



INDEPENDENCE DAY 2026

Multi-tier security arrangements in place across Kashmir: IGP Birdi

Says function venues secured, urges people to join celebrations in large numbers

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Aug 11: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir V K Birdi on Tuesday said that multi-tier security arrangements have been put in place across Kashmir to ensure peaceful Independence Day celebrations.

IGP Birdi while talking to reporters here, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Security has been strengthened at key venues across Srinagar city and districts of the Valley."

The IGP said, "Multi-tier security arrangements are in place not only at the venues but also around the city and in all districts of the Valley."

He said preparations for the main Independence Day function in Srinagar were underway, including full-dress rehearsals and other arrangements to



Pic: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)

ensure the event is conducted smoothly.

The IGP also appealed to people to participate in the celebrations in large numbers, saying

the Independence Day function was ultimately an occasion for the people.

"The function is for the people. The police work as an

organiser. Since it is the function of the people, we ask people to participate in this function in large numbers so that it can be carried on successfully," he said.

On the recent terror attacks in South Kashmir and whether investigators had made any breakthrough, IGP Birdi said, "The matter is under investigation. I don't think it is appropriate to talk about it at this time. Whenever there is something that can be shared with you, we will share it at an appropriate time."

Pertinently, security arrangements across Kashmir are being intensified ahead of the August 15 Independence Day celebrations, with special focus on major venues, Srinagar city and other parts of the Valley. Preparations for the main function in Srinagar are also underway, with full-dress rehearsals being held ahead of the main event on August 15. (KNO)

Security forces step up vigil along LoC, border

Smart fencing, drones, rapid response teams deployed across vulnerable stretches

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Aug 11: Security has been stepped up along the Line of Control (LoC) and International Border (IB) in Jammu and Kashmir ahead of Independence Day, with security forces maintaining heightened vigilance to foil any infiltration or other attempts to disrupt the August 15 celebrations.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the security grid has been strengthened across vulnerable stretches of the LoC, particularly in the Gurez, Uri, Karnah and Tangdhar sectors of North Kashmir and the Sunderbani area of Jammu.

"Additional surveillance and area domination measures have

J&K govt notifies consolidated ex-gratia relief norms for L&O disturbance victims

Civilian death compensation fixed at Rs 1 lakh

J&K domicile defence, CAPF personnel killed in or outside UT to get Rs 25 lakh

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Aug 11: The Jammu and Kashmir administration has notified a consolidated framework for payment of ex-gratia relief to civilians, security personnel, government employees and others affected by law-and-order disturbances, with compensation ranging from Rs 500 for minor injuries to Rs 25 lakh for the death of a J&K domicile defence or Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) personnel.

As per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the General Administration Department (GAD), in an order, superseded its earlier order dated December 3, 2025, and issued revised guidelines for sanctioning relief under the Security Related Expenditure (SRE) scheme.

As per the new framework, the next of kin of a civilian killed in circumstances covered under the order will be eligible for Rs 1 lakh. The same amount will be provided in cases involving deaths on the International Border (IB) or Line of Control (LoC), as well as surrendered militants and militants who had turned informers.

The ex-gratia relief has been



fixed at Rs 75,000 for permanent disability, Rs 5,000 for injuries requiring hospitalisation for more than 24 hours, Rs 1,000 for hospitalisation of less than 24 hours and Rs 500 for minor injuries.

The order clarifies that relief for persons other than government employees will be admissible only when the victims were not directly or indirectly involved in actual violence or its instigation and were killed, disabled or injured innocently.

For police personnel, the ex-gratia compensation for death has been fixed at Rs 5 lakh, including in the case of Special Police Officers (SPOs). The death of an ex-serviceman will attract Rs 2 lakh, while permanent and partial disability will be compensated with Rs 75,000 and Rs 10,000, respectively.

Police personnel killed or completely or partially disabled in

Security stepped up across Srinagar

Div Com inspects Bakshi Stadium preparations, directs close coordination among depts

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir Anshul Garg on Tuesday inspected preparations at Bakshi Stadium, Srinagar, the main venue for Independence Day celebrations, as security has been stepped up across the city ahead of August 15.

During his visit, the Div Com reviewed arrangements, including seating, the Public Address System, overhead covering of stands and adherence to protocol during the singing of the National Song followed by the National Anthem. Garg, as reported by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), directed the officers to ensure complete

Apple scab threat looms over Kashmir orchards

Wet spell fuels fungal infections, waterlogging, fruit cracking

Growers fear impact on quality, returns

Jahangeer Ganaie

Shopian, Aug 10: Prolonged rainfall across South Kashmir is throwing fresh challenges for apple growers in various with cases of secondary apple scab and other moisture-related diseases being reported from several fruit-growing areas of the districts.

Farmers told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) the continuous wet conditions over the past fortnight have kept orchards excessively moist, creating a favourable environment for fungal infections and raising concerns over the quality of the apple crop as the season progresses.

The secondary scab has emerged in Nagbal area of Shopian, Dachnipora area of Anantnag, Aharbal side of Kulgam and Shadimarg area of Pulwama besides other major apple-producing pockets in Kashmir.

Growers said that while timely rainfall is generally considered beneficial for fruit development, excessive and uninterrupted precipitation can have the opposite effect by increasing disease pressure, affecting foliage and damaging the appearance of the fruit.

"Rain is important for maintaining moisture and supporting fruit development, but when it continues for days together, the conditions become favourable for fungal diseases. The situation now requires close monitoring," said an Nisar Ahmad an apple grower from Shopian.

According to growers, the problem is being noticed across both lower and higher elevations, indicating that the prolonged wet spell

Heavy rain likely in Jammu division over next 24 hours

MeT warns of flash floods, predicts more rains

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Aug 11: Jammu and Kashmir is likely to witness another spell of heavy to very heavy rainfall in parts of the Jammu division on Wednesday, with the weather department warning of flash floods, landslides and mudslides in vulnerable areas.

The Meteorological Centre, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said one or two spells of light to moderate rain and thundershowers are expected at many places across the Union Territory on August 12.

However, some districts of the Jammu division could receive heavy to very heavy rainfall, while isolated areas of Kashmir may experience brief spells of intense showers, it said.

The advisory comes after several parts of the Jammu region received significant rainfall



during the past 24 hours.

Kathua KVK recorded the highest rainfall of 156 mm, followed by Jammu with 79 mm, Katra 71 mm and Samba 55 mm, according to the weather department.

The department said the prevailing wet spell is likely to continue in a subdued form between August 13 and 16, with light to moderate rain and thundershowers possible at

many places and brief intense showers at isolated locations.

ANOTHER WET SPELL EXPECTED BETWEEN Aug 17-19

Another spell of wet weather is expected between August 17 and 19, when heavy rain or brief intense showers could occur in a few districts, particularly during the early morning and afternoon hours. The weather

'Unnecessary suspicion' of Kashmiri youth must end: Tanvir Sadiq

Says such approach 'widening trust deficit' between Kashmir & Delhi

Dismisses tariff hike rumours

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Aug 11: National Conference (NC) chief spokesperson and Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Zadibal, Tanvir Sadiq on Tuesday urged the Centre and Jammu and Kashmir administration to end unnecessary suspicion of local youth, saying such a perception is widening the trust deficit between Kashmir and Delhi.

Speaking to reporters here, MLA Sadiq, as reported by the



news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), referred to the recent killing of a police Head Constable in Anantnag, saying youth should not be put under the scanner following such incidents.

"We need to trust our people a lot. If we want to close the distance between the heart and Delhi and make it closer, then I think we have to trust our people," he said.

Backing PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti's remarks that some elements exploit

Drug seizures in J&K drop to 4,977 kg in 2024, convictions rise

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Aug 11: Jammu and Kashmir recorded 4,977.21 kg of drug seizures in 2024, while 1,550 cases were registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, with 227 convictions and a conviction rate of 51.2 per cent, according to the latest NCRB data cited by the Union Government in the Lok Sabha.

The details were provided by Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Nityanand Rai, in a written reply to M K Raghavan and Adv Adoor Prakash.

As per the reply, accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), J&K recorded 17,192.409 kg of drug seizures in 2022, which declined to 11,358.528 kg in 2023 and further to 4,977.21 kg in 2024. The number of seizure cases stood at 300,776 in 2022, 158,776 in 2023 and 134,699 in 2024.

The data further shows that 1,837 NDPS cases were registered in J&K in 2022, with 99 convictions and

Over 3,300 Non-Gazetted GMC staff await recruitment rules, promotions

AIRNF warns of indefinite strike from Aug 17 over service rules; employees question 'different rules for different GMCs in same UT'

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Aug 11: More than 3,300 non-gazetted employees serving in the five Government Medical Colleges (GMCs) established in Jammu and Kashmir in 2019 are facing prolonged career stagnation as the Service Recruitment Rules (SRRs) governing their posts remain pending, with the All India Registered Nurses Federation (AIRNF), J&K UT Committee, warning of an indefinite strike from August 17 if the matter is not addressed.

The affected workforce includes nursing, paramedical, clerical, and multitasking staff who have been serving the newly established medical institutions for several years.

Employees say that despite their continued contribution to patient care and the functioning of the colleges, they have not been provided a clear mechanism for promotion or career progression.

Speaking to the news



agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), AIRNF J&K UT Committee State President Vishay Sharma said employees had joined the new medical colleges with the expectation that they would receive service benefits and promotional opportunities similar to those available to their counterparts in established GMCs.

"During recruitment, we were expecting that there would be similar rules as we have in the existing GMC Jammu and GMC Srinagar. But after two years of recruitment, we came to know that the government was planning

different rules," Sharma said.

He questioned how different Government Medical Colleges within the same Union Territory could have substantially different service conditions for employees performing similar duties. "One can question how, in one UT, there can be different rules for different GMCs," he said.

According to Sharma, the prolonged delay in finalising the SRRs has resulted in employees remaining on the same posts for years without access to regular promotional processes. He said the problem had become

J&K proposes over 300 PG medical seats to NMC

120 new seats created in ongoing academic year

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Aug 11: The Jammu and Kashmir government has submitted proposals to the National Medical Commission (NMC) for the creation of more than 300 additional postgraduate medical seats.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration informed the Department-related Standing Committee on Home Affairs that it has submitted proposals to the National Medical Commission (NMC) for the creation of more than 300 additional postgraduate medical seats.

During its study tour of Jammu and Kashmir in May this, the committee, as per report, a copy of which is in possession of news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), was informed that 120 additional postgraduate seats had already been created



across Government Medical Colleges, including those located in remote districts.

"The Committee was informed that expansion of postgraduate medical education constitutes another important component of the long-term manpower strategy. During the current academic year, approximately 120 additional postgraduate seats have been created across Government Medical Colleges, including those located in remote districts. In addition, 286 postgraduate students are presently undergoing training in the seven newly established Government Medical Colleges and are contributing to specialist

25-yr-old woman dies in overnight accident at Nishat



KNO Correspondent

Srinagar, Aug 11: A young woman died while another person was injured after the vehicle they were travelling in met with an accident near Kral Sangari in Nishat area of Srinagar during the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday, officials said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the accident occurred around 1:00 am when the vehicle bearing (No. JK01AR-0071) hit a road divider and overturned, leaving both occupants injured.

He said the duo was shifted to a hospital, where the woman succumbed to her injuries. She was identified as Tabiya Ayooob (25), a resident of Barbar Shah, Srinagar.

The body was subsequently handed over

DC Budgam
presides over
ICMR-SHINE
Programme at
MRHRU Khag



KT News Desk

BUDGAM, AUGUST 11: Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, Tuesday presided over ICMR-SHINE Programme held at the Model Rural Health Research Unit (MRHRU), Khag, Budgam, in collaboration with ICMR-NICHR, New Delhi, Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

The two-day programme, as per an official statement, held from Tuesday, brought together health officials, researchers, doctors, academicians and community members for discussions on health awareness, community engagement, evidence-based practices and strengthening rural healthcare.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner appreciated the efforts of MRHRU Khag and its partner institutions for promoting health research and community-focused healthcare initiatives.

He stressed the need to better connect health research with on-ground implementation, saying that evidence-based research should lead to real improvements in healthcare delivery and health outcomes, especially in rural and underserved areas.

He also highlighted the importance of community participation in public health efforts, noting that lasting improvements in healthcare require teamwork between health institutions, researchers, frontline workers, the district administration and the community.

An informative session was also delivered by Dr. Mohd Caser, Scientist-C (Medical) and In-charge, MRHRU Khag, ICMR-NICHR, New Delhi, who spoke about the objectives of the ICMR-SHINE Programme and how research institutions can help address local health challenges.

Mega Tiranga
bike rally held
in Shopian

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, AUGUST 11: As part of the Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign-2026, a grand Tiranga Bike Rally was held in Shopian Tuesday to celebrate the spirit of patriotism and encourage citizens to proudly display and honour the National Flag.

The rally, as per an official statement, was flagged off by Deputy Commissioner Shopian, Shishir Gupta, and SSP Shopian, Mushtaq Ahmad Choudhary, who also joined the rally and rode alongside the participants, leading the patriotic procession through the town. The event was attended by senior district officers, police officers and officials from various departments.

