmir, with budding filmmakers, artists and others associated with cinematic world getting big platform to showcase their work and talent.

Rashtriya Raksha University
enters strategic partnership with
University of Kashmir, signs MoU



KT News Desk

Srinagar, August 03: The Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU), an Institution of National Importance under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, and the University of Kashmir (UoK) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) Monday in the Office of the Vice Chancellor, University of Kashmir.

The MoU, as per a PIB statement, was executed by the Rashtriya Raksha University, Jammu and Kashmir Campus, Director, Dr. Mahesh Tripathi, and by the Registrar, University of Kashmir, Prof. (Dr.) Naseer Iqbal, on behalf of the University of Kashmir. The signing took place in the presence of the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, UoK, Prof. (Dr.) Neelofar Khan; Prof. (Dr.) Mehraj Ud Din Mir, Lifetime Professor, RRU; Prof. (Dr.) Shahnaz, Head

and Dean, School of Law, UoK; Dr. Ashfaq Ahmad Zari, Special Secretary to the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, UoK; Dr. Mudassir Bhat, Senior Law Faculty, RRU; and Dr. Mohammad Yaseen Wani, Senior Law Faculty, School of Law, UoK.

The MoU was executed with the purpose of strengthening cooperation between the two universities in areas of mutual interest, particularly joint research initiatives, student and teacher exchange programmes, student internships, and credit transfer under the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS). The collaboration will also extend to teacher training, consultation, and skill development in the domain of national security, Behavioural and forensic science, law, police administration, criminology, and other multidisciplinary studies.

ACD Anantnag calls for robust
PRI Participation in VB-GRAM-G
Act implementation



KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, AUGUST 03: A District-Level Panch Sammelan was organized Monday at the Block Headquarters, Khoveripora, to sensitize elected representatives and functionaries of the three-tier Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) on the provisions and implementation framework of the Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act, 2025 (VB-GRAM-G).

The Sammelan, as per an official statement, was chaired by the Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD), Anantnag, Shafiq Ahmad Wani, who addressed former Panchs, Sarpanchs and other PRI functionaries. In his address, the ACD elaborated on the vision and objectives of the VB-GRAM-G Act, 2025, emphasizing the pivotal role of Panchayati Raj Institutions in its effective implementation.

He highlighted the statutory roles and responsibilities of PRIs under the Act, the preparation and approval of Viksit Gram Panchayat Plans (VGPPs),

registration of eligible households and issuance of Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Cards (GRGCs), as well as the planning, execution, monitoring and long-term maintenance of community assets.

The ACD further underscored the significance of convergence with various rural development programmes to maximize developmental outcomes. Stressing the principles of good governance, he emphasized transparency, social accountability, effective grievance redressal, and robust social audit mechanisms as the cornerstones for successful implementation of the Act at the grassroots level.

The Sammelan witnessed enthusiastic participation from PRI representatives and functionaries, who actively engaged in the deliberations. They were encouraged to strengthen community participation, ensure effective implementation of the Act, and contribute towards realizing the vision of a Viksit Bharat through responsive, transparent and accountable grassroots governance.

Shri Machail Mata Yatra witnesses
smooth pilgrim movement

KT News Desk

KISHTWAR, AUGUST 03: Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma Monday visited Machail Mata temple and conducted a detailed review of the arrangements put in place by the District Administration for the convenience and safety of the pilgrims.

The annual Shri Machail Mata Ji Yatra 2026 was resumed on July 28, witnessing increasing footfall of devotees from across the country.

He interacted with locals and assessed the ground situation while reviewing the effectiveness of the infrastructure and services being made available for the smooth and successful conduct of the yatra.

The DC, as per an official statement, reviewed key arrangements, including parking facilities, transportation, water supply, power, sanitation, accommodation facilities for pilgrims, security measures and the progress of ongoing developmental works at Shri Machail Mata Bhawan. He issued on-the-spot directions to the concerned officials to ensure the smooth movement of pilgrims, strengthen safety measures and ensure that no pilgrim faces any inconvenience during the yatra.

The DC also took stock of the availability of essential services and commodities at the Bhawan. He directed the concerned departments to expedite the pace of ongoing works and complete the same within the



stipulated timelines.

The DC directed the Yatra Camp Director to make all necessary facilities available to provide a comfortable and hassle-free pilgrimage experience to the devotees.

Emphasising the importance of this year's 100% plastic-free yatra, the DC directed the enforcement departments to maintain cleanliness and sanitation throughout the yatra period. He also appealed to pilgrims to avoid the use of single-use plastic, maintain cleanliness and keep the yatra route clean and hygienic. BDO Paddar was directed to undertake the repair, renovation and restoration of Durga Raru Khul towards Machail to meet the demands raised by the locals.

The locals apprised the Deputy Commissioner of

various issues concerning the area. The DC gave a patient hearing and issued on-the-spot directions to the concerned departments for necessary action.

The Deputy Commissioner also interacted with the NDRF Team stationed at Machail, reviewed their preparedness. He directed the NDRF Team to stay vigilant throughout the yatra period to tackle any unforeseen situation.

The DC paid obeisance at the revered shrine, praying for peace, prosperity and well-being of the people of the District.

ADC Pawan Kotwal; SDM Dr. Amit Kumar; Camp Director SMMJY 2026 Subhash Thakur; BDO Rajesh Sharma; Executive Engineer PWD R&B Paddar Er. Gurjeet Singh; besides other officers and concerned staff were present on the occasion.

Forest Department
refutes News Report

KT News Desk

KATHUA, AUGUST 03: The Divisional Forest Officer Kathua Monday clarified that the Department has initiated appropriate legal action against the persons involved in a Forest offence. The Department has refuted a news report published in a section of press.

"Proceedings have been initiated against the owner of the vehicle used in the commission of the forest offence as well as against the owner of M/s Sharma Katha Industry, Banyari Mahreen under Section 52 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927. The proceedings are presently pending before the competent authority," the Department informed.

The Department, as per an official statement, further stated that the vehicle and illicit timber were duly seized and the offence was

registered in accordance with the prescribed procedure. All statutory and legal actions against the persons involved have been initiated without any favour or discrimination.

Accordingly, the allegation that the factory has been shielded from legal action is wholly baseless, unfounded and contrary to the official records, the Department asserted.

"Since the matter is presently under statutory proceedings before the competent authority, it will not be appropriate to comment further on the merits of the case," the Officer stated.

The Department further observed that publication of the news report without ascertaining the factual position from the Department has the potential to mislead the public and prejudice the ongoing legal proceedings.

Learning Outcome Gaps
DC Budgam rolls out
Classes of Joy initiative

KT News Desk

BUDGAM, AUGUST 03: Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, Monday chaired a meeting on roll out of the Classes of Joy initiative in Budgam district to address the gaps in learning outcomes among the kids in primary and middle schools of the District.

The initiative aims to adopt Teaching at Right Level (TaRL) approach in partnership with Pratham Foundation. The action plan for elaborate capacity building and training of all primary and middle school teachers has been prepared. Appropriate teaching and learning tools are being made available.

The initiative, as per an official statement, will adopt 4 step process of baseline assessment of all children,

grouping on the basis of learning levels, play way teaching interventions over next three months and then the end line assessment. The cycles would be then repeated to ensure the gaps are filled and kids achieve the class appropriate learning outcomes.

A comprehensive follow up, monitoring and support mechanism has been put in place. More than 850 schools, around 4600 teachers and around 45000 children are being covered in this major initiative.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Budgam Vivek Agarwal, JD Planning, Chief Education Officer, ACD Budgam, Zonal Education Officers, Zonal Planning Officers, District Coordinators and representatives of the Pratham Education Foundation.

Religious fervour marks
inauguration of Shravan
Mahotsav-2026 at Shri Shiv Khori

KT News Desk

REASI, AUGUST 03: Deputy Commissioner Reasi Kumar Abhishek, who is also Vice Chairman Shri Shiv Khori Shrine Board (SSKSB), inaugurated Shravan Mahotsav-2026 Monday -coinciding with the first Monday of the holy month of Shravan. The celebrations commenced with a traditional Kavad Yatra, taken out from Darshani Deori to the revered Shri Shiv Khori Shrine.

The Kavad Yatra witnessed enthusiastic participation from a large number of devotees. They carried holy water amid chanting devotional hymns and slogans in praise of Lord Shiva. The spiritual procession culminated at the holy cave shrine, where special prayers and rituals were performed. Upon reaching the shrine, the Deputy Commissioner participated in the Hawan and offered prayers for peace, prosperity and the well-being of all.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner extended warm greetings to the devotees on the auspicious occasion of Shravan. He informed that the district administration and the Shri Shiv Khori Shrine Board have made comprehensive arrangements to ensure a safe, smooth and comfortable pilgrimage for the visiting devotees. "During the holy month a series of religious activities, including Shiv Katha and Bhajan Sandhya, will be organized as part of the Shravan Mahotsav," he added.

Senior officers of the civil and police administration, officers from the Shri Shiv Khori Shrine, religious heads and a large gathering of devotees were present on the occasion.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Krishan Lal; Assistant Commissioner Revenue Nitin Verma; Assistant Commissioner Development Mukesh Sharma; Tehsildar Pouni and other senior officers were present on the occasion.

CEO inspects Seasonal Education
Centre at Bhalpadri- Doda

KT News Desk

DODA, AUGUST 03: Chief Education Officer Bhushan Kumar Pathak conducted an inspection visit to the Seasonal Education Centre at Bhalpadri in Educational Zone Bhalessa to assess the functioning and academic progress of the institution.

The CEO interacted with students and their parents, taking first hand feedback on the teaching-learning process and the overall facilities being

provided at the centre. He underscored the importance of these seasonal centres in ensuring continuity of education for students in far-flung and migratory areas of the district.

The CEO emphasized the need to focus on achieving meaningful learning outcomes and directed the teaching staff to adopt student-centric and activity-based teaching methodologies. He appreciated the efforts of the staff in maintaining regular academic activities despite challenging conditions.

DLSA Ganderbal commences 3-day training
programme for community mediators

KT News Desk

GANDERBAL, AUGUST 03: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Ganderbal Monday commenced a Three-Day Training Programme for newly selected Community Mediators at the Conference Hall, District Court Complex, Ganderbal.

The programme is being conducted from 3rd to 5th August, 2026 under the NALSA SOP on Community Mediation Towards Litigation Free Rural India.

The inaugural session, as per an official statement, was attended by Abdul Nasir, Chairman, District Legal Services Authority (Principal District & Sessions Judge), Ganderbal, and Sheikh Babar Hussain, Secretary, District Legal Services Authority, Ganderbal, besides trained mediators, newly selected Community Mediators as well as Para Legal Volunteers.

Addressing the gathering, Chairman, DLSA Ganderbal, stressed upon the growing importance of mediation in the

justice delivery system and encouraged the participants to actively engage in the training programme so that they could effectively serve their communities as impartial and competent mediators in community Mediation.

Secretary, DLSA Ganderbal, emphasized the importance of community mediation as an effective, accessible and people-centric mechanism for amicable settlement of disputes at the grassroots level especially in rural areas. He highlighted that trained Community Mediators would play a significant role in strengthening access to justice, fostering social harmony and reducing avoidable litigation as well as providing training to the newly selected Community Mediators as per Community Mediation Training Manual.

The training sessions on the first day were conducted strictly in accordance with the NALSA Community Mediation Training Manual and the NALSA Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on Community Mediation

Towards Litigation Free Rural India.

The participants were imparted comprehensive training on the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, the Mediation Act, 2023, communication and negotiation skills, vision and objectives of community mediation, basic principles of mediation and disputes suitable for resolution through community mediation. The sessions were delivered by experienced trained mediators through interactive lectures and practical discussions in conformity with the prescribed training curriculum.

The three-day programme will continue focusing on practical sessions, ethical standards, procedural aspects, case studies, demonstrations and interactive discussions aimed at equipping the proposed Community Mediators with the requisite knowledge and skills for effective community-based dispute resolution in rural areas, thereby advancing the objective of a Litigation Free Rural India.

Sakeena Itoo leads mega outreach prog of Social Welfare Dept at Baramulla

Javid Dar, Nasir Wani, MLAs from North Kashmir join to strengthen grassroots awareness

KT News Desk

Baramulla, Aug 03: The Social Welfare department on Monday organized a mega awareness camp at Baramulla for all the three districts of North Kashmir viz; Baramulla, Kupwara and Bandipora to promote awareness for saturation of more than 25 welfare schemes being implemented by the department.

Minister for Social Welfare, Education, Health & Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, was the chief guest during the camp, which was also attended by Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Cooperatives and Elections, Javid Ahmad Dar besides Advisor to the Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani.

The event was also attended by Members of the Legislative Assembly from North Kashmir, including MLA Baramulla Javid Hassan Beigh, MLA Sopore Irshad Rasool Kar, MLA Wagoora-Kreeri, Irfan Hafiz Lone; MLA Uri Dr. Sajad Shafi, MLA Bandipora Nizam-ud-Din Bhat, MLA Langate Sheikh Khursheed Ahmad; MLA Sonawari Hilal Akbar Lone; MLA Pattan Riyaz Ahmad Bedar;



MLA Karnah Javid Ahmad Mirchal; Deputy Commissioner Baramulla Dr. S.F. Hamid; MD POSHAN, Sajad Hussain Gana; district and sectoral officers, anganwadi workers, helpers and a large number of local residents.

The awareness programme featured speeches, cultural performances and skits highlighting various flagship welfare initiatives and schemes being implemented by the Social Welfare Department, including

Integrated Social Security Schemes (ISSS), ICDS, Poshan and other beneficiary-oriented programmes.

Speaking on the occasion, Sakeena Itoo appreciated the overwhelming participation of the Anganwari workers and helpers in the awareness programme and highlighted the importance of saturation of various welfare schemes to ensure comprehensive social protection.

The Minister acknowledged

the invaluable contribution of ICDS workers and helpers in reaching the most vulnerable sections of society. She said the government fully recognizes their role and is actively working towards addressing their concerns, including issues related to enhancement of the honorarium.

Emphasizing the need for greater public outreach, the Minister urged the legislators to organize similar awareness programmes at the tehsil level in their respective constituencies to maximize awareness and ensure saturation of welfare schemes.