The rally commenced from District Police Lines (DPL), Shopian, and passed through the designated route covering Batapora Bus Stand, Four Way Chowk, Clock Tower, Hospital Road and Police Station Road, before returning via Batapora Bus Stand and culminating at DPL, Shopian.

The rally was organised jointly by the District and Police administration shopian.

Independence Day Celebrations

Div Com Kashmir
inspects preparations
at Bakshi Stadium

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 11: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, Tuesday visited Bakshi Stadium, Srinagar, to inspect the ongoing preparations for the Independence Day celebrations at the venue.

During the inspection, the Divisional Commissioner, as per an official statement, took stock of various arrangements, including seating arrangements, functioning of the Public Address System, overhead covering of the stands and adherence to protocol during the signing of the National Song followed by the National Anthem.

The Div Com directed the concerned officers to ensure complete preparedness of contingents from schools, colleges and the Sports Council, besides ensuring their enthusiastic participation in the ceremonial proceedings.

In view of the possibility of rainfall, the Divisional Commissioner directed the Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), to ensure that an effective dewatering mechanism is put in place and that the Fire & Emergency dewatering pump remains operational at the venue.

He further directed the concerned agencies to ensure proper floral decoration of the podium and operational readiness of all seven LED screens installed at the stadium. The Divisional



Commissioner stressed upon all concerned departments to maintain close coordination and ensure that all arrangements are completed well in advance for the smooth and successful conduct of the Independence Day celebrations.

The Div Com was accompanied by the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Commissioner SMC, ADC Srinagar, Joint Director

Information and senior officers from various departments, including R&B, PHE, School Education, Higher Education, Fire & Emergency, Hospitality & Protocol, KPDCL, UEED, YSS and other concerned departments.

Besides, IGP Kashmir and other senior officers of Police & Security agencies were also present on the occasion.

Heritage Preservation, Conservation Scheme

DC Srinagar inspects renovation,
upgradation works of Khankah-
e-Naqshband Sahib Shrine



KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 11: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo on Tuesday visited Khankah-e-Naqshband Sahib (RA) at Khwaja Bazar, Nowhatta to review and finalize arrangements for the upcoming Urs.

He also conducted an on-site inspection of the ongoing renovation and upgradation works at the shrine being executed under the Heritage Preservation & Conservation Scheme of the Government.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner, as per an official statement, was accompanied by the Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, IAS Probationer, Alfred Thomas, Joint Commissioner SMC, Nuzhat Qureshi, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Superintending Engineer, R&B, Circle North, Shabir Ahmad, Tehsildar Khan-yar, Syed Shahid, Executive Engineers of R&B, PHE, PDD, Officers of Archives & Archaeology, Fire & Emergency and other concerned Departments.

On the occasion, the DC also held a joint interactive meeting with members of the Shrine Management and Officers of the District Administration present on the occasion. He took stock of the facilities and arrangements required for devotees

expected to visit the shrine during the Urs and directed the concerned Officers to ensure that all necessary arrangements are put in place well in advance.

The DC emphasized coordinated efforts by all line department to ensure better facilities for the devotees during Urs days including uninterrupted power and water supply, sanitation measures, transportation parking facilities.

During the visit, the DC also inspected the progress of the ongoing revival, restoration and conservation works being carried out at the shrine under heritage conservation project.

On the occasion, the DC directed the concerned Officers to further accelerate the pace of work and ensure the time-bound completion of the project while maintaining the prescribed quality standards and adhering to the conservation norms. He was informed that the project encompasses comprehensive structural conservation while retaining the original exterior character of the shrine, restoration of its traditional wooden architecture and intricate ornamentation, conservation of wooden elements on the exterior façade, besides installation of a traditional Khatamband ceiling with exquisite papier-mache work in the Central Hall.

Har Ghar Tiranga

DC, SSP lead Mega Tiranga Rally at
Iconic Vibrant Village Teetwal

KT News Desk

KUPWARA, AUGUST 11: A grand Tiranga Rally was organised Tuesday at the iconic Vibrant Village Teetwal, Karnah, as part of the nationwide Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign being observed from 9th to 17th August 2026, aimed at reinforcing patriotic fervour and public participation in the celebration of the National Flag.

The rally was flagged off by Deputy

Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Suse and SSP Kupwara, Tahir Gilani from HS Gundi Sharti, culminating at Teetwal ground with enthusiastic participation from students of various schools, ex-servicemen, Lumberdars, officials, and local residents. A large number of students, as per an official statement, participated in the rally, carrying the Tricolour and showcasing their patriotism, unity, and respect for the National Flag.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER

PLANNING AND PUBLICITY DIVISION SRINAGAR

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE

e-NIT NO: 05 of 2026-27 DATED: 11-08-2026

For and on behalf of the Hon'ble President of India, e-tenders (Two cover system) are invited from registered, reputed and resourceful Contractors/Firms registered with Jammu & Kashmir Govt./Central Govt. Organizations for the following works:

S.No.	Name of Work	Adv. cost (Rs. in Lakh)	Bid Security (EMD) INR (Rs.)	Class of Contractor	Cost of Tender Document (Rs)	Time of Completion
	Rasing of Medicinal plants/Rhizomes of different species in Poshkar Nursery and construction of inspection path 1.5 Mtrs wide with standard specification	4.232	8500	"D" & Forest Territorial Contractor	200.00	60 days

The position of codal formalities in respect of above work(s) is as under:

Sno	Particulars	Remarks
a.	Scheme	CAPEX
b.	Position of Funds	Budgeted
c.	Position of AA	Accorded vide No: CFC/Plg/AA/TS/Plg/2026/75-78DT.09-07-2026

The e-NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, scope of work, Bills of Quantities, (B.O.Q), Terms & Conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the website www.jktenders.gov.in.

Publishing Date:	11-08-2026
Download Start Date:	12-08-2026 from 06:00 p.m
Bid submission Start Date:	12-08-2026 from 06:00 p.m
Bid submission End Date:	21-08-2026 upto 06:00 p.m
Date of Opening of Technical Bid through online:	22-08-2026 at 01.30 p.m (In the office of Divisional Forest Officer, Planning and Publicity Division Kashmir at Sheikh Bagh Srinagar).
Date of Opening of Financial Bid through online:	To be opened (Online) after technical evaluation is completed.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

1. The bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the website: <https://jktenders.gov.in>.

2. In pursuance to Finance Department Circular instructions vide No. FD-Code/290/2026 Dated: 22-05-2026 to implement on-line system for depositing Bid security (EMD) and Tender Fee across all works Departments. The Bidders shall deposit the EMD, IT Service Charges & Tender Fee in the Centralized Pooling Bank Account of this Department. The details of the Accounts are as.

Account: Principal Chief Conservator Forests

Name of the Bank: Jammu and Kashmir Bank.

Branch : Civil Secretariat

IFSC Code : JAKA0MOVING

Account No : 0110010200001102

3. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 30 days from the date of opening of bids.

4. The bidders have to submit their Technical & Financial bids online in electronic format with digital signature. No Technical or financial bid shall be accepted in physical/hard form. Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned above.

5. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copies of all necessary documents i.e., Bid Security (EMD) and Tender Fee, Valid Registration Card issued by PWD/CPWD/Forest Territorial Department/duly renewed for the current year 2026-27, PAN, Valid GST Registration, Affidavit cum undertaking.

6. As per rule 171 of GFR-2017, Performance Security shall have to be deposited by successful bidder to the order of 3% of the value of contract and if there are compelling circumstances, performance security in excess of three percent may also be demanded.

7. In case bid of the lowest bidder /successful bidder is found abnormal low Bids (ALBS) the circular instructions issued by Finance Department J&K vide No. FD-Code/441/2021-02-158 Dated:- 08-08-2025 will be imposed on the lowest bidder.

8. The Department will not be responsible for any delay in online submission of the bid due to any reason (technical or otherwise).

9. The Department shall not be held responsible for selection criteria/policy matter being adopted by the Directorate of Information regarding publishing the NIT, in any of the newspaper under circulation.

10. The Tender Accepting Authority reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

11. All other terms and conditions shall remain same as per PWD form 25 (double leaf) and as per the Detailed Tender document.

Abid Ali Lone , SFS

Divisional Forest Officer,

Planning & Publicity Division

Srinagar

DIPK-4445/26

DATED: 11-08-2026

No. DFO/P&P/NIT-05/2026-27/332-37

Dated: 11-08-2026.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR (U T)

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

MECHANICAL & HOSPITALS DIVISION HANDWARA

MECHANICAL & HOSPITALS ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, KASHMIR.

email: xenmhd-handwara@jk.gov.in

CORRIGENDUM 01 (EXTENSION)

Name of work:- Annual Operation and Comprehensive Maintenance of Oxygen Generation Plant at SDH Gurez for the year 2026-27.

Reference: 1) e-NIT No: - MHDH/TS/2026-27/e NIT/41

Tender ID No.: 2026_PWDJK_319432_1

Due to no response, the Critical dates of above referred NIT are hereby rescheduled as under.

S. No.	Description	Date & Time
1	Document Submission End Date	18/08/2026 up to 1400hrs
2.	Date of Opening Cover-I	18/08/2026 at 1600hrs

All other terms, conditions and specifications of the NITs shall remain unchanged.

Sd/-

Executive Engineer

Mechanical & Hospitals Division

Handwara

DIPK-4434/26

DATED: 11-08-2026

No: MHDH/TS/1465-68 Date:-11/08/2026.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

DIRECTORATE OF AGRICULTURE

KASHMIR

EXTENSION NOTICE

Subject: Extension of Date for Expression of Interest (EOI) for Procurement of Quality Saffron Corms.

Reference: This office EOI Notification No.: Agri/Accts/2026-27/1706-10, Dated: 01.08.2026.

Due to poor response received till the original closing date of 08.08.2026, the last date for the submission of applications for the Expression of Interest (EOI) regarding the procurement of quality, disease-free saffron (Crocus sativus L.) corms is hereby extended.

Interested and eligible entities, including Individual Farmers, Registered Nurseries, Farmer-Producer Organisations (FPOs), Cooperative Societies, and other eligible parties, may now submit their applications along with the requisite documents on or before the extended deadline of 17.08.2026.

All other eligibility conditions, technical specifications, inspection checklists, and evaluation criteria as outlined in the original EOI Notification No. Agri/Accts/2026-27/1706-10 dated 01.08.2026 shall remain unchanged.

Sd/-

(Ishtiyaq Ahmad Khan)

Accounts Officer

Directorate of Agriculture

DIPK-4418/26

DATED: 11-08-2026

Macadamisation works resume in Srinagar

Pace to pick up after Aug 15

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Aug 11: President of Hot Mix Plant Owners Association (HMPO) Kashmir Bashir Ahmad Khan on Tuesday said that macadamisation works have resumed in Srinagar and other parts of Kashmir with the pace expected to pick up further after August 15.

Khan said the work has started in the summer capital, though it is currently progressing at a slow pace. "We hope the speed will increase in the coming days and will pick up further after August 15," he said.

Khan said the recent meeting with Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and other officials was fruitful, adding that the association hopes the assurances given by the government will be adhered to.



"Some issues are still pending and we hope those will also be addressed. Once these issues are resolved, the work will be expedited after August 15," he said.

An official from R&B told KNO that all approved macadamisation works have already been tendered and allotted. "The macadamisation has commenced in many areas of the Valley and is expected

to be substantially completed within the next month, subject to weather conditions and availability of funds," he said.

Pertinently, the macadamisation process had remained affected amid differences between contractors and hot mix plant owners over issues including pending payments, cost escalation and other matters—(KNO)

Repora rides the grape wave

Emerges as Kashmir's 'Grape Village'

Raja Syed Rather

Ganderbal, Aug 11: Repora village in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district has emerged as a prominent grape-growing hub, with the traditional crop supporting the livelihoods of a large section of the local population.

Located in the Lar area, Repora is popularly known as the 'Grape Village' and is renowned for producing varieties including Sahibi, Hussaini and Thomson. The village witnesses a significant influx of visitors during the harvesting season, with people arriving to see the vineyards and purchase fresh grapes.

Ganderbal is among Jammu and Kashmir's leading grape-producing districts, with around 206 hectares under grape cultivation and an estimated annual production of nearly 1,500 metric tonnes, according to official figures. The produce is supplied to local markets as well as markets outside Jammu and Kashmir. Repora alone has around 80-90 hectares under grape cultivation, according to



growers, making it one of the key grape-producing areas of the district. Farmers said the crop has become an important source of livelihood, with a large majority of households in the village associated with grape cultivation.

The harvesting season generally begins in August and continues through September, providing seasonal employment and income opportunities to hundreds of people, particularly during the

peak harvesting period.

Farmers and horticulture experts said the timing of Repora's grape crop gives it a distinct market advantage, as the grapes become ready for harvesting at a period when fresh grapes are relatively scarce in several international markets.