Addressing the gathering, Javid Dar congratulated Sakeena Itoo and the Social Welfare department for introducing significant reforms in the social welfare sector.

He underscored that the government has consistently prioritized the public welfare and has taken several people-centric decisions, including enhancement of assistance under various welfare schemes. He urged the field functionaries to actively educate the people about the schemes available so that every eligible beneficiary can avail government support.

JK SEHAT App strengthening digital healthcare services across J&K

KT News Deska

Srinagar, Aug 03: The JK SEHAT App, developed by the Health & Medical Education Department, government of Jammu and Kashmir, has emerged as a unified digital platform for providing citizen-centric healthcare services across the Union Territory. It has emerged as a One stop healthcare solution for J&K citizens.

The App supports the vision of accessible, transparent and technology-enabled healthcare by bringing multiple health services together on a single platform. It also complements the objectives of the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) by integrating key digital health services for the benefit of citizens.

The JK SEHAT App offers a comprehensive range of digital healthcare services through a single platform. The citizens can book online appointments in public hospitals, generate digital OPD tokens through the Scan & Share service, access tele-consultation and home healthcare services, place medicine orders through registered pharmacies and view their digital health records

through services.

ABDM-enabled

The App also provides access to blood bank information, ambulance services (102 and 108), health helpline, AI chatbot, health insurance information, drug store services, immunization centres and de-addiction centres among other health care services. In addition, dedicated facilities for medical students, including course information, access to medical resources and references are available on the application making the JKSEHAT Appa comprehensive digital health platform for the citizens and healthcare stakeholders across Jammu and Kashmir.

The people are availing health services across the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir with 15.60 lakh citizens registered on the platform. The ABDM-enabled Scan & Share service has facilitated more than 12.37 lakh digital-online OPD tokens being generated, indicating its increasing use by citizens for hassle-free OPD registration. A total of 3,077 healthcare professionals are registered in the App to provide Home Healthcare and Tele-Consultation services

resulting in 4,805 services already delivered.

The above mentioned public centric services have exponentially improved due to sustained monitoring, periodic reviews and timely gap redressal under the guidance of Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo.

More than 4000 pharmacy orders raised in the App have been successfully delivered, highlighting the focus on the citizen centric health care delivery.

The government of Jammu and Kashmir is taking sustained measures to enhance the adoption and utilization of the JK SEHAT App as a unified digital health platform for the citizens of the Union Territory.

Under the guidance of the Health & Medical Education Department, coordinated efforts are being undertaken by the National Health Mission (NHM), Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) J&K, Directorate of Health Services Jammu and Kashmir, State Controller Drugs, J&K and other stakeholders to further enhance the user experience and expand the availability of these services.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Protect natural

RECOMMENDATIONS

LG Sinha also placed six major recommendations before policymakers, scientists, and engineers. "Use modern technologies like remote sensing, geospatial mapping, and AI to track glacier retreat, spring flow, soil health, and forest cover. This data should inform every development project in the region. Nature-based Solutions must be embedded into project budgeting, appraisal, and monitoring. Farmers, shepherds, orchard owners, and tribal communities must be equal stakeholders. Their generational knowledge of rivers, mountains, and forests is invaluable. Annual budget reviews should include whether forests and ecosystems have grown richer or weaker, ensuring accountability for environmental wealth. Establish platforms for long-term cooperation among scientists, policymakers, and communities. Move beyond concrete embankments to restore floodplains and wetlands, combining built structures with natural systems," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted the alarming pace of climate change in the Himalayan region. He noted that between January and August last year, the Himalayas witnessed a natural disaster almost every day. "In Jammu Kashmir alone, flash floods and cloudbursts have damaged public infrastructure, disrupting roads, water supply schemes, and power feeders," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that there is no dichotomy between development and conservation and the nature itself is infrastructure.

"For example, constructing a watershed is also an effective flood-control system. It is infrastructure that also serves as a water purification system and forms the basis of an irrigation system. Similarly, a wetland is nature's vast reservoir because it absorbs excess water during the monsoon and then slowly gives life to surrounding areas during the dry months. A dense forested mountain slope is in fact like a strong wall that protects the entire mountain from collapsing onto the villages below," he said.

ELEVATE NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS INTO MULTIDISCIPLINARY SUBJECT

The Lieutenant Governor urged universities to elevate Nature-based Solutions into a multidisciplinary subject, spanning ecology, hydrology, engineering, economics, disaster management, and traditional knowledge. He stressed that future professionals must understand the interconnectedness of ecosystems, economies, technologies, and societies.

Recalling the Green Jammu Kashmir Drive launched in 2020, which raised forest cover to nearly 55 percent, the Lieutenant Governor reiterated the importance of sustainable living. He envisioned a Himalaya where watersheds are healthier, wetlands thrive, and rivers flow naturally, sustaining biodiversity and culture.

"By placing nature at the centre of development, integrating modern technology with traditional wisdom, and involving communities as equal partners, the Himalayan region can build resilience against climate change. We must remember that Himalayas are not merely a geographical entity but a living heritage that demands foresight, patience, and responsibility," the Lieutenant Governor said.

INAUGURATES CIVIL, MECHANICAL ENGINEERING BLOCK, LAW SCHOOL

He also inaugurated Civil and Mechanical Engineering Block at the main campus, IUST's Larmoo Campus and the Law School.

The Lieutenant Governor congratulated the IUST for their initiatives and lauded the University's policy brief on the Drug-Free Jammu Kashmir campaign.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor released the special edition of IUST's monthly magazine 'Times Echo' on 100-Day Anti-Drug campaign and Policy Brief on Nasha Mukta Jammu Kashmir Abhiyan, prepared by various experts of J&K. Certificates were also handed

over to the PMKVY trainees.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Chief Justice (Acting), High Court of Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh; Prof. Shakil A. Romshoo, Vice Chancellor, IUST; Prof. Shamim Ahmad Shah, Registrar, IUST; Prof. Javed Hussain Mir, Convener of the Conference; eminent scientists, experts, senior officials, faculty and students attended the conference. (KNO)

Two die as

fields were inundated.

The State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) launched rescue operations and safely evacuated around 80 people, including schoolchildren and staff members, from the affected areas.

"Relief and rescue teams were immediately pressed into service after the flash floods. Evacuation has been completed successfully and assessment of the damage is underway," an SDRF official said.

A district official said no fatalities were reported from Shopian, but several houses and public infrastructure suffered damage.

In neighbouring Anantnag district, another cloudburst struck Batkoot in Pahalgam, triggering flash floods and damaging a kacha house belonging to a poor family. No injuries were reported.

Heavy rains also caused the collapse of the rear concrete wall of the Nunwan base camp in Pahalgam, allowing water to enter the camp and damage several accommodation tents. Officials said the situation was later brought under control.

The rain fury also disrupted connectivity in the tourist destination, with the Aishmuqam-Pahalgam road blocked near Langnai Bridge due to flooding, while another bridge at Batkoot sustained damage under the force of the rushing water.

In North Kashmir's Bandipora district, another cloudburst was reported in the Arin-Dardpora area, damaging roads at several locations and disrupting movement, officials said. In Ganderbal district, strong winds blew away the rooftop of a residential house in Bakura village and damaged an electricity pole. No injuries were reported.