Experts also highlighted the size and quality of the grapes produced in the area. While a berry size of around 4-5 grams is generally

considered a benchmark for premium-quality grapes, some Repora grapes reportedly reach around 12.5 grams. Among the varieties cultivated, Sahibi and Hussaini are particularly popular and fetch good prices in the market. The tradition of grape cultivation in Repora, according to local growers, dates back to the period of Maharaja Hari Singh.

Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in

From the Parliament

174 textile MSMEs shut down in J&K



Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Aug 11: As many as 174 textile-sector MSME units in Jammu and Kashmir were reported to have shut down between April 1, 2023 and March 31, 2026, affecting 886 workers, while six such units were reported closed in Ladakh, impacting 27 workers, the Lok Sabha was informed on Tuesday.

Minister of State for Textiles Pabitra Margherita gave the information in a written reply to Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 3864, raised by Mohibbullah, who sought details of textile and ready-made garment exports, the impact of rising input costs and global demand slowdown, closure of textile MSMEs, funds under textile cluster development schemes and measures being taken to improve exports and support the industry. According to the Ministry of Textiles, 7,894 textile MSME units across the

country were reported to have shut down during the three-year period from April 2023 to March 2026.

The Ministry said 24,73,634 textile-sector MSMEs were registered on the Udyam Portal during the same period, while a total of 36,00,012 textile MSMEs were registered and active on the portal as on March 31, 2026.

The reported closures constituted around 0.32 per cent of the total textile MSMEs registered during the last three years, the Ministry said.

As per the State/UT-wise data, Jammu and Kashmir recorded 174 textile MSME closures with employment of 886, while Ladakh recorded six closures involving 27 workers during the period under review.

Rs 35.73 cr released for J&K textile park
The Centre also informed the House that under the Scheme for Integrated Textile Park (SITP), a component of the Textile

Cluster Development Scheme, a project in J&K was approved at Rs 39.70 crore, against which Rs 35.73 crore of the Government of India share was released and utilised.

The Ministry said the SITP was implemented to help the Indian textile industry become globally competitive through environmentally friendly processing standards and technology. The scheme has now been subsumed under the Textile Cluster Development Scheme for completion of ongoing projects.

Textile exports rise

The Ministry said India's exports of textiles and apparel, including handicrafts, increased from Rs 2,49,250 crore in 2019-20 to Rs 3,25,339 crore in 2025-26, registering a compound annual growth rate of about 4.5 per cent during the period.

It said textile and ready-made garments, including handicrafts, were exported from 548 districts across the country during 2025-26. The government has taken several measures to support the sector, including temporary exemption from customs duty on cotton imports from June 1 to October 31, 2026, exemption from customs duties on key inputs in the man-made fibre value chain and rationalisation of GST rates in the MMF value chain.

The Ministry further said various schemes, including PM MITRA Parks, Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Textiles, National Technical Textiles Mission and SAMARTH, are being implemented to strengthen the competitiveness of the textile and apparel sector and support MSMEs—(KNO)

J&K gets Rs 261.87 Cr under PMGSY in 2025-26

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Aug 11: Jammu and Kashmir received Rs 261.87 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) during 2025-26, while an expenditure of Rs 420.50 crore, including the State share, was incurred under the programme, the Union Government informed the Lok Sabha on Tuesday.

The information was provided by Minister of State in the Ministry of Rural Development Kamlesh Paswan in a written reply to an Unstarred Question raised by Atul Garg, Dr D. Purandeswari, Dr Lata Wankhede, Arun Bharti, Shambhavi and Rajesh Verma. As per the reply, a total of 2,132 rural habitations in Jammu and Kashmir have been provided all-weather road connectivity under PMGSY. Ladakh has recorded connectivity to 64 habitations.

The Ministry stated that PMGSY-III, launched in 2019, focuses on consolidation

of existing rural roads and improving connectivity to key socio-economic growth centres, including Gramin Agricultural Markets, schools and hospitals.

At the national level, PMGSY-III has facilitated connectivity to over 6.96 lakh socio-economic facilities, including 1.38 lakh agricultural markets, 1.46 lakh educational institutions and 82,806 medical facilities, the reply stated.

The government further informed the House that independent National Quality Monitors (NQMs) conduct quality inspections of PMGSY road works. Works requiring improvement or rectification are graded as "Unsatisfactory", while State governments are required to ensure that identified defects are rectified through contractors before final bill clearance.

On maintenance, the Ministry said PMGSY construction contracts carry a mandatory five-year Defect Liability Period, during which the same contractor

remains responsible for routine maintenance and keeping the road and associated structures in serviceable condition.

Maintenance during the five-year period is monitored through eMARG (Electronic Maintenance of Rural Roads) on performance-based maintenance principles. The government said maintenance payments are linked to performance evaluation, and where the performance score is below 80 per cent, payment is not released.

The reply also stated that a Post-DLP module of eMARG has been introduced to monitor maintenance beyond the initial five-year period, with provisions for performance-based maintenance, performance security and recovery or penalties in cases where contractors fail to undertake stipulated maintenance.

The details were furnished in response to Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 3730, answered on August 11, 2026—(KNO)

Centre allocates Rs 980 Cr to J&K under PMGSY

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Aug 11: The Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory has received significant financial support under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), with the Centre allocating Rs 980 crore for the current financial year 2026-27, the Lok Sabha was informed on Tuesday.

Minister of State for Rural Development Kamlesh Paswan gave the information in reply to Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 3839, raised by June Maliah and Shafi Parambil, who sought details of roads sanctioned, completed and under construction under PMGSY, funds allocated, released and utilised, reasons for delays and measures taken to ensure timely completion of pending projects.

As per the reply, J&K had an indicative allocation of Rs

948 crore in 2021-22, against which Rs 1,328.34 crore was released and Rs 1,485.28 crore utilised, including the Union Territory's share.

In 2022-23, the indicative allocation for J&K stood at Rs 1,450 crore, with Rs 717 crore released and Rs 1,114.78 crore utilised. In 2023-24, Rs 1,450 crore was allocated, Rs 1,304.17 crore released and Rs 1,256.96 crore utilised. During 2024-25, J&K had an indicative allocation of Rs 1,400 crore, while Rs 1,028.25 crore was released and Rs 1,070.65 crore utilised.

In 2025-26, the indicative allocation stood at Rs 998 crore, against which Rs 261.87 crore was released and Rs 420.50 crore utilised.

For 2026-27, the indicative allocation for J&K is Rs 980 crore. As on August 6, 2026, Rs 214.01 crore had been

released, while expenditure stood at Rs 237.79 crore.

At the national level, the Ministry said that from 2021-22 till August 6, 2026, a total of 18,807 road works covering 98,505 km and 3,661 bridges had been sanctioned under various PMGSY verticals.

During the same period, 23,247 road works covering 1,34,751 km and 5,287 bridges were completed, while 12,447 road works covering 41,368 km and 1,775 bridges were at various stages of construction as on August 6, 2026.

The Ministry clarified that PMGSY funds are released to States and UTs as a whole and not district-wise. Funds are released based on works in hand, progress achieved and submission of necessary documents through the SNA SPARSH system.

Continued on
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Women representatives from J&K, Ladakh trained under RGSA

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Aug 11: The Centre on Tuesday informed the Lok Sabha that 23,83,765 Women Elected Representatives (WERs) were trained under the revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) during the last three financial years from 2023-24 to 2025-26, with Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh also covered under the capacity-building programme.

The information, was given by Union Minister of Panchayati Raj Rajiv Ranjan Murmu and Dr Rajesh Mishra regarding measures taken to strengthen the participation, leadership capacity and effective functioning of women representatives in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).

According to the statement laid before the House, 1,75,168

Women Elected Representatives from Jammu and Kashmir were provided training under the revamped RGSA during 2022-23 and 2023-24, with 1,07,089 trained in 2022-23 and 68,072 in 2023-24. The data shows seven representatives trained in 2024-25, while no training figure has been recorded for J&K for 2025-26 and 2026-27 up to July 10, 2026.

For Ladakh, the government data shows that 27 Women Elected Representatives were trained during 2025-26 under the revamped RGSA. No beneficiaries were recorded for Ladakh during 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25 or 2026-27 up to July 10, 2026.

The minister said strengthening Panchayati Raj capacity is primarily the responsibility of States and Union Territories as Panchayats are a State subject. However, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj is implementing

the revamped RGSA from 2022-23 to support PRIs and provide training to elected representatives, including women representatives, through induction, refresher and theme-based Panchayat Development Plan training.

On funding, the Centre stated that Rs 65 crore was released to Jammu and Kashmir in each of 2023-24 and 2024-25, while Rs 57 crore was released during 2025-26. The corresponding utilisation was Rs 98.61 crore, Rs 57.89 crore and Rs 78.99 crore respectively.

For Ladakh, Rs 1 crore was released in 2023-24, with utilisation of Rs 0.80 crore; no central share was released in 2024-25, while Rs 0.72 crore was released in 2025-26. The utilisation figures for the three years stood at Rs 0.80 crore, Rs 0.58 crore and Rs 0.92 crore respectively.

The government further

informed the House that an external evaluation of the overall revamped RGSA was undertaken through the Institute of Rural Management, Anand (IRMA). However, no independent review has been conducted specifically on programmes aimed at strengthening the leadership and participation of Women Elected Representatives, as Panchayat is a State subject.

To promote women-led governance, the Ministry launched the Sashakt Panchayat Netri Abhiyan during a national workshop held in New Delhi on March 4-5, 2025. The campaign includes recognition of exemplary women Panchayat leaders and a specialised training module aimed at strengthening leadership skills and empowering women representatives as agents of change in grassroots democracy.

Continued on
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EDITORIAL

A Celebration Of Unity And Pride

The annual 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign has evolved into a powerful movement that unites the nation in a shared expression of pride and patriotism. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call to citizens to participate enthusiastically in this campaign reminds us that the national flag is the embodiment of our collective identity, our struggles, and our aspirations. This year's campaign carries added significance as it coincides with the 150th anniversary of 'Vande Mataram,' the national

song that stirred the soul of a nation during its freedom struggle. The combination of the Tricolour in every home and the resonance of 'Vande Mataram' creates a moment of reflection and renewal, reminding us of the sacrifices that made our freedom possible and the responsibilities that freedom demands. What makes the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign truly remarkable is its scale and inclusivity. Across Jammu and Kashmir, citizens from all walks of life have come together to hoist

the flag and celebrate the spirit of the nation. Students, teachers, government employees, security forces, and ordinary citizens have participated in rallies, cultural programmes, and awareness drives, creating a wave of patriotic enthusiasm that transcends all boundaries. The campaign is a reminder that the Tricolour belongs to every citizen, regardless of religion, region, or language. It is a symbol of our unity in diversity, a promise that we will stand together as one nation. We are all

stakeholders in the future of India, and we all have a role to play in building a Viksit Bharat. As the campaign continues across the country, it serves as an opportunity for every citizen to reflect on what it means to be Indian. The Tricolour in every home is a symbol of our shared identity and our collective responsibility to uphold the values of justice, equality, and freedom. Let us hoist the flag with pride and renew our commitment to the nation.

From Queues To Clicks: Four Decades Of Passenger Reservation In Indian Railways

Press Information Bureau

From queues to clicks, Indian Railways has transformed passenger reservations. Today, technology powers one of the world's largest public reservation systems. Continuous modernisation has made bookings faster and more reliable. The modernised Passenger Reservation System is creating a smarter and more seamless travel experience.

The Backbone of Railway Reservations
Every day, Indian Railways (IR) connects millions of travellers across one of the world's largest rail networks. Whether travelling for work, education, healthcare, business or family, passengers depend on a reliable reservation ecosystem to plan their journeys. Behind every reserved ticket is the Passenger Reservation System (PRS), the technology-enabled backbone of railway bookings for nearly four decades. Introduced in 1986, PRS has evolved from replacing manual reservation counters to supporting online and mobile ticket booking.

As user volumes and online adoption have grown, so have expectations for faster, more reliable and seamless booking facilities. Peak booking periods, particularly during tatkal reservations, witness massive demand, increasing pressure on infrastructure originally designed for a different era. To meet these changing needs, Indian Railways is undertaking a comprehensive modernisation of the PRS. The new PRS will enhance booking capacity, introduce passenger-centric features and create a resilient online infrastructure.

Four Decades of Passenger Reservation System

The PRS is the computerised platform that manages reserved ticketing across the Indian Railways network. It enables commuters to book, modify and cancel reserved tickets. It also manages seat allocation, waitlists, Reservation Against Cancellation (RAC), reservation charts and passenger enquiries. By connecting reservation centres and online booking channels, the PRS has made railway reservations more efficient, transparent and accessible.

PRS replaced manual reservation registers and counter-based booking with an electronic setup. As the railway network expanded, the PRS evolved into a nationwide reservation platform through the Countrywide Network for Computerised Enhanced Reservation and Ticketing (CONCERT). This enabled passengers to book tickets for trains across the country from any connected reservation centre, irrespective of the train's origin or destination. Over time, booking channels expanded beyond reservation counters to websites and mobile applications. Today, passengers access PRS online through the Indian Railway Catering



and Tourism Corporation's (IRCTC) website and mobile application, enabling reserved ticket booking from anywhere.