HIGHWAY CLOSED

In the Jammu region, continuous rainfall forced authorities to suspend traffic on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway after a stretch near Dawal Bridge in Udhampur's Samrolli area became unsafe.

Officials said the road had turned slushy and slippery due to persistent rainfall, prompting the closure of traffic from both directions.

"NHAI personnel and traffic police are on the spot with machinery to restore the road. Commuters are advised not to undertake travel on NH-44 until the highway is declared safe," an official said.

Heavy rainfall was also reported from Rajouri district, where rivers and streams were flowing close to danger levels, prompting authorities to monitor vulnerable areas.

FLASH FLOODS HIT LADAKH

In the Union Territory of Ladakh, flash floods caused widespread damage in the remote villages of Badgam and Hardass in Kargil district.

Officials said several houses, village infrastructure and agricultural fields were damaged in Badgam village, while Hardass, known for its apricot orchards, witnessed extensive losses to orchards and farmland, affecting the livelihood of growers.

Police, volunteers and local rescue agencies carried out relief operations in the affected villages as residents sought compensation and long-term flood protection measures.

Meanwhile, four boys were rescued safely from the middle of Dal Lake after their boat got stranded due to sudden gusty winds.

Officials said a Quick Response Team of the SDRF rushed to the spot and evacuated all four boys safely without any injuries.

The Meteorological Centre has forecast intermittent spells of rain and thunderstorms across Jammu and Kashmir over the next five days, warning of heavy rainfall at isolated places

that could trigger flash floods, landslides, mudslides and shooting stones in vulnerable areas.

Officials advised people living near streams and landslide-prone areas to remain alert and avoid unnecessary travel during periods of intense rainfall.

IMD PREDICTS MORE RAINS

Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said rainfall during the past 24 hours was mainly confined to parts of Jammu division, with Jammu recording 24.4 mm of rainfall and Katra receiving 8 mm. Kupwara received 0.8 mm, Gulmarg 0.6 mm, while Pahalgam and Batote recorded trace rainfall.

According to the Meteorological Centre, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 32.2 degrees Celsius, 2.1 degrees above normal, while the minimum settled at 19.8 degrees Celsius. Qazigund recorded 30.6 degrees Celsius, Pahalgam 28.1 degrees Celsius, Kupwara 31.3 degrees Celsius and Gulmarg 21.2 degrees Celsius.

Jammu recorded a maximum of 33.4 degrees Celsius, while Muzaffarabad was the hottest place in the region at 35 degrees Celsius.

The MeT department has forecast light to moderate rain and thundershowers at many places across Jammu and Kashmir on August 3 and 4, with the possibility of heavy rain and brief spells of torrential showers in a few districts.

It said similar weather conditions are likely between August 5 and 7, while scattered rain and thundershowers are expected from August 8 to 10.

The weather office warned that intense rainfall over the next five days could trigger flash floods, landslides and shooting stones at vulnerable places, particularly in parts of Jammu division, and advised people to remain alert and avoid unnecessary travel during periods of heavy rain. (KNO)

In 2026, 35 cloudbursts

cloudbursts beyond 35.

The fatalities have largely resulted from cloudbursts, flash floods and rain-triggered landslides, with the Jammu division accounting for the highest number of deaths. The worst-hit districts include Poonch, Rajouri, Kathua, Doda and Kishtwar, while several parts of Kashmir, particularly Shopian and Kupwara, have also witnessed repeated flash floods in recent weeks.

The latest spell of extreme weather on Monday left two persons dead after multiple cloudbursts struck different parts of the Union Territory, including Kupwara, Shopian, Bandipora and Anantnag, while heavy rainfall disrupted normal life across both Kashmir and Jammu divisions.

Officials said recurring cloudbursts have damaged dozens of residential houses, shops, schools, roads, bridges, irrigation channels and agricultural fields this year. Several villages have witnessed inundation following sudden flash floods, forcing authorities to evacuate residents and deploy rescue teams.

JAMMU-SRINAGAR NATIONAL HIGHWAY FACES REPEATED DISRUPTIONS

The strategic Jammu-Srinagar National Highway has also faced repeated disruptions due to landslides, mudslides and shooting stones triggered by heavy rainfall, affecting the movement of passengers and essential supplies on multiple occasions.

Disaster management officials said mountainous districts in the Chenab Valley, particularly Kishtwar and Doda, along with upper reaches of Shopian, Kupwara and other hilly areas of Kashmir, remain among the most vulnerable regions because of their steep terrain and proximity to seasonal streams.

Meteorologists define a cloudburst as an extremely intense and highly localised rainfall event in which precipitation exceeds 100 millimetres within an hour over an area of around 20 to 30 square kilometres. Such events often trigger sudden flash floods, debris flows and landslides, leaving little time for evacuation.

According to meteorological experts, the growing frequency of cloudbursts in Jammu and Kashmir is being driven by the interaction of moisture-laden southwest monsoon winds with western disturbances over the Himalayas.

They said the region's steep mountain slopes force moisture-rich air to rise rapidly, a process known as orographic lifting, leading to the formation of towering cumulonimbus clouds. These clouds often become trapped within narrow valleys, where they continue accumulating moisture until they suddenly collapse, releasing massive volumes of rain over a small area within minutes.

Experts also attribute the phenomenon to intense atmospheric instability. Strong upward air currents keep raindrops suspended inside clouds, allowing enormous quantities of water to accumulate. Once these updrafts weaken under the increasing weight of the water, the cloud system collapses, resulting in an intense cloudburst.

IMD SUGGESTS STRENGTHENING EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

Recent assessments by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) and the Geological Survey of India indicate an increasing trend in such mountain hazards and recommend strengthening early warning systems through X-band Doppler weather radars, dense networks of automated weather stations and real-time community alert mechanisms.

The studies also call for hazard mapping of vulnerable slopes and flood channels, strict regulation of construction in floodplains and dry riverbeds, controlled urban expansion in ecologically fragile mountain areas, large-scale afforestation and protection of wetlands to reduce the impact of flash floods and landslides. (KNO)

CM to preside over

cabinet status, will take the salute at the main Independence Day function in Kupwara, his home district. This will be the first time since his appointment that the Advisor to the Chief Minister will preside over an Independence Day function.

According to the communique, deputy commissioners will take the salute in 13 other districts, apart from those where ministers will preside over the functions.

Sub-divisional magistrates will take the salute at the respective sub-divisional headquarters, while tehsildars or the senior-most civil officers will preside at tehsil, block, and municipal headquarters, as decided by the concerned deputy commissioner. (KNO)

Amarnath Yatra

vehicles (MMVs) and 15 light motor vehicles (LMVs), under a tight security escort," an official said.

The official said that with the departure of the latest batch, the total number of pilgrims who have left the Jammu base camp for the on-going pilgrimage has reached 1,40,748. (KNO)

ASI dies after

that led to his death. His identity is yet to be ascertained, while further investigation has been taken up. (KNO)

Youth found

that further investigation has been taken up, while the identity of the deceased is yet to be established. (KNO)

J&K sees sharp

tribunals, and courts.

The Centre also said that financial fraud complaints reported through the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal or helpline 1930 feed into the Citizen Financial Cyber Fraud Reporting and Management System, which enables coordination between police agencies, banks, and financial intermediaries for tracing money trails and placing lien holdings on defrauded funds.

Ladakh recorded eight fraud cases involving a negligible amount in FY 2025-26, while

18 cases involving Rs 0.07 crore were reported in FY 2023-24 and 13 cases involving Rs 0.03 crore in FY 2024-25. (KNO)

'J&K Govt school

student enrolment and establishment of new schools. The timeline for filling up such vacancies is also determined by the respective State Governments and UT Administrations," Gol informed the house.

It also said that the Gol on its part periodically advises states and UTs to fill up vacant posts of teachers through transparent and merit-based recruitment processes, including through autonomous teacher recruitment boards or similar organisations.

As already reported by KNO, the government-run-schools in Jammu and Kashmir average less than five teachers per school and on the contrary private schools average more than 13 teachers per institute respectively—thus raising a question on quality of education being imparted to students.

The official figures in this had revealed that in the academic year 2025-16, Jammu and Kashmir sees government schools average with just 4.8 teachers per school.

However, on the contrary, private schools in J&K on an average have recorded 13.7 teachers per school.

It also reveals that despite having a dominance of 18,787 schools, the government is functioning the School Education Department with just 91,569 teachers and on the contrary, Jammu and Kashmir's 5,397 private schools exert a huge human resource of 74,226 teachers.

Furthermore, the MoE figures had revealed that despite having only 5,397 private schools in Jammu and Kashmir, the private sector is educating nearly fifty percent of the total student enrolment with 12.89 lakh out of 26.53 lakh total enrolled students.

As per the fresh figures revealed by the MoE, private schools in Jammu and Kashmir average 239 students per institution.

The government-run-schools on the contrary, despite having 18,852 infrastructures, the department is managing only 51.4 percent students with 13.63 lakh students—averaging a mere 72 students per school.

Earlier this news agency reported that in Jammu and Kashmir, 1,544 schools are being run by single teachers each wherein more than 33,537 students are enrolled.

The Union Territory was also functioning with 188 such schools that were having zero student enrolments. Interestingly, 87 teachers are still deployed to these empty institutions, drawing salaries while teaching no one.

These figures were recently released by the Department of School Education and Literacy for the Ministry of Education (MoE) wherein the ministry has said that 1544 schools in Jammu and Kashmir are functioning with single teachers.

MoE had also said that there were 33,537 students enrolled in those 1544 schools that are functioning with single teachers.

Furthermore, MoE had said that 87 teachers are posted in such schools that are having zero enrolments and 188 schools are without any student enrolled. (KNO)

J&K speedster

He said the young pacer's achievement would serve as a source of inspiration for countless aspiring cricketers and sports persons across the region, encouraging them to pursue excellence with determination and commitment.

Extending his best wishes, Abdullah expressed confidence that Auqib Nabi would make the most of the opportunity on the international stage and contribute significantly to India's success in the series.

He wished him a successful debut and many more milestones in his cricketing career, expressing hope that he would continue to bring laurels to the nation and make Jammu & Kashmir proud. (KNO)

SC says states can withdraw FIRs against students who participated in NEET protests

PTI

New Delhi, Aug 3: The Supreme Court on Monday clarified that the expression "criminal antecedents" in its order on releasing student protesters referred only to those involved in grave and heinous offences, and said states could close or withdraw FIRs against the remaining students in accordance with law.

The clarification came after the Centre submitted that it was "serious" about not pursuing FIRs against students who participated in the NEET examination paper leak protests, including the July 20 Parliament march in Delhi, provided they did not have criminal antecedents.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joyimalya Bagchi and V Mohana was hearing a batch of pleas alleging police excesses against student protesters during the agitation spearheaded by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP). "It is clarified that NCT of Delhi and any other state shall be at liberty to close or withdraw FIRs against protesters... The word criminal antecedents is to be read as grave and heinous offences," it said.

At the outset, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta submitted that there was some misconception regarding how to implement the Union government's commitment to withdraw the FIRs against students.

"There was some misapprehension about what to do with the FIRs against the protesters. I



have instructions to say that the government is serious about that commitment. Those who had criminal antecedents... except them, everything can be taken care of," Mehta said.

He said FIRs against more than 2,700 people with antecedents involving grave and heinous offences would not be withdrawn.

Mehta said he had discussed with senior advocate Vrinda Grover the legal mechanism for implementing the commitment. Grover said the issue was whether the cases should be withdrawn or the FIRs quashed.

"It was about improvement in the education system. These are young people who have their lives ahead of them. Even for quashing, we have FIRs filed in Bihar, West Bengal, Assam, UP and Delhi.

"After this has been worked out with the states, we will come back

to this court," she said, adding that individual public prosecutors seeking closure is a tedious and uncertain process.

Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan submitted that even lawyers' children were beaten during the protests.

"The videos are very shocking. We have given 300 videos to the court. Since directions have come from the top, the Commissioner of police must look at all this.

"Ideally, we have identified un-uniformed individuals committing such police excess. A direction has to go to the Commissioner of police and the RAF director as to why police used pellet guns etc," he said. Sankaranarayanan said police cannot be permitted to act brazenly.

"We have placed videos. We are inviting the court's attention to this serious. Let the affidavit answer

these questions. The responsibility has to be fixed," Sankaranarayanan submitted.

Senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi said the expression "criminal antecedents" required clarification, as students could have a traffic violation, petty offences or politically motivated cases against them.

The CJ observed, "A police officer involved in excessive force should not be unduly protected. And it should not be that a hardened criminal under the garb of student protest is also getting protected."

On the use of pellet guns, Grover said there was no standing order of the Delhi Police permitting their use.

"The petition (on pellet guns) is not saying that the police should not have anything to protect itself. But this particular weapon is unfit for use," she said.

The court said it would like to lay down a protocol governing the use of pellet guns and posted the matter for further hearing on August 18.

The apex court had earlier observed that police excesses or a 'lathi charge' cannot be justified merely because there is an agitation and underlined that the right to peaceful protest was "absolutely guaranteed". The CJP-led march on July 20 in Delhi saw clashes between protesters and security personnel, who used lathis and teargas shells to disperse crowds attempting to move towards Parliament.

Earlier, the top court had agreed to hear on Monday the pleas alleging police excesses against

protesting students.

One petition seeks nationwide guidelines to regulate police action during public protests, including a prohibition on the deployment of plainclothes personnel for crowd-control duties, safeguards on the use of prohibitory orders under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), and an independent probe into the police action during the July 20 protest in Delhi.

Filed by Shailendra Mani Tripathi through advocate-on-record Chand Qureshi, the plea has made the Centre, the Delhi government, the police commissioner and all states and union territories as respondents.

It seeks enforcement of fundamental rights under Articles 14, 19 and 21 of the Constitution. It alleges that the demonstration at Delhi on July 20 was met with heavy police deployment, barricading, teargas, baton charges and mass detentions, resulting in injuries to at least 60 protesters.

It also alleges assaults, gender-based misconduct against female protesters and the use of force by unidentified or plainclothes personnel.