Key Milestones in the Evolution of PRS
The evolution of the Passenger Reservation System spans nearly four decades. In 1986, PRS was introduced, marking the beginning of computerised railway reservations in India. During the 1990s, the PRS network expanded across railway zones, enabling reservations through an interconnected nationwide network. In 2002, internet-based ticket booking was introduced, extending reservation services beyond physical counters. In 2014, the Next Generation e-Ticketing (NGeT) system was launched to improve online booking capacity and passenger experience. In 2025, the RailOne app was launched, and the government announced the development of a next-generation PRS with significantly enhanced booking and enquiry capacity. In August 2026, the phased migration of trains to the upgraded PRS began, marking a new phase in the digital transformation of railway reservations. These initiatives improved transparency and operational efficiency.

PRS: A Digital Platform at Scale
During June 2025 and June 2026, passengers booked 65.08 crore reserved tickets through PRS. Of these, 57.90 crore tickets, representing 89 per cent, were booked online, reflecting the rapid adoption of digital services by rail travellers.

At present, the PRS is one of the world's largest online railways booking platforms. It was developed and is maintained by the Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS). It serves over 20.5 lakh passengers every day through multiple booking channels. Around 73 per cent of PRS transactions are

cashless. PRS has evolved into one of India's largest public-facing online platforms.

Meeting the Needs of Digital India
To meet growing demand, Indian Railways requires a booking system capable of handling higher transaction volumes while delivering faster, more reliable, and more secure services.

To strengthen the reservation ecosystem, Indian Railways introduced several passenger-centric reforms. The Advance Reservation Period (ARP) was reduced from 120 days to 60 days to better align with passenger booking patterns. Aadhaar-authenticated Tatkal booking was introduced in July 2025 to improve fairness and transparency, with OTP-based verification added later to curb misuse by automated bots and unauthorised agents.

The existing PRS, deployed in 2010 on Itanium servers and the OpenVMS platform, was designed for a different scale of digital demand. It is now being upgraded to a cloud-enabled, next-generation reservation system. The upgraded PRS will deliver over 1.5 lakh ticket bookings per minute, compared to 32,000 under the existing setup, and over 40 lakh enquiries per minute, up from 4 lakh currently. It will also feature a multilingual, user-friendly interface for booking and enquiries, along with greater scalability, flexibility and reliability to support future passenger demand.

Passenger facilities are also being strengthened through a redesigned IRCTC website. The beta version, launched in July 2026, features a simplified interface, fewer booking steps and seat availability across all classes. The new portal will be integrated with the next-generation PRS, creating a smoother booking experience.

Beyond railway ticketing, IRCTC also offers travel-related services through its tourism platform, including hotel bookings, retiring rooms, lounge bookings, tour packages, flight tickets and bus tickets.

CRIS: Institution Driving Railway Technology

Established in 1986, the Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS) designs, develops and maintains the IT infrastructure for Indian Railways. Over nearly four decades, CRIS has expanded from computerising railway bookings to developing integrated digital platforms. Currently, its solutions support millions of passengers and railway personnel every day.

Passenger-Centric Digital Services
CRIS has developed several platforms, including PRS, that have transformed how passengers interact with Indian Railways. The Unreserved Ticketing System (UTS) supports paperless and mobile ticketing for unreserved travel. The National Train Enquiry System (NTES) provides real-time train running status, schedules and arrival or departure information. RailConnect, introduced in 2017, brought PRS services to smartphones, enabling online ticket booking, ticket cancellation and PNR enquiries. RailOne, launched in July 2025, is an integrated mobile application that combines multiple functions into a unified interface. The application has recorded over 4.55 crore downloads across Android and iOS devices as of 22nd July and is currently facilitating around 9.65 lakh ticket bookings every day. One of its latest features is AI-based waitlist confirmation prediction, which estimates the likelihood of a waitlisted ticket being confirmed before the journey. The prediction accuracy has

improved from 53% to 94%, helping passengers make more informed travel decisions.

RailMadad provides an integrated platform for passenger grievances, feedback and service requests, with automated complaint assignment and auto-escalation for timely redressal. The platform resolved 99.98 per cent of grievances in 2023-2024, 99.99 per cent in 2024-2025, and 99.98 per cent in 2025-2026. CoachMitra helps passengers request onboard facilities such as housekeeping and assistance during their journey. Rail Sugam provides information on railway services, freight and passenger-related facilities, while Rail Rajbhasha supports the use of Hindi in railway administration through digital tools.

Technology Supporting Railway Operations

Beyond passenger services, CRIS has developed digital systems that improve railway efficiency. The Freight Operations Information System (FOIS) digitises freight movement, wagon management and logistics planning. The Crew Management System (CMS) streamlines crew scheduling, deployment and monitoring. eDrishti provides dashboards for monitoring railway performance and operational indicators. Aaporti digitises procurement and tender management processes. Chalak Dal and Hand-Held Terminals support field operations, inspections and real-time monitoring.

Adopting Emerging Technologies

CRIS continues to modernise railway technology through advanced digital solutions. It is adopting Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Big Data Analytics and Cloud Computing, along with Blockchain, the Internet of Things (IoT) and Augmented/Virtual Reality (AR/VR) across railway applications. These technologies are being used to predict train delays and waitlist confirmation, optimise train routes and timetables, forecast energy consumption, enable predictive maintenance of railway assets, and improve planning and operational decision-making.

The next-generation PRS builds on this technological foundation. It combines cloud-enabled infrastructure with advanced digital technologies to create a faster, smarter and more scalable reservation platform.

A Future Ready Reservation Ecosystem
The Passenger Reservation System reflects the digital transformation of Indian Railways over nearly four decades. Today, it is a trusted reservation platform used by millions of travellers across the country. The next-generation PRS builds on this strong foundation. Together, these will deliver faster, more reliable and more seamless railway offerings. As passenger needs continue to evolve, Indian Railways is building a future-ready reservation ecosystem.

India's Cotton Story: From White Gold To Productivity Leap

Press Information Bureau

66-year-old Vinodbhai Virjibhai Vadodriya, a farmer living in Gujarat's Rajkot, has been producing cotton throughout his life. Often the changing temperatures and plant diseases forced him to bear heavy losses. When he was introduced to the High-Density Planting System, he implemented this system in his field. The outcome surprised him. He produced 15 quintals of cotton per acre, a jump of 30-35 percent over his previous produce using the old method.

In the previous agriculture year, instead of the usual 135 cm by 45 cm spacing, Vadodriya packed his plants closer, at 90 cm by 15 cm.

Vinodbhai Virjibhai Vadodriya, a cotton grower from Gujarat's Rajkot

Vinodbhai says he was informed that he should harvest earlier, which meant less damage from the pink bollworm, one of cotton's most stubborn pests. Most of the farmers in the neighbourhood noticed the change in the outcome and they also

decided to follow suit.

Bhaskar Tapiram Chaudhary, a cotton farmer from Jalgaon district, Maharashtra Six hundred kilometres away, in Maharashtra's Jalgaon, Bhaskar Tapiram Chaudhary was also introduced to the High-Density Planting System, in 2025. Bhaskar, who is in his 50s, remembers how he was initially reluctant to switch to closer spacing, because that was not his usual method. However, he went on, cleaned up his fertilizer use, and managed pests and nutrients carefully.

The results also surprised him. His yield rose from 8 quintals an acre to 11 (37.5 % rise), despite a dry spell that would normally have hurt his crop.

The improved produce of thousands of farmers indicated how India's cotton policy: small, practical changes in farming technique, backed by government support, is producing significant outcomes.

And likely so, India's cotton sector remains in need of reforms.

According to official statistics, India has more land under cotton cultivation than anyone else globally. The country, at

present, has 114.84 lakh hectares, about 38 percent of the world's cotton area.

India is the only country wherein all four known cotton species are cultivated.

The industry is so widespread that at least 6 million farmers grow cotton here, and almost 40-50 million people earn a living from processing and trading it. That is why cotton is "White Gold" for most Indians.

Despite its critical importance, India ranks only second in actual production, behind its massive acreage lead.

In 2025-2026, output stood at 290.91 lakh bales, while domestic demand ran higher, at 328 lakh bales. The reason behind this gap is that India's fields simply have not been able to produce as much cotton per acre as compared to Brazil and the US.

However, the farmers of Rajkot and Jalgaon have shown that this gap can be altered using basic and modern methods.

What is the government doing to fix it?

In the recent past, the central government has responded with a mix of price support and productivity push. The Minimum Support Price for 2026-27 was raised to INR

8,267 per quintal for medium-staple cotton and INR 8,667 for long-staple (an increase of INR 557 over the previous year).

The Cotton Corporation of India expanded its procurement network from 508 centres to 571, now covering 152 districts, and bought 105.09 lakh bales worth INR 41,530 crore this season alone.

On the productivity side, a five-year Mission for Cotton Productivity was launched in 2025-26 with INR 5,659 crore allocated for it, aiming to nearly double output — from 297 lakh bales to 498 lakh bales by 2031. It will reach 32 lakh farmers across 140 districts.

The High-Density and Closer Spacing planting systems, the very techniques that worked for farmer Vinodbhai and Bhaskar, are central to this new change. Field trials have already recorded yield gains of roughly 40 percent under high-density planting and over 32 percent under closer spacing.

Technological intervention has also made it easier for farmers. As per records, Kapas Kisan app now has over 41 lakh farmers registered, letting them book procurement slots, get Aadhaar-linked payments, and

track updates by SMS — turning what used to be long queues into a paperless process.

And there's a quieter, longer-term bet: Kasturi Cotton Bharat, a branding and traceability programme using QR codes and blockchain to certify premium Indian cotton for global buyers.

Estimates suggest that over 3.29 lakh bales have been certified so far, a small start toward positioning Indian cotton as a mark of quality abroad rather than just a cheap bulk export.

The future ahead

There is a lot that needs to be taken into consideration before we expect greater outcomes. It's spacing between plants, apps for slot booking, QR codes on bales. India's cotton sector doesn't need a revolution — it needs to replicate what farmers in Rajkot and Jalgaon have done and the process needs to be replicated across millions of acres.

To summarise, if the Mission for Cotton Productivity delivers even a fraction of its 2031 target, India won't just grow the most cotton land in the world. It will finally grow enough cotton to match it.

The views expressed by contributors on this page are their own and do not necessarily reflect the policies or positions of the newspaper

Welfare of people can be ensured through collective responsibility, concerted action: Javed Rana

» Reviews water supply, irrigation, forest, tribal issues of Khanyar, Hazratbal constituencies

» Announces Rs 1 Cr for water reservoir at Sulaiman Teng, Dalgate

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 11: In a move aimed at addressing the constituency-specific issues and strengthening coordination among the key departments, Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, Tuesday convened a meeting to take up issues related to water supply, irrigation, environment, forests and tribal affairs in Khanyar and Hazratbal Assembly constituencies.

Besides MLA Khanyar, Ali Muhammad Sagar, MLA Hazratbal Salman Ali Sagar, the meeting was attended by Chief Conservator of Forests, Kashmir; Director Tribal Affairs, J&K; Chief Engineers of Jal Shakti/Irrigation & Flood Control, Kashmir; Superintendent Engineer, Hydraulic, Srinagar, Wildlife Warden, Central Srinagar; Divisional Forest Officer, SMC/Social Forestry, Srinagar; Executive Engineers, Ground Water/Master Plan/Jal Shakti, Srinagar/Ganderbal and Executive Engineers, Irrigation & Flood Control, Srinagar/Ganderbal.

The meeting took stock of water supply, irrigation, source augmentation, distribution networks and groundwater management, with focus on resolving bottlenecks affecting the ongoing and proposed projects in the two constituencies.

During the meeting, the Minister announced an



allocation of Rs 1 crore for up-grading the existing water supply infrastructure through construction of an additional water reservoir at Sulaiman Teng, Dalgate, aimed at augmenting the water supply network and meeting the requirements of the adjoining areas.

Emphasising the need to strengthen water infrastructure in densely populated areas, Rana directed the Jal Shakti Department to work out the necessary modalities and take up the project on priority.

Reviewing the Tulpathri Water Supply Scheme, the Minister called for early resolution of pending issues with the Forest Department to facilitate further progress. He also took up matters concerning

the Sindh Extension (SE) and Mawas Canals, directing necessary measures for its restoration and improvement to ensure uninterrupted water and irrigation supply.

Rana stressed the need for comprehensive dredging and desilting of canals facing heavy siltation and reduced carrying capacity, to improve water flow and irrigation potential. He called for timely availability of irrigation water for paddy fields in Hazratbal, with vulnerable areas to be identified in advance to pre-empt shortages during the cultivation season.

The meeting also took up Master Plan-related bottlenecks, CAPEX planning, and expansion of the water distribution network in underserved

areas besides formulation of new water supply, drainage and irrigation projects for deficient pockets, particularly Phaak.

The Minister sought a review of water allocation from the Alusteng and Ringal 5 MGD Water Treatment Plants, seeking clarity on existing allocation and scope for enhancing the share for Hazratbal.

Other issues discussed included a dedicated water supply line along 90 Feet Road, water and irrigation supply at Syedpora Hamchi, the proposed Tailbal OHT and distribution line, and interventions by the Ground Water Wing.

The Minister also reviewed the proposal for augmenting the Rapid Sand Filtration Plant (RSFP) Hadoora source through

two new production wells besides taking up irrigation-related proposals and identifying priority areas for upcoming plans.

Underlining the importance of close coordination between the public representatives and the administration, Rana said that the welfare of the people can be best ensured through collective responsibility and concerted action. "Public representatives play a vital role in bringing ground-level concerns to the for and it is our collective responsibility to ensure that these concerns are addressed effectively. When public representatives and departments work in close coordination, the response becomes more focused, responsive and time-bound, ultimately delivering better results for the people," Javed Rana said.

The residents from the twin constituencies also raised various developmental issues and demands before the Minister and sought his intervention for their early resolution.

The Minister assured that all the identified projects would be taken up in a phased manner with due focus on addressing the pressing developmental needs of the local population.

The meeting also discussed allocation of funds for tribal development in proportion to the tribal population, with emphasis on ensuring equitable distribution of resources and adequate funding for development interventions in tribal areas.

Govt approves Rs 5.78 Cr for restoration, preservation of historic Lah Wali Bowli in Rajouri

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 11: The Government of Jammu & Kashmir has approved 5.78 crore for the comprehensive restoration and preservation of the historic Lah Wali Bowli in Rajouri, marking another significant step towards safeguarding J&K's rich architectural and cultural heritage.

The conservation project, as per an official statement, will focus on restoring the historic stepwell and its architectural features while preserving its cultural character and historical significance. The initiative is also aimed at enhancing the site's tourism potential and creating a heritage attraction for visitors to the district.

The approval forms part of the Government's broader efforts, under the leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, to conserve and revitalise historically and culturally significant sites across Jammu & Kashmir.

In recent months, the Government has approved a series of heritage conservation initiatives covering both Jammu and Kashmir divisions. These include the repair and renovation of the

historic Rattan Garh Fort in Baderwah, Doda; restoration and renovation of Ziyarat Sharief Khiram; repair and renovation of the historic Shiv Mandir at Thajiwara, Bijbehara; and restoration and revival of the historic heritage site of Purmandal in Samba.

Other approved initiatives include the conservation and upgradation of the historic Imambara Zadibal in Srinagar, development of the revered holy spring of Khoo Sahib at Yarwan in Pulwama, restoration of the historic Jamia Masjid Sharief in Shopian, and restoration of the revered Sarvadhara Chaumanda Mata Mandir in Ramban.

The Government's heritage conservation programme seeks to preserve the architectural legacy of Jammu & Kashmir while integrating heritage sites into the region's broader tourism and cultural development framework.

The restoration of Lah Wali Bowli is expected to provide a renewed identity to the historic site in Rajouri, while contributing to local tourism and strengthening efforts to preserve the region's diverse cultural heritage for future generations.

Takeena Itoo inaugurates new GDC Katra building, assures enhanced facilities for students

KT News Desk

REASI, AUGUST 11: Minister for Health & Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Takeena Itoo on Tuesday inaugurated the newly constructed building of Government Degree College Katra at Kakryal, marking a significant step towards strengthening the higher education infrastructure.

The college building was constructed by the J&K Housing Board at a cost of 12.92 lakh.

MLA Katra Baldev Raj Sharma, Director Colleges Dr. Sheikh Ajaz Bashir, Director Health Services Jammu, Principal of the college, faculty members, students and local residents were present on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister, as per an official statement, congratulated the students, faculty members and people of Katra on completion of the new college building. She said that the new facility would provide better infrastructure and quality education to students who were earlier studying in a makeshift arrangement. She credited Chief Minister Omar Abdullah for releasing the necessary funds for the project and appreciated the efforts of the executing agencies, engineers and all other



stakeholders involved in completing the building.

Takeena Itoo announced that a college bus would be sanctioned soon to facilitate the students commuting from distant areas. She also assured that the Commerce stream would be introduced at the college, subject to sufficient student demand. Addressing other demands, she directed the Director Health Services to initiate the process for relocation of Katra Hospital to the Irrigation Department's land and building, subject to the requisite NOC, and assured efforts to provide a fully equipped 108 ambulance for the area.

The Minister highlighted the government's focus on introducing demand-driven courses

in higher educational institutions. She informed that the students belonging to BPL and AAY categories are eligible for fee-waiver benefits for higher education. She urged the local representatives, community leaders, parents and students to encourage greater enrolment in colleges and reiterated the government's commitment to ensure that no student in Jammu and Kashmir is deprived of higher education opportunities.

She also appreciated the role played by MLA Katra Baldev Raj Sharma in pursuing the construction and completion of the college building. She said that the collective efforts of the government, elected representatives, executing agencies and

2-day training for census 2027 phase-II commences in Udhampur

KT News Desk

UDHAMPUR, AUGUST 11: A two-day training programme for District & Charge Level Officers/Officials engaged for Census 2027 Phase-II- the Population Enumeration in snowbound and inaccessible areas, commenced here Tuesday.

The training, as per an official statement, is being conducted under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (Principal Census Officer) Minga Sherpa.

The resource persons from the Directorate of Census Operations J&K, Nimrat Kour - Assistant Director Nodal Officer and District Coordinator Ajit Raj sensitized the District level officers/officials, Sub Divisional Census Officers, Charge Census Officers, Census Clerks and Technical Assistants to their role and

responsibilities.

The officials are being equipped to effectively implement the key concepts of Population Enumeration and use of digital platforms like CMMS PE Modules for the smooth conduct of Census 2027 Phase-II Population enumeration.

Addressing the participants, the Principal Census Officer emphasized the importance of completing the second phase of Census 2027 in snowbound areas within the stipulated time frame. He directed the charge census officers to ensure 100% coverage of the migratory and homeless population, strictly as per the census guidelines. He further directed Charge Officers to keep the provision of reserved Enumerators and Supervisors to meet the need for additional manpower wherever required.

HAR GHAR TIRANGA

Reasi celebrates legacy with mass plantation drive



KT News Desk

REASI, AUGUST 11: As part of the nationwide 'Har Ghar Tiranga-2026' campaign and commemoration of the glorious 150 years of Vande Mataram, the district administration Reasi, in collaboration with the Forest Department, organized a mass plantation drive near the DC Office Complex.

Senior functionaries from Civil and Police administration participated in the drive initiated by Deputy Commissioner Kumar Abhishek by planting a Gulmohar sapling. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Mukund Tibrewal and other district officers were also present.

Around 100 saplings of ornamental and shade-bearing trees, including Gulmohar, Tecoma and Bougainvillea, were planted along the

stretch to enhance the green cover and aesthetic appeal of the area.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of environmental conservation. "Planting trees is only the first step," he said and stressed that it is the collective responsibility of the administration and the public to protect and nurture the saplings into mature trees.

The Deputy Commissioner, as per an official statement, also distributed saplings among participants and local residents to encourage plantation at the household and community levels. Around 200 saplings were distributed during the programme.

ADDC Krishan Lal; ADC Rakesh Kumar; Additional SP Iftikhar Ahmed; DFO Reasi and other district officers were present on the occasion.

Bike, e-rickshaw rally taken out in Doda

KT News Desk

DODA, AUGUST 11: As part of the ongoing Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign-2026 and celebrations commemorating 150 Glorious Years of Vande Mataram, the district administration Doda Tuesday organised a vibrant Bike and e-Rickshaw Tiranga Rally in the town.

The rally, as per an official statement, was flagged off by the Deputy Commissioner Krishan Lal from the DC Office Complex. The Rally drove towards Sports Stadium via Clock Tower, with participants carrying the Tricolour and spreading the message of patriotism, national pride and unity.

The rally witnessed enthusiastic participation from bikers, e-Rickshaw drivers

and officials, creating an atmosphere of patriotic fervour across the town.

The event was organised by the ARTO Tasleem Wani under the overall guidance of ADC Anil Kumar Thakur, Nodal Officer for Tiranga Rally.

ACR Ashraf Parvez; CPO Manesh Kumar; Dy. SP Traffic Shokat Ali; ACD Din Mohammad Afaqi; SHO Tariq Ahmed, besides other officers, officials and staff of Motor Vehicle Department were present on the occasion.

The rally highlighted the spirit of "Har Ghar Tiranga", encouraging citizens to proudly display the National Flag and actively participate in the campaign aimed at strengthening national unity, patriotism and public participation.

Census 2027 Phase-II

Training of enumerators deployed for snow-bound areas begins at Kishtwar

KT News Desk

KISHTWAR, AUGUST 11: District administration Kishtwar, under the leadership of Principal Census Officer/Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma Tuesday launched the training programme for conducting Population Enumeration in the snow-bound areas under the Phase-II of Census 2027.

The training is being imparted to members of the District Coordination Committee, Sub-Divisional Census Officers (SDMs), Charge Officers (Tehsildars/CEO Municipality) and their technical teams.

Addressing the participants, the Principal Census Officer (Deputy Commissioner) emphasised that Phase-II is the main and most crucial exercise of Census 2027. He called upon all officers and officials associated with the process to understand their role, responsibilities and field-level duties before entering the field.

He directed the Charge Officers to ensure complete manpower readiness, including verification of the available Enumerators, Supervisors and reserve personnel to make sure that every Enumeration Block is properly assigned and covered. He also called for special attention to remote and tribal areas, keeping in view the challenging terrain and accessibility issues of the district. Emphasising the importance of technology in the exercise,

he directed the teams to ensure that devices, applications, credentials and all other technical requirements are checked and kept fully functional before field deployment.

The officers were further directed to maintain the accuracy, confidentiality and integrity of Census data in accordance with the prescribed instructions. They were asked to closely monitor the progress on a daily basis and ensure 100 percent coverage within the prescribed timeline, without any compromise on quality.

The Principal Census Officer also highlighted that Kishtwar, with its difficult terrain and far-flung habitations, presents unique logistical challenges. He called for advance planning rather than last-minute arrangements, particularly for difficult areas such as Dachhan, Marwah, Warwan, Paddar and other remote pockets of the district.

He encouraged all officers to work with a sense of responsibility, coordination and commitment so that Kishtwar emerges as a model district in the successful conduct of Census 2027.

The programme was attended by PO ICDS Rishi Kumar Sharma, ACD/ACP Neeraj Sharma, DSEO (ADCO) Suresh Sharma, SDM Dr. Mohd Ashraf, SDM Nayeam ur Rehman, EO MC Mirza Mumtaz Iqbal, Tehsildars, CEO Sanjay Dogra, DIO NIC Faizal Khan besides other officers and concerned officials.

Census 2027 2-day training programme for charge officers for Snow-Bound areas commences in Baramulla

KT News Desk

BARAMULLA, AUGUST 11: A two-day training programme for Charge Officers deputed for conducting the Census 2027 exercise in snow-bound areas of Baramulla district commenced on Tuesday at the Main Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex, Baramulla.

The training programme, as per an official statement, was chaired by Chief Planning Officer (CPO) Baramulla, Nisar Ahmed, and was attended by SDM Uri, Price Kumar, Nodal Officers for Census in Baramulla, charge officers and other concerned officers and officials associated with the census exercise.

The training has been organised with the objective of ensuring comprehensive preparedness among the field functionaries for the smooth and effective conduct of census operations in snow-bound



areas, where challenging terrain, harsh weather conditions and limited accessibility can pose operational difficulties.

During the programme, the participants were provided detailed orientation regarding the various stages of the census exercise, their roles and responsibilities, field-level planning, coordination mechanisms, documentation, reporting procedures and other important aspects to ensure accurate and timely completion of the assigned tasks.

It was informed during the meeting that self-enumeration through the official Census

portal will commence from August 17 and continue till August 31, 2026, providing citizens an opportunity to furnish their household-related information through the designated online platform. This will be followed by door-to-door physical enumeration from September 1 to September 30, 2026 in all identified snow-bound areas of the district.

The Charge Officers were apprised of the importance of effectively facilitating both phases of the exercise and ensuring that the benefits of self-enumeration are communicated widely among the eligible population.

DIPR's Cultural Unit, Field Publicity Unit organise 'Jashn-e-Azadi' progs at GGHSS Kothi Bagh, Zadibal

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Aug 11: The Cultural Unit and Field Publicity Unit of the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) organised vibrant Jashn-e-Azadi programmes at Government Girls Higher Secondary School (GGHSS), Kothi Bagh, and GGHSS Zadibal, as part of the celebrations commemorating the 80th Independence Day.

At GGHSS Kothi Bagh, the highlight of the programme was a patriotic singing competition in which students enthusiastically participated and presented soulful solo and group performances. Through their melodious renditions of patriotic songs, the students expressed their love for the nation and celebrated the spirit of freedom, unity and national pride.

The programme was presided over by Deputy Director Information, Zubair Ahmed Lattoo. Cultural Officer Abdul Raqib Bhat, Field Publicity Officer Shabir Ahmad and Assistant Exhibition and Cultural Officer Syed Shakeel Shan were also present. Principal GGHSS Kothi Bagh, Dr. Sameena Wani, along with teachers and students, attended the programme.