The student-led protests, which spread to several cities, were centred around the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.

The agitation, which began at Jantar Mantar on June 20, was called off on July 25 after Pradhan resigned and the government accepted the CJP's other demands.

Prez Murmu commends all-women tri-services crew



PTI

New Delhi, Aug 3: President Droupadi Murmu on Monday commended the all-women crew from the three defence services for successfully traversing some of the world's most challenging seas, and said their achievement would inspire young Indians to dream big.

The crew of the Indian Army Sailing Vessel Triveni

called on the President at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, her office said in a post on X.

"The Tri-Services All-Women Circumnavigation Sailing Expedition - Samudra Pradakshina has successfully traversed over 25,000 nautical miles across some of the world's most challenging seas while rounding the Capes

of Leeuwin, Horn and Good Hope," it said.

The President commended the all-women crew for its courage, resilience and exemplary professionalism in successfully completing the expedition, the post said.

She said that this achievement would inspire young Indians, especially women, to dream big and serve the nation with dedication, it added.

Aboard the Indian Army Sailing Vessel (IASV) Triveni, nine women officers of the three services recently successfully completed a 314-day voyage covering nearly 25,500 nautical miles across four oceans. The expedition was virtually flagged-off by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on September 11, 2025 from Mumbai.

Bill to increase SC judges passed by Lok Sabha without debate

PTI

New Delhi, Aug 3: The Lok Sabha on Monday passed a bill to replace an ordinance that increased the number of Supreme Court judges from 34 to 38 without a debate as opposition members persisted with slogan-shouting over the issues of NEET paper leak and alleged theft of Ram temple donations.

Last week, a bill to amend the law on birth and death registration was also passed without any debate in the Lok Sabha under similar circumstances.

A statutory resolution moved by the opposition members denouncing the promulgation of the ordinance was also rejected by a voice vote.

After brief introductory remarks by Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal, the Chair urged the members to speak on the statutory resolution, but as sloganeering continued, the bill was put to vote and subsequently cleared.

After the passage of the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026, the House was adjourned for the day.

The bill was listed in the agenda almost every day since its introduction on July 20 but could not come up for consideration and passage.

The government has maintained that an enhanced strength is one of the most exigent and viable solutions for tackling pendency in the top court.

In May, the Union Cabinet had cleared the bill to increase the sanctioned strength of the top court, but soon thereafter the government brought an ordinance.

Military-civil integration key to robust defence ecosystem to tackle emerging challenges: Rajnath

PTI

New Delhi, Aug 3: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday said there was a need to "deepen integration" between the military and civil components of his ministry to foster greater synergy within the defence ecosystem to tackle evolving security and technological challenges.

In his address at the foundation day celebrations of Armed Forces Headquarters (AFHQ) Civilian Services here, he also said that if officers of the AFHQ Civilian Services develop defence-specific common cyber tools leveraging their expertise, it could prove beneficial to the defence forces.

Singh emphasised that both the uniformed and civil services share the same commitment of 'nation first', and when the objective is singular, every element of the system transforms into national strength.

Underlining that defence forces are marching towards greater



jointness with renewed vigour, he said there was a need to deepen integration between the military and civil components of the defence ministry to foster greater cooperation and alignment within the defence ecosystem to tackle evolving security and technological challenges.

"Military officers bring operational experience, a command perspective, and an understanding of warfare, while civilian officers contribute through administrative continuity, policy experience, an understanding of government processes, and institutional memory. When these strengths combine, decision-making

becomes more informed, balanced, and effective," Singh said.

The Union minister highlighted the importance of further enhancing structured "cross-exposure" between civilian and military officers, suggesting joint training programmes and developmental assignments for both sides to learn from each other's experience, according to a defence ministry statement.

He also suggested that a forum could be developed for the study of Indian military history, examining it from a civilian perspective, thereby fostering fresh ideas and new perspectives.

Singh expressed confidence that by leveraging expertise in such areas, the AFHQ Civilian Services will be able to make more meaningful contributions to the defence sector.

While he acknowledged the AFHQ Civilian Services for moving ahead in sync with changing times, he asserted that, at a time when modern warfare is driven by technological dynamism, "the cadre must move beyond its specific mandate" of proper implementation of service rules, regulations and orders.

"It must focus on strengthening the security architecture through research, geo-strategic thinking and innovative ideas. Its active participation in core defence matters is essential as, being a permanent cadre of the Ministry of Defence, it possesses deep domain knowledge," Singh said.

AFHQ Day is celebrated in August every year to recognise the role of the civilian officers who work with service personnel, primarily in the

three Integrated Service Headquarters, Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff and 24 Inter-Service Organisations of the Ministry of Defence.

As part of the celebrations, the defence minister launched several digital initiatives of the office of Joint Secretary & Chief Administrative Officer (JS & CAO) and its Revised Vision & Mission Statement, the statement said.

Singh also released the 34th issue of the 'Samvad' magazine that contains travelogues, essays, articles, and poems written by employees of various ranks posted in Service Headquarters and Inter-Service Organisations. He also presented awards at the event.

Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth, Chief of Defence Staff Gen NS Raja Subramani, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Krishna Swaminathan, Chief of the Army Staff Gen Dhiraj Seth, and Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh were among other senior officials present on the occasion.

Ex-WFI chief Brij Bhushan, co-accused Tomar acquitted in wrestlers' sexual harassment case



PTI

New Delhi, Aug 3: A Delhi court on Monday acquitted former Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh and co-

accused Vinod Tomar in a sexual harassment case filed by women wrestlers.

Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Ashwini Panwar acquitted ex-BJP MP Singh and Tomar, former WFI assistant secretary, in the case. Speaking to reporters outside the court, Singh said the court had "honourably" acquitted him and Tomar.

"On the first day, I had said that if any allegation against me was proved, I would hang myself. The court has now honourably

acquitted me. I am happy and grateful to my lawyers," he said. "For now, this is all I can say. I will comment further after going through the court's reasoned order," the ex-BJP MP added.

Public prosecutor Manish Rawat, however, said that after examining the detailed order, "appropriate action" would be taken before the higher courts.

The prosecution can challenge the magisterial court's verdict before the Delhi High Court.

The trial was conducted in-camera, while the media was barred from the courtroom. Singh's counsel confirmed the acquittal while briefing reporters outside the court shortly after the order was pronounced.

Stock markets take winning run to 4th day as crude oil prices drop sharply; Nifty surges 1.6 pc

PTI

Mumbai, Aug 3: Stock market benchmark indices ended higher on Monday, with the Sensex climbing 544.39 points and Nifty surging 1.60 per cent, following a sharp decline in crude oil prices amid easing geopolitical tensions. Foreign fund inflows also added to markets' optimism.

Extending the winning momentum to the fourth day, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 544.39 points, or 0.70 per cent, to settle at 78,639.03. During the day, it surged 800.46 points, or 1 per cent, to 78,895.10.

The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 390.70 points, or 1.60 per cent, to end at 24,774.30. From the Sensex pack, InterGlobe Aviation, Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, Eterna, ITC, and Axis Bank were among the major winners.

Sun Pharma, Bharti Airtel, Maruti, and Tata Steel were among the laggards. Brent crude, the global oil

benchmark, tumbled 4.62 per cent to USD 83.88 per barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 277.48 crore on Friday, according to exchange data.