The participating students were accompanied by ace musicians Imtiyaz Malik, Nayem Naqash and Wahid Ali, whose musical accompaniment added vibrancy to the performances.

A similar Jashn-e-Azadi programme was also organised by the Cultural Unit Kashmir at Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Zadibal, where students participated



enthusiastically in patriotic singing and presented solo and group performances. The programme provided students with a creative platform to express their patriotic sentiments and celebrate the 80th Independence Day through music and cultural expression.

Speaking on the occasion, officers of DIPR emphasised the important role of cultural activities in nurturing patriotism, strengthening national spirit and providing young people with meaningful platforms to showcase their creative talent. They said that such initiatives help inculcate the values of unity, harmony, national pride and responsible citizenship among the younger generation.

Principal Dr. Sameena Wani expressed gratitude to DIPR for

organising the programme at the institution and appreciated the department's efforts to engage students through meaningful cultural activities. She said such initiatives not only provide students an opportunity to showcase their talent but also foster a deeper sense of patriotism and national belonging.

Participating students, judges, accompanying musicians and Principal Dr. Sameena Wani were felicitated on the occasion in recognition of their participation and contribution to the successful conduct of the programme.

The programmes concluded on a patriotic note, with students and participants reaffirming their commitment to the ideals of the nation and the spirit of the 80th Independence Day celebrations.

Jaishankar meets parliamentary delegation from Liberia on India visit

PTI

New Delhi, Aug 11: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met a parliamentary delegation from Liberia visiting India for an IBSA-funded peer-learning programme, and said the interaction reaffirmed the commitment towards a deeper Global South partnership.

Jaishankar shared the update in a post on X on Tuesday, along with photographs of the meeting.

The project is funded by the governments of India, Brazil and South Africa through the IBSA Fund (India, Brazil, South Africa) administered by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC).

"A pleasure to meet a Parliamentary Delegation from Liberia visiting India for the IBSA funded peer-learning programme. Exchanged views on development programmes, sharing the experience of Jan-Dhan Yojana, MUDRA Yojana, SVAnidhi, Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, Jal Jeevan Mission, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Yojana, and Mission Amrit Sarovar.

"Appreciated their interest and reaffirmed our commitment towards deeper Global South partnership," Jaishankar said.

The delegation comprises 15 members of the Liberian Senate, the House of Representatives and Secretariat, accompanied by staff members of UN Women Liberia and India, according to a statement issued by the UN Women India country office.

The mission has been organised under the project 'Women Legislators in Liberia: Promoting Voice, Leadership and Gender-Responsive Governance for Sustainable Development', implemented by UN Women Liberia in partnership with the Women's Legislative Caucus of Liberia.

The project seeks to strengthen the capacity of legislators to advance gender-responsive legislation, oversight and governance, while expanding opportunities for women's political and economic empowerment, it said.

The delegation is visiting India for nearly a week starting August 10.

Union Minister for Women and Child Development, Annpurna Devi, also met with the Liberian delegation led by Ellen-Attoh Wreh on Tuesday, the ministry said in a statement.

Wreh represents Electoral District 3, Margibi County, and is currently in her second term in the 55th national legislature, according to her profile shared by the UN Women India country office.

"During the meeting, the delegation was briefed on India's key initiatives for women-led development," the ministry said in the statement.

Devi underlined India's approach of viewing women as active agents of national development and highlighted "India's legislative, programmatic and institutional commitment" to women's empowerment, including in the areas of women's political representation, gender-responsive governance and budgeting, institutional responses to violence against women, the care economy and women's leadership in local governance, the statement said.

"Both sides had a substantive exchange on areas of shared interest and expressed their commitment to deepening cooperation between the two countries within the framework of South-South cooperation," it said.

India has been a trailblazer in integrating women into peacekeeping, officials said.

In 2007, India deployed the first ever all-female police unit in Liberia, which served till 2016. It comprised women CRPF personnel who were praised for their dedication, professionalism and courage during their discharge of duties, they said.

At present, Indian peacekeepers (around 4,200) are active in nine out of 11 UN missions.

India has contributed more than 3,00,000 peacekeepers in more than 50 UN missions. So far, 184 Indian peacekeepers have made the supreme sacrifice, the officials said.

India's engagement in peacekeeping activities is held in high esteem by the UN and the member states, which is illustrated by the various citations and awards received by Indian peacekeepers, they said.

Ensuring freedom of navigation Navy's responsibility: Vice Admiral Sadhu

PTI

Kolkata, Aug 11: Indian Navy's Controller of Warship Production and Acquisition, Vice Admiral Sanjay Sadhu, on Tuesday said that the Navy's responsibility is not only to defend national interests but also to ensure freedom of navigation.

He said that over the last decade, India has made remarkable progress in creating a vibrant and increasingly technologically advanced defence manufacturing and shipbuilding ecosystem.

"The Navy's responsibility is not only to defend our national interests, but also to ensure freedom of navigation, security of our sea lanes, and the uninterrupted flow of energy and essential goods to and from India," he said here at the launch of 'Shruti', the second Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessel (NGOPV) built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Ltd.

Kolkata-based Defence PSU GRSE is constructing four such vessels as part of the Indian Navy's 11-ship NGOPV programme, an official said.

'Shruti's launch comes within three months of 'Sanghmitra', the first NGOPV from GRSE, being launched on May 20, he said.

'Shruti' was formally launched by Manika Sadhu, wife of Vice Admiral Sadhu, as is the custom, the GRSE official said.

Measuring about 113 metres in length and 14.6 metres in width, these vessels will achieve speeds of up to 23 knots and have an endurance of 8,500 nautical miles at a cruising speed of 14 knots, he said.

Designed for a wide range of maritime operations, the NGOPVs will undertake coastal and offshore asset protection, maritime interdiction, surveillance, mine warfare and special operations, the official said.

They will also be deployed for out of area contingency operations, anti-piracy, counter-infiltration, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), search and rescue missions, he added.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Security forces

also been put in place along the IB in the Jammu region, where Border Security Force personnel are conducting round-the-clock patrolling and monitoring sensitive locations using electronic and digital surveillance systems," the official added.

He said troops deployed along the LoC have intensified patrolling and surveillance, with units maintaining close coordination to detect and respond to any suspicious movement.

"Security forces remain fully alert and are prepared to respond swiftly to any infiltration attempt or ceasefire violation," the official added.

The forces have also deployed a range of modern surveillance and mobility equipment in difficult terrain, including drones and quadcopters fitted with high-resolution cameras and night-vision capabilities, he said.

Smart fencing and other electronic surveillance systems have been installed at vulnerable points to strengthen the existing physical barriers and improve the ability of troops to detect movement along the border.

In addition, rapid response teams and specialised units have been kept ready to move quickly to sensitive locations, while bulletproof and all-terrain vehicles are being used to facilitate troop movement in mountainous and difficult terrain.

The security forces have also been conducting exercises to sharpen their response to possible infiltration attempts and attacks on forward positions, officials said.

Recently, troops in the Sunderbani sector carried out drills simulating infiltration and attacks on fortified positions, testing coordination, firepower and rapid-response capabilities.

"Continuous surveillance and area domination are being maintained to ensure the security of border areas and the safety of civilians living close to the LoC," another official said.

The heightened security measures come ahead of the August 15 celebrations, when security agencies across Jammu and Kashmir have been placed on high alert to ensure peaceful and incident-free functions.

The Jammu and Kashmir Police have also intensified checking and surveillance in border areas, besides strengthening security at key entry and exit points, officials said.

Security agencies are maintaining close coordination and sharing inputs to prevent any attempt to exploit the heightened movement and security activity associated with Independence Day celebrations, they added. (KNO)

Security stepped

preparedness of contingents from schools, colleges and the Sports Council and their enthusiastic participation in the ceremonial proceedings.

In view of the possibility of rainfall, he directed the Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), to ensure an effective dewatering mechanism at the venue and keep the Fire & Emergency dewatering pump operational. The officials were directed to ensure proper floral decoration of the podium and operational readiness of all seven LED screens installed at the stadium.

The Divisional Commissioner stressed close coordination among all concerned

departments and directed that all arrangements be completed well in advance for the smooth conduct of the celebrations.

The inspection was attended by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Commissioner SMC, ADC Srinagar, Joint Director Information and senior officers from R&B, PHE, School Education, Higher Education, Fire & Emergency, Hospitality & Protocol, KPDCL, UEED, Youth Services and Sports and other concerned departments. IGP Kashmir and senior officers of police and security agencies were also present.

Meanwhile, a heightened security grid has been put in place across Kashmir to ensure peaceful Independence Day celebrations. Special contingents of Jammu and Kashmir Police have been deployed around Bakshi Stadium, the main venue for the I-Day function.

Security forces also conducted surprise frisking and checking of pedestrians, shops and vehicles in Lal Chowk as part of intensified security measures ahead of August 15. (KNO)

J&K govt notifies

militancy-related incidents while on duly sanctioned leave will also be eligible for relief under the applicable provisions.

For defence personnel and CAPFs, the government has prescribed Rs 5 lakh for a non-domicile killed in J&K, while the death of a J&K domicile personnel will attract Rs 25 lakh, irrespective of whether the death occurs within or outside the Union Territory.

Permanent disability of such personnel in J&K will attract Rs 75,000, while partial disability will be compensated with Rs 10,000.

The administration has also prescribed separate relief for government employees other than police personnel. The next of kin of a magistrate killed in circumstances covered under the order will receive Rs 2 lakh, while the death of other government employees will attract Rs 1 lakh.

Permanent disability will qualify for Rs 75,000, while serious injuries requiring hospitalisation for more than 24 hours will attract Rs 5,000. Injuries requiring hospitalisation for less than 24 hours will qualify for Rs 1,000 and minor injuries for Rs 500.

The order also provides for cases where there is no direct or conclusive evidence of death but a person is reported missing or the body has not been identified.

In such cases, relief may be sanctioned after a personal inquiry by the District Magistrate into the circumstances in which the person's death can reasonably be presumed to have occurred. The recipient will have to furnish an indemnity bond and surety bond undertaking to refund the relief if subsequent evidence establishes that the person had not died.

The administration has further laid down provisions for compensation for property damaged during counter-terrorism operations.

For damage to movable and immovable property caused during counter-terrorism operations undertaken by CAPFs or the Army, relief will be capped at Rs 10 lakh or the actual assessed loss, whichever is less, subject to verification by the District Level Screening Committee.

Of this amount, the ceiling has been fixed at Rs 7 lakh for immovable property and Rs 3 lakh for movable property.

For damage caused by shelling or firing from across the IB or LoC, the relief will be 50 per

cent of the assessed loss or Rs 1 lakh, whichever is less.

In cases of damage to immovable property caused by a bomb blast or other act of sabotage, relief will similarly be limited to 50 per cent of the assessed loss or Rs 1 lakh, whichever is less.

The Deputy Commissioner concerned will sanction relief for eligible persons other than police personnel, while relief for police personnel will be sanctioned by the Director General of Police. Cases involving defence personnel and CAPFs will be sanctioned by the Government's Home Department.

A person aggrieved by the Deputy Commissioner's assessment of damage to immovable property may appeal before the concerned Divisional Commissioner within 30 days from the date of the order, the government said. (KNO)

Apple scab threat

has affected orchards across a wide geographical area.

Apart from scab, waterlogging has emerged as another major concern. In several orchards, farmers said the soil has remained saturated for prolonged periods, leaving standing water in some areas.

They fear that continued waterlogging could affect the root systems of apple trees and eventually lead to root rot and other soil-borne problems. Such damage, growers said, may not always become visible immediately but could weaken trees and affect their productivity in the longer term.

Another grower said that his orchard had developed symptoms resembling necrotic leaf blotch following the prolonged wet conditions.

"Scab is not the only issue. We are also noticing leaf-related problems. Continuous moisture is creating conditions for multiple diseases, and growers will have to remain extremely cautious," he said.

It's in place to mention here that Apple scab is a fungal disease considered among the major threats to apple cultivation in Kashmir. Secondary infections can develop during the growing season when favourable weather conditions persist after the initial infection.

Extended periods of rainfall, high humidity and prolonged leaf wetness provide suitable conditions for the fungus to multiply and spread from one part of an orchard to another.

The disease commonly appears as dark or velvety lesions on leaves and fruit. Severe infection can affect the appearance and marketability of apples and may also increase expenditure on orchard protection and disease management.

Farmers, however, said rainfall is not entirely detrimental to the crop. Adequate moisture can support fruit growth and, under suitable conditions, contribute to better fruit size and colour.

The problem arises when rainfall becomes excessive and the soil and foliage remain wet for prolonged periods.

Weather data cited in the report showed that Jammu and Kashmir received around 35 per cent more rainfall than normal during July. Farmers said they are keeping a close watch on orchards and urged the Horticulture Department to intensify field-level guidance, particularly regarding disease identification, orchard drainage and timely management measures.

They said that they are under fear as weather department has predicted more rains in coming days.

With the apple harvest approaching, growers fear that a combination of fungal diseases, fruit cracking and waterlogging could affect both the quality and market returns of the crop if the wet spell continues.

They said timely technical intervention and regular field inspections would be important to prevent the situation from worsening and to protect the season's crop from avoidable losses. (KNO)

Heavy rain likely

is expected to improve thereafter, with only light rain or thundershowers possible at scattered places between August 20 and 22, according to the forecast.

The MeT office cautioned that torrential rain and brief intense showers could trigger flash floods, landslides and mudslides, particularly in vulnerable and hilly areas.

SRINAGAR RECORDS 33 C, JAMMU 31.2 C

Meanwhile, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 33 degrees Celsius on Monday, three degrees above the normal for this time of the year. Its minimum temperature was 21.6 degrees Celsius, also three degrees above normal.

Among other stations, Qazigund recorded a maximum of 30.6 degrees Celsius, Kupwara 33.3, Pahalgam 25.5, Kokernag 29.2 and Gulmarg 24.5 degrees Celsius.

In the Jammu region, Jammu recorded a maximum temperature of 31.2 degrees Celsius, nearly two degrees below normal, while its minimum temperature was 22 degrees Celsius, more than three degrees below normal.

Katra received 71.1 mm of rain during the 24-hour period ending Tuesday morning, while Jammu recorded 79 mm during the same period.

The Met department has advised people, particularly those living in landslide- and flood-prone areas, to remain alert during periods of intense rainfall. (KNO)

'Unnecessary suspicion'

such situations to cast suspicion on youth, Sadiq said the National Conference would raise the issue with the Centre.

"The way Mehbooba has spoken... we agree with her. Some elements take advantage of such incidents to put our youth under the scanner. This needs to stop," he said.

The NC chief spokesperson also dismissed speculation about a tariff hike, saying no such order had been issued by the administration and urging people not to believe rumours.

"There is no such order. Last time too, a rumour was spread. There is no increase in any tariff," he said.

The MLA said the NC would raise both issues with the Centre and ensure that mischief-makers do not succeed in their designs. (KNO)

Drug seizures

a conviction rate of 41.3 per cent.

In 2023, 2,232 cases were registered, with 195 convictions and a conviction rate of 53 per cent.

In 2024, the number of cases declined to 1,550, while convictions increased to 227, with the conviction rate standing at 51.2 per cent.

The Centre said the latest NCRB data pertains to 2024 and covers State/UT-wise drug seizures, cases registered, convictions and conviction rates under the NDPS Act for the period 2022-24. The data is collected from States and UTs and duly validated and certified by the concerned authorities before publication.

The figures show that while the quantity of drugs seized in J&K declined considerably over the three-year period, the number of convictions increased from 99 in 2022 to 227 in 2024, according to the NCRB data.

The reply also shows that 4,977.21 kg. of drugs were seized in J&K in 2024 along with 552,800 litres of drug-related substances.

The information was furnished by the Ministry of Home Affairs in response to the Lok Sabha question concerning anti-narcotics campaigns and drives. (KNO)

Over 3,300 Non-Gazetted

more serious as new units, laboratories, and other healthcare services were being introduced at the medical colleges without a corresponding increase in manpower.

Employees have particularly raised concerns about the absence of Departmental Promotion Committees (DPCs), saying that many who have completed several years of service have not seen a single promotion exercise. The federation has also pointed to an alleged disparity between employees of the new GMCs and their counterparts in established institutions, in which eligible employees become entitled to promotion after completing the prescribed period of regular service.

Sharma said employees had made repeated efforts to resolve the matter through representations and meetings but had not received a concrete solution. "We have made strenuous efforts to solve this issue, but failed. We are now going for an indefinite strike from August 17 to press for our demands," he said.

The federation has urged Health and Medical Education (H&ME) Minister Sakina Itoo and senior officials to intervene immediately. Among its demands, the federation has sought immediate framing and finalisation of SRRs for all non-gazetted employees, conduct of DPCs for all eligible employees, a time-bound mechanism for completing the process, and consideration of retrospective promotional avenues with consequential benefits.

Former Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti, in a post on X, said that more than 3,317 non-gazetted employees working in the new GMCs had been waiting for SRRs since 2019. "7 YEARS. NO SRRs. NO PROMOTIONS. NO CAREER GROWTH," Mufti said.

MLA Doda, Mehraj Malik also raised the issue, saying, "This may seem like a small administrative issue, but for the employees it means the possibility of serving their entire career on a single post," appealing to the J&K Government to take up the matter on priority. (KNO)

J&K proposes

healthcare services in these locations," reads the report. (KNO)

25-yr-old woman

to the police and later to the family after completion of all necessary formalities.

Police have taken cognisance of the incident and further proceedings are underway. (KNO)

‘Govt considering sending FCRA Bill to joint committee of Parl for further scrutiny’



PTI

New Delhi, Aug 11: The government is considering sending 'The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026' to a joint committee of both houses of Parliament, even as the Congress and some opposition parties have demanded that it be withdrawn, sources said on Tuesday.

The Congress and TMC were among the parties which raised the issue during the meeting of the Business Advisory Committee of the Rajya Sabha, though it was not part of the agenda, asking when the FCRA Bill will be taken up in the House, to which the government said a decision

will be taken on it in due course of time. The two parties demanded that the bill be withdrawn, but others like BJD feel the bill could be sent to a joint committee of Parliament for further scrutiny.

The DMK also wants the Bill to be withdrawn, the sources said.

The Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on March 25 this year and proposes tighter government oversight on non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and foreign funding in the country.

Government sources said it is considering sending the Bill to a joint committee of both Houses of Parliament and a motion may be brought in the Lok Sabha in this regard on

Wednesday.

The Bill seeks to create a designated authority to manage and dispose of assets if an organisation loses its FCRA licence.

The opposition parties which have raised strong objections to the FCRA Bill allege that it targets minorities as certain provisions will choke legitimate funding for Christian NGOs and minority-run social welfare and educational institutions.

But the government has made it clear that the proposed legislation is not religion-specific and is aimed at regulating foreign contributions.

The Business Advisory Committee of the Rajya Sabha was chaired by Chairman C P Radhakrishnan and attended by Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju and leader of the house J P Nadda and opposition leaders Jairam Ramesh (Cong), Tiruchi Siva (DMK) and Sasmit Patra (BJD).

During the meeting, the BAC allotted two hours for 'The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026'; two hours for 'The Tribunals Reforms Bill, 2026'; three hours for 'The National Co-operative Development Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 2026'; and 1.5 hours for 'The Kerala (Alteration of Name) Bill, 2026. Later, Deputy Chairman Hariyansh announced the decisions of the business advisory committee in the House.

RSS chief to visit US, Canada, Britain from Aug 25



PTI

Nagpur, Aug 11: Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat will embark on a tour of the United States, Canada and Britain from August 25 on the invitation of overseas local groups, the organisation announced on Tuesday.

RSS Akhil Bhartiya Prachar Pramukh (national publicity and media head) Sunil Ambekar said on X Bhagwat will begin his overseas tour from August 25 and visit the US, Canada and the United Kingdom.

The three-nation tour is at the invitation of local organisations there and it is just a coincidence that this trip is taking place in the centenary year of the RSS founding, he added.

Ambekar did not provide further details, but Bhagwat's visit is being seen as part of the Nagpur- headquartered Hindutva organisation's ongoing global outreach.

State of border with China will reflect on state of bilateral ties: India



PTI

New Delhi, Aug 11: India on Tuesday said the state of its border with China will reflect on the state of the "larger bilateral ties" and that maintenance of peace and tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) is of "utmost importance".

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) also rejected China's criticism of New Delhi identifying 27 places and features in Arunachal Pradesh by their standard names, and asserted that the state is an "inalienable and integral" part of India and nothing can change this "indisputable reality".

"In matters relating to the border areas between India and China, we have always emphasised in discussions with the Chinese side that we consider these issues as most serious," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said at a regular media briefing.

"The maintenance of peace and tranquillity in these areas is of the utmost importance. We have also stated that the state of the border affairs will reflect on the state of our larger bilateral ties," he said.

Jaiswal said this was reiterated at meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China border affairs (WMCC) held last week.

"At this meeting, the two sides engaged in frank discussions and reviewed the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC)," he said.

Jaiswal said the Indian side again underlined that maintaining peace and tranquillity in the border areas is essential for the overall development of bilateral relations.

"It was agreed to continue to use existing diplomatic and military channels, including the WMCC, local commander-level meetings and other agreed mechanisms, to resolve outstanding issues and avoid misunderstanding and miscalculation along the LAC," he said.

India and China rolled out a series of measures in the last over one year to rebuild their relationship after it came under severe strain following the deadly Galwan Valley clashes in 2020 and the subsequent military face-off that lasted for over four years.

In October 2024, the two sides firmed up a disengagement pact for Depsang and Demchok, the last two friction points in eastern Ladakh.

Days after the agreement was finalised, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping held talks in Kazan and took a number of decisions to improve the ties.

In August last year, Modi travelled to the Chinese city of Tianjin to attend the annual SCO summit. Modi and Xi held extensive talks on the sidelines of the SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) summit.

In the meeting, Modi said India is committed to taking forward its ties with China based on mutual trust, respect and sensitivity.

US judge dismisses criminal case against Gautam Adani, Sagar Adani



PTI

New York/New Delhi, Aug 11: A US court has dismissed with prejudice the criminal charges against Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani and his nephew, bringing to an end nearly two years of proceedings in an alleged fraud and bribery case.

The US District Court for the Eastern District of New York granted the Justice Department's Rule 48(a) motion to dismiss the indictment against Gautam Adani, Sagar Adani and former Adani Green CEO Vneet Jaan. The counts covered securities-fraud conspiracy, wire fraud conspiracy, and securities fraud.

Judge Nicholas Garaufis allowed the Justice Department's motion after seeking additional explanations from prosecutors over their decision to abandon the case. A dismissal with prejudice permanently closes the criminal proceedings and bars the charges from being refiled, but does not amount to a judicial finding on the underlying allegations.

The criminal case originated in November 2024, when US prosecutors alleged that Gautam Adani, Sagar Adani, former AGEL Chief Executive Officer Vneet Jaan and others were involved in a conspiracy to pay USD

250 million in bribes to Indian government officials to secure solar power contracts projected to generate more than USD 2 billion in after-tax profits over two decades.

Prosecutors also alleged that investors were misled while the group raised more than USD 3 billion through loans and bond issuances in US markets.

The Adani Group consistently denied the criminal allegations, describing them as baseless and maintaining that it had acted in accordance with applicable laws and regulatory requirements.

The SEC's separate civil action has also been resolved through the final judgment against Gautam Adani, under which he consented to the order without admitting the allegations. The final judgment also requires Adani to pay a USD 6 million civil penalty to the SEC within 30 days.

In its submissions before the court, the Trump administration said continuing the prosecution no longer served the interests of justice, citing significant jurisdictional and evidentiary challenges, the predominantly Indian nature of the alleged conduct, the fact that Indian authorities had examined the matter, the absence of identified

investor losses and broader public-interest considerations.

The DOJ also stated that the indictment, unsealed in November 2024 during the closing weeks of the previous Biden administration, had little realistic prospect of proceeding to trial and appeared to have been a politically motivated "name and shame" exercise orchestrated by the outgoing administration.

In dismissing the charges against Adani, Garaufis said he was satisfied that Adani's November 2024 promise to invest USD 10 billion in the United States did not factor into the Justice Department's decision, and acknowledged that judges' role in reviewing federal prosecutors' decisions to drop charges was limited.

Adani welcomed the decision "with humility and deep respect for the judicial process."

"Throughout this challenging period, our faith in truth, fairness and the rule of law remained unwavering. My deepest gratitude to those who never lost faith in us, in the system and in India's capacity for justice. We will continue doing what matters: building for our nation, creating value that outlasts us and serving a purpose larger than ourselves. That is our commitment," he said in a post on X.

Before approving the request, Judge Nicholas Garaufis directed the DOJ to publicly explain its reasons for seeking dismissal and required the defendants to file sworn declarations confirming there had been no promise, offer, quid pro quo or undisclosed agreement connected with the decision.

In his sworn declaration, Gautam Adani categorically denied the existence of any promise, offer, quid pro quo or undisclosed agreement relating to the DOJ's decision. After reviewing the government's submissions and the sworn declarations, the court accepted the motion and permanently dismissed the case.

Dipke slams police action against protesters in Ranchi

Says students just fighting for their rights

PTI

Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, Aug 11: Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) convenor Abhijeet Dipke on Tuesday denounced the police action on students protesting in Ranchi against alleged irregularities in recruitment exams in Jharkhand and said it was a repeat of what happened in Delhi last month.

Talking to reporters in his hometown Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar in central Maharashtra, he asserted students are fighting for their rights and not for vote bank, and wondered by only agitating pupils and youngsters face police crackdown and not workers of political parties.

Asked about police using batons, water cannons and tear gas shells against protesting students and job aspirants in Ranchi on Monday, Dipke strongly condemned the use of force by law enforcement personnel.

"What happened in Jharkhand yesterday was too bad. We saw the same thing happening earlier in Jantar Mantar (Delhi on July 20). Lathis and tear gas were used (against agitating students in the national capital during 'Sansad Chalo' march). I don't understand why lathis and tear gas are not used when political parties protest. Why they are used only against students?" he asked.