After four straight months of selling, foreign investors turned net buyers of Indian equities in July, pumping in Rs 20,200 crore, aided by attractive valuations, improving corporate earnings and easing global headwinds. "The decline in crude oil prices, driven by expectations of renewed dialogue between the US and Iran, provided relief to markets by easing concerns over inflation and corporate earnings. Market sentiment was further supported by a rebound in FII inflows and a strengthening rupee, although elevated US bond yields remain a key risk to the sustainability of foreign flows into emerging markets," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Ltd, said.

PTI

Kolkata, Aug 3: India has completed its first comprehensive catalogue of butterflies and moths after more than 12 years of work, documenting 13,703 species and bridging taxonomic gaps that had persisted for over a century, the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) said.

The catalogue, prepared by the ZSI under the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, has been compiled across 22 volumes and provides an updated taxonomic inventory of Indian Lepidoptera -- the insect order comprising butterflies and moths, the ZSI said in a press release.

The final volume of the series, authored by ZSI taxonomists Dr Rahul Joshi and Dr Navneet Singh, has been published in the international journal Zootaxa. According



to the survey, India is home to 13,703 species of butterflies and moths belonging to 3,705 genera, 240 subfamilies, 102 families and 31 superfamilies, accounting for around 8.25 per cent of the world's known Lepidoptera diversity.

The concluding volume catalogues the remaining 1,689 species, completing what the

ZSI described as the country's first authoritative and centralised taxonomic reference on the group. A major component of the project is a dedicated catalogue of the moth superfamily Geometroidea, which records 2,205 species under 479 genera, 13 subfamilies and four families in India.

The Geometroidea fauna

represents about 8.8 per cent of the world's known diversity in the superfamily, the survey said.

Among the four families, Geometridae is the largest with 2,100 species, followed by Uraniidae with 95 species, Epicopeidae with nine species and Pseudobistonidae with a single species. The family Sematuridae is absent from India.

The most species-rich subfamilies are Ennominae with 895 species, Larentiinae with 565 species and Geometrinae with 309 species, it added.

The project involved extensive field surveys, examination of museum collections and verification of scientific literature over more than a decade.

ZSI Director Dr Dhriti Banerjee said the catalogue would serve as a key national resource for biodiversity research, ecological monitoring and conservation planning.

"These catalogue volumes will serve as a vital national asset for biodiversity research, ecological monitoring, and global conservation strategies. Such comprehensive catalogues ensure these species are given an authoritative voice, a clear legal identity, and a permanent place in scientific history," she said. The survey noted that butterflies and moths are important pollinators, herbivores and detritivores, and form a critical part of the food chain for birds, bats and other insectivores. Many species also have significant implications for agriculture and forestry.

It said the consolidated inventory would provide researchers, conservationists and policymakers with a scientific baseline for biodiversity assessment, ecological monitoring and studies on the impact of climate change across India's diverse ecosystems.

Sports Min lauds
CWG weightlifting
contingent during
felicitation

PTI

New Delhi, Aug 3: Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Monday lauded the strong performance of the Indian weightlifters in the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, saying every medal they won has brought immense joy to the country. The Indian weightlifting team won one gold, six silver and one bronze in the Games. Olympic medalist Mirabai Chanu was the lone gold winner.

The weightlifters were felicitated by Mandaviya after their return to India.

Mirabai was handed a cheque of Rs 30 lakh, while the silver and bronze medalists received Rs 20 lakh and Rs 10 lakh respectively.

"You may not realise it, but every medal you win brings immense joy to the country. Whenever one of you won a medal, the news was announced in Parliament before proceedings began. To those athletes who could not win a medal this time, remember that a sportsperson never loses. They either win or learn to win again," Mandaviya said during the felicitation event.

"Three of our athletes could not secure medals this time, but I am confident that with the blessings of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the good wishes of 140 crore Indians, they too will return with medals in the future," he added.

For Mirabai, it was her third CWG gold medal on the trot, having also won the yellow metal in 2018 and 2022 editions.

Trump says Gulf leaders' input
weighed heavily in decision to hold
off on ordering new Iran strikes

AP/AFP

Washington, Aug 3: US President Donald Trump said he decided to hold off on ordering American forces to carry out new strikes against Iran at the urging of Gulf allies Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Trump added that a plan was in place for US forces to carry out "the biggest attack since World War II" on Sunday. But he decided to scrap the plan and give diplomacy more time to play out after hearing from key Gulf leaders — including Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman — as well as at the request of unnamed Iranian officials.

"I said to the crown prince, 'What would you rather do? Would you rather us do this or not?'" Trump told reporters on Air Force One as he flew back to Washington after spending the weekend at his golf club in Bedminster, New Jersey. "They said we would much prefer a deal as opposed to an attack, because you don't know where these attacks lead."

But Iran said that while it was in talks with Oman about a deal on the Strait of Hormuz, there was no talks, and no planned talks currently with the US.

Trump and the crown prince spoke on Saturday before the US president announced in a social media post that Middle East allies had reached the "perimeters" of a deal to end the 5-month-old war.

Trump said that new negotiations with Iran will begin Monday after he decided to hold off on striking the Islamic republic to pursue a deal to end the war entering its sixth month. Trump



told reporters on Sunday that the talks would cover the Strait of Hormuz — a route for global energy supplies that has become a key sticking point in the conflict — and ultimately, the denuclearization of Iran.

For its part, Iran said it was nearing a deal with Oman over a new route through the strait, where a tanker reported an explosion nearby on Sunday, underscoring the continued volatility of the strategic waterway.

However, Iran's foreign ministry said on Monday there were currently no negotiations with the United States.

"We are not currently negotiating with the United States. Our negotiations are with Oman to secure passage through the Strait of Hormuz," said foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei during a weekly press briefing.

Oil prices fell on Monday at the opening of Asian trade after Trump announced the new

negotiations, with West Texas Intermediate dropping 4.7 percent to \$80.72 per barrel.

Washington and Tehran have been at war since February 28, when the US and Israel launched surprise strikes against Iran, though months of on-off diplomacy have led to periods of relative calm. Following a return to strikes last month, fears had mounted that the fighting could escalate once again. Trump had threatened to hit Iran "very hard" and was reportedly considering renewed attacks including against energy infrastructure, with US embassies across the region on alert.

Trump pulled back from that threat Saturday, saying the "perimeters" of a deal were there.

"Now what we're doing is we're talking to them in the form of a negotiation. It begins tomorrow afternoon," Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One on Sunday, without providing details of the venue or participants in the talks.

Iranian media denied that Tehran had asked Trump not to strike.

A previous ceasefire deal that included the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz fell through, and Iran has since tightened its control over the waterway.

The US president said at the start of the conflict that the war was necessary to deal with Iran's nuclear program. Western nations accuse Iran of seeking a bomb, though Tehran insists the program is entirely civilian in nature.

'Exchange of views'

Iranian lawmaker Hassan Ghashghavi, spokesman for the parliament's national security commission, said on Sunday that mediators were trying to revive the US-Iran memorandum of understanding that was agreed in June.