Parl panel recommends mandatory kidney tests for all aged 20 yrs

PTI

New Delhi, Aug 11: A parliamentary committee has recommended mandatory kidney function tests every six months for everyone aged 20 years and above, along with annual screening of all high-risk individuals, as part of a policy shift from treating advanced kidney failure to preventing and slowing disease progression. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare has recommended that the biannual kidney function test (KFT) be provided free of cost to people below the poverty line and at a nominal cost to those above the poverty line under the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD).

For high-risk individuals, the screening should include assessment of kidney function using estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR) and urine albumin/protein testing, along with appropriate referral and follow-up, the panel said.

In its 177th report on "Prevalence of Chronic Kidney Disease in India - Prevention, Diagnosis, Treatment and Management", the committee headed by Rajya Sabha member Ram Gopal Yadav made 66 recommendations covering prevention, early detection, diagnosis, treatment and management of chronic kidney disease (CKD).

The report was presented in Rajya Sabha and laid on the table of Lok Sabha on August 7.

The committee said the existing approach to CKD screening was largely opportunistic and depended on individuals visiting Ayushman Arogya Mandirs and other health facilities, which did not ensure periodic screening of all high-risk people.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER DISTRICT INDUSTRIES CENTRE, SRINAGAR

Near Petrol pump Baghi Ali Mardan Khan, Srinagar-190011
Public Notice

M/s Chaya Steel Furniture I/E Zainakote, Srinagar under No. 07/09/01878/PMT/SSI dated 29.08.1983 for the activity of "Steel furniture, gates, grills, water tanks and rilling shutters", as proprietorship concern of Mr. Mohammad Aslam Darzi (Khan) S/o Abdul Aziz Darzi(Khan) R/o Chanpora, Srinagar.

Now, the promoter of the unit has approached this office for transfer of lease hold rights from Mr. Mohammad Aslam Darzi (Khan) S/o Abdul Aziz Darzi(Khan) R/o Chanpora, Srinagar to 1). Mr. Raja Zahoor Khan and 2) Yasir Bilal Khan both S/o Abdul Rehman Khan R/o Alnoor Colony, Hyderpora, Srinagar. The incoming promoter intends to establishment of a new unit for the activity of "Food processing of fruits and grading and pacing of walnuts, almonds and dry fruits" under new name and style M/s Royal Stors I/E Zainakote, Srinagar, as well as de-registration of existing unit namely M/s Chaya Steel Furniture I/E Zainakote, Srinagar.

Any person having any objection with regard to the above mentioned changes in favour of the unit, shall report to the Office of General Manager, District Industries Centre, Srinagar within a period of 07 days from the date of Publication of this notice, failing which no objection shall be entertained.

DIPK-4414/26
Dated: 11-08-2026

General Manager
District Industries Centre Srinagar

IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1st CLASS SOPORE

In the case of: Mohd Hanief War S/o: Gh Hassan War R/o: Al noor Colony.
Versus
C.E.O Municipal Council Sopore/BDO Sangrama/BDO Sopore
(Registrar of Birth and Death)

...Non Applicant

NOTICE TO PUBLIC AT LARGE

Whereas, the above titled case is under process in this court, seeking direction therein to the non-applicant u/s 13(3) of the Registration of Births & Deaths Act, 1969 for registration of Birth event of the applicant's Daughter namely Aafiyah Hanief D/o: Mohd Hanief War as 21-08-2009 at M.C.H Sopore.

Whereas through the medium of this proclamation the public at large is informed that in case any one has any objection for issuance of direction with respect to the registration of aforementioned Birth event he/she shall file the same before this court in person or through counsel within 7 days from the date of the publication of this proclamation.If the date fixed is declared holiday,the matter will be taken on the next working day.

Executive Magistrate 1st Class, Sopore

IN THE COURT OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1st CLASS SOPORE

In the case of: Muzamil Sharief S/o: Sharief ud din Budha R/o: Mahrajpora.
Versus
C.E.O Municipal Council Sopore/BDO Sangrama/BDO Sopore
(Registrar of Birth and Death)

...Non Applicant

NOTICE TO PUBLIC AT LARGE

Whereas, the above titled case is under process in this court, seeking direction therein to the non-applicant u/s 13(3) of the Registration of Births & Deaths Act, 1969 for registration of Birth event of the applicant's Self namely Muzamil Sharief S/o: Sharief ud din Budha as 04-08-2006 at Home.

Whereas through the medium of this proclamation the public at large is informed that in case any one has any objection for issuance of direction with respect to the registration of aforementioned Birth event he/she shall file the same before this court in person or through counsel within 7 days from the date of the publication of this proclamation.If the date fixed is declared holiday,the matter will be taken on the next working day.

Executive Magistrate 1st Class, Sopore

Former Syrian President Assad sentenced to death in absentia for war crimes

AP

Damascus, Aug 11: A Syrian court sentenced ousted Syrian President Bashar Assad along with his younger brother to death in absentia on Tuesday for crimes against humanity and war crimes during Syria's 14-year conflict that left about half a million people dead.

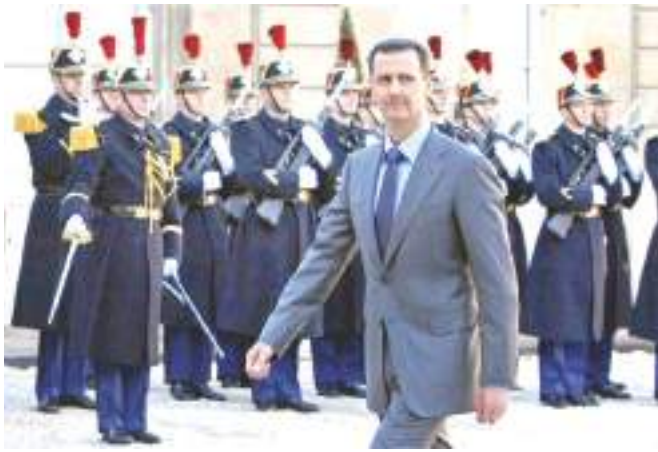
The sentences at the Fourth Criminal Court in Damascus are the first against Assad or members of his inner circle since the Assad family's five decades in power came to an end 20 months ago.

"Bashar Assad used state agencies to commit war crimes and crimes against humanity," said judge Fakhreddine Al-Aryan during a court session that was aired live on state TV.

Also sentenced to death was Assad's maternal cousin Atef Najib, who was convicted of overseeing a crackdown in the southern province of Daraa that led to the uprising and later the civil war. Al-Aryan said Najib can appeal.

Under tight security, Najib stood inside a cage wearing a prisoner's uniform as the judge read the sentence. A crowd gathered outside the courthouse in central Damascus to hear the verdict.

"Today is the day of justice for all the wounded, martyrs,



detainees and Syrians who were forced to leave their country," said attorney Adnan Al-Masalmeh who represented families of Najib's victims. "Today marks a victory of right against injustice, a victory of the Syrian people against the ousted regime."

Assad and his brother Maher fled to Russia after the government's fall in December 2024 and received political asylum. Syria's new rulers have asked Russia to hand the Assads over.

Najib, who was sanctioned by the US Department of the Treasury in April 2011, was later detained and is one of the highest-ranking security officials to be put on trial.

Najib is a former army

brigadier general who was head of the Political Security Branch in Syria's southern Daraa province under Assad in 2011.

During his tenure, more than a dozen teenagers who scrawled anti-government graffiti on a school wall in Daraa were arrested and tortured. The case became a catalyst for mass protests against the repressive policies of Assad's security forces. The protests were met by a brutal government crackdown that spiraled into a 14-year civil war that ended with Assad's ouster in a lightning rebel offensive.

Some of Najib's victims were present at the courthouse including two who were teenagers in 2011 and expressed their

opinions to The Associated Press. "Today we reached a point where the blood was not wasted," said Mouawiya Sayasneh, about those who died in the crackdown. Fifteen years later, "there is happiness that Atef Najib was sentenced to death," he said.

Another man, Nayef Abazeid, who was detained at the age of 13 in 2011, expressed his satisfaction with the sentence, adding that "our biggest happiness will be when Bashar Assad is executed."

Maher Assad was a former commander of the Syrian military's 4th Armored Division — which opposition activists have accused of killings, torture, extortion and drug trafficking, in addition to running its own detention centers.

"Today's scenes outside the courthouse reflect 15 years of pain and a justice long denied. Human Rights Watch opposes the death penalty in all cases, including this one," said Hiba Zayadin, Syria researcher at Human Rights Watch. "It's cruel and irreversible, especially when a fair trial isn't guaranteed."

Zayadin added that Najib has the right to appeal, and that process "needs to meet fair trial standards too." Real accountability for Assad-era crimes depends on Syria building a justice system that lasts, she said.

US human rights groups sue Trump over anti-ICC push



REUTERS

Washington, Aug 11: Four leading U.S. human rights groups on Tuesday sued the Trump administration over its campaign aimed at dismantling the International Criminal Court, calling the effort unconstitutional.

President Donald Trump last year issued an executive order authorizing sanctions on prosecutors, judges and others working with the court for pursuing cases against officials from the U.S. and its ally Israel, neither of which are members of the ICC.

Human Rights Watch, the Open Society Institute, the American Friends Service Committee and the Center for Constitutional Rights said in their lawsuit filed in New York that those sanctions prevent them from working with the court to seek justice for genocide, war crimes and crimes against

humanity around the world.

"The plaintiffs are seeking an end to this sanctions regime, which transgresses the president's authority and violates international and U.S. law, including the rights to freedom of expression and religion," lead counsel Andrew Loewenstein of Foley Hoag LLP, which is representing the human rights groups, said in a statement.

The lawsuit comes after a similar lawsuit filed last month by advocacy groups who work on human rights for Palestinians. In response to that lawsuit, the State Department said the groups were seeking to "enable ICC overreach" and said the court posed a threat to U.S. sovereignty. Three ICC judges have separately sued the Trump administration over the sanctions. Trump's opposition toward the ICC goes back to his first term. A similar executive order

Trump issued in 2020 was blocked by a judge, who said it likely violated the First Amendment, before being rescinded by President Joe Biden's administration in 2021.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio last month said the administration would step up efforts to undermine the court in The Hague, including with a diplomatic campaign aimed at persuading other countries to quit it. Rubio argued that the court posed a threat to U.S. personnel carrying out Trump's hardline immigration policies or strikes on boats accused of carrying drugs, as well as other U.S. service members.

Trump during a July 31 cabinet meeting said in response to an update from Rubio that the campaign was aimed at defending Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and others, rather than Trump himself.

Colombia recognizes Israeli claim over the Golan Heights

AFP

Bogota, Aug 11: Colombia's newly appointed hard-right government on Monday recognized Israel's claim over the Golan Heights, which it captured from Syria in 1967.

The United States was until now the only country to recognize Israel's annexation of the territory in 1981.

Colombian President Abelardo de la Espriella took power on Friday, following a bombastic campaign during which he promised tight relations with the US and Israel as a way to combat armed groups in his own country.

His foreign ministry announced recognition of Israel's claim on the same day that a powerful earthquake struck western Colombia, killing at least 111 people and injuring dozens more.

"The Government of Colombia recognizes Israeli sovereignty over this territory, as well as that State's right to protect itself against external threats," read a statement published on X.

"Colombia recognizes that maintaining Israel's control and sovereignty over the Golan Heights is an essential component of its national defense," it added.

The United Nations maintains that the plateau is Syrian territory under Israeli military occupation. Israel's Foreign Minister Gideon Saar thanked his "good friend" De la Espriella for the recognition. The pair had agreed on the move in the Colombian city of Barranquilla, he said, one day before De la Espriella's inauguration.

"Defensible borders are essential to guarantee the continued existence of the Jewish people in our historic homeland," Saar, who attended the swearing-in, posted on X.

Last month, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres reiterated that the Golan Heights were part of Syria, describing Israeli occupation as "totally unacceptable."

Atiqa Mir becomes youngest Indian to record two top-10 finishes in 'Formula 1 of Karting'

PTI

Kristianstad (Sweden), Aug 11: Racing sensation Atiqa Mir added another feather to her cap by becoming the youngest Indian to collect a couple of impressive top-10 finishes in Round 4 of the FIA European Championship, a marquee event in the world of karting.

Atiqa, all of 11, showed tremendous speed and fight to achieve a ninth and 10th place in the heat races in the 12-14 age category. Atiqa, the first Indian to be backed by F1 Academy, qualified P11, which was remarkably only 0.13 seconds off the fastest time, reflecting the intensely competitive nature of the grid.

Driving as a wildcard in only her second ever FIA event, the Indian with Kashmiri roots battled hard with drivers as old as 14 despite being among the youngest on the grid.

Atiqa has got race wins and pole positions under her belt in a fast rising career but considering



the challenge at hand in the FIA European Championship, which is dubbed as 'Formula 1' of the karting world, she was pleased with her performance in Sweden.

"I'm super happy with my performance here. We achieved all our

targets and we have a good technical understanding of these FIA events. I've improved my driving