That agreement was not intended as a final peace deal, but as a stepping stone to negotiations on a comprehensive agreement, though it did include provisions on Hormuz.

"They know that the main issue and, in fact, the key to the matter right now is the issue of the Strait of Hormuz, so yes, there is an exchange of views," Ghashghavi said.

Posting on X, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said: "We must strive to compel the enemy to remain committed to what it has signed."

Iran deal with Oman?

Before the war, there was free passage for all vessels through the Strait of Hormuz, but Iran closed the strait during the war and now insists on retaining control and charging tolls, something the US rejects.

Bangladesh measles
outbreak drives families
into debt: aid groups



AFP

Dhaka, Aug 3: Bangladesh's deadliest measles outbreak in decades, which has killed hundreds of children, has had a crippling economic impact on families, aid groups warned Monday.

At least 844 children have died and more than 112,000 people have sought hospital treatment for the preventable disease since March 15, according to health department figures.

Nine out of 10 families affected by measles were forced to borrow to cover medical expenses, according to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society.

"The effects of this measles health emergency do not end at the hospital door, as families often face severe

financial hardship," said the IFRC chief in Dhaka, Alberto Bocanegra. "Humanitarian assistance and strong social protection systems are both essential during public health emergencies," he added. The groups assessed 2,746 families who sought medical treatment for their children at 12 government health facilities.

While hospital care is free, associated costs can quickly mount. Thirty-five percent of surveyed families needed financial support to pay for medicines, while 22 percent needed food assistance.

Many affected families come from poorer communities and rely on informal work, earning between \$48 and \$160 a month.

Families affected by the outbreak spent an average of more than \$130 on treatment and related expenses, the assessment found.

Cyclist Harshita Jakhar
becomes first Indian
woman to be part of Tour
de France Femmes

PTI

Aigle (Switzerland), Aug 3: Young cyclist Harshita Jakhar rode into history books by becoming the first Indian woman to be a part of the Tour de France Femmes here.

The 19-year-old led a pack of eight talented cyclists from Afghanistan, Algeria, Chile, Ethiopia (two riders), Namibia and Uganda during the ceremonial start at Stage 2 of the gruelling race on Sunday. The event started on August 1 in Lausanne and will end on August 9 in Nice.

The team, handpicked by UCI (Union Cycliste de Internationale), cycled 4.5 kilometres on a neutralised section of the course along with some riders from the WCC Road Team. Tour de France Femmes is the women's multi-stage cycling race that corresponds to the men's Tour de France. It is part of the UCI Women's World Tour calendar.

Water-bombing planes take to skies as Greece battles wildfires

AFP

Kryo Pigadi (Greece), Aug 3: Water-bombing aircraft resumed firefighting operations in Greece on Monday after winds eased, joining hundreds of firefighters battling multiple blazes that have already claimed five lives, the fire department told AFP.

"Today we are facing three difficult fronts: Psatha, Kryo Pigadi and Kandyli," a department spokesperson told AFP, referring to areas located between 45 and 70 kilometers (30-45 miles) west of Athens.

Lighter winds allowed aerial

firefighting operations to resume early on Monday, with nine water-bombing aircraft joining nine helicopters and about 450 firefighters battling the flames in the regions of Boeotia and Attica, according to the fire service.

In recent days, wind gusts reaching 80 kilometers per hour had grounded aircraft for safety reasons, hampering firefighting efforts. Authorities ordered new evacuations on Monday morning in villages near Kandyli, about 45 kilometers west of the capital, Greece's Civil Protection agency said. "The battle against the fires is uneven," Deputy Minister for



Civil Protection and Climate Crisis Kostas Katsafados told public broadcaster ERTNews on Monday. The wildfires have claimed five

lives since last week.

On Sunday, two Bell helicopters collided while conducting firefighting operations near Psatha.

A Danish pilot and a Greek co-pilot aboard one of the aircraft were killed. Their deaths followed those of three firefighters who died last week while battling separate wildfires in Crete and the Peloponnese. Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis warned that Greece faced "extremely difficult" days ahead as high temperatures and dry conditions continued to fuel the blazes.

More than 12,000 hectares of forests and agricultural land have burned over the past week, according to analyses from the European Union's Copernicus Earth observation program cited by local media.

India's Test squad for SL tour

Auqib Nabi earns
maiden India call-up,
replaces injured Bumrah



PTI

New Delhi, Aug 3: Jammu and Kashmir seamer Auqib Nabi on Monday replaced injured Jasprit Bumrah for the upcoming two-match Test tour of Sri Lanka, becoming the first player from the Kashmir valley to get selected in India's Test squad.

Bumrah, originally named in the squad, has been ruled out of the tour as he has not yet fully recovered from the left knee injury sustained during the ODI series against England.

It is Nabi's maiden call-up to the senior national team.

"The Men's Selection Committee has named Auqib Nabi as Bumrah's replacement. The

Jammu and Kashmir fast bowler earns his maiden call-up to the senior national team," the BCCI said in a statement.

The 29-year-old Nabi, who hails from a remote village in Kashmir's Baramulla, is the third player from J&K after Parvez Rasool and Umran Malik to get a senior national team call-up. Rasool and Malik played for India in limited overs format.

Nabi had claimed 104 wickets across the last two Ranji Trophy seasons, including 60 wickets in the 2025-26 campaign, playing a pivotal role in Jammu and Kashmir's maiden Ranji Trophy triumph. He is also a handy customer with the bat.

He was also part of the India

A squad that toured Sri Lanka recently, where he claimed six wickets in two first-class matches.

Pace spearhead Bumrah has been ruled out after the swelling in his knee turned out to be more serious than it initially looked. The Sports Science team in Bengaluru's Centre of Excellence was in no mood to rush the seasoned pacer to the grind of international cricket, keeping in mind a packed calendar ahead.

The 32-year-old had missed out on the third ODI against England at the Lord's last month after sustaining an impact injury.

B Sai Sudharsa's participation in the series is subject to fitness clearance as he is still steadily recovering from a foot injury that he sustained during the recent India A series in the Island nation.

The two-match Test series in Sri Lanka begins on August 15 in Galle.

India's updated squad for the Test series against Sri Lanka: Shubman Gill (C), KL Rahul (VC), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Rishabh Pant (WK), Sai Sudharsan*, Dhruv Jurel (WK), Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav, Manav Suthar, Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna, Gurnoor Brar, Devdutt Padikkal, Saransh Jain, Auqib Nabi.

*Subject to fitness clearance.

INOX SRINAGAR MOVIES Watchlist

Tuesday 4TH AUGUST

DHAMAAL 4 (HINDI) (U/A 13+) 03:05 PM

SPIDERMAN BRAND NEW DAY (HINDI) (U/A 13+) 10:00 AM, 03:50 PM

SPIDERMAN BRAND NEW DAY (3D ENGLISH ATMOS WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLE) (U/A 13+) 11:00 AM, 02:05 PM, 05:10 PM, 08:15 PM

SPIDERMAN BRAND NEW DAY (ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLE) (U/A 13+) 12:55 PM, 06:45 PM

THE ODYSSEY (ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLE) (A) 11:40 AM, 06:00 PM

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT BOX OFFICE & ONLINE

ASSISTANCE +91 95416 13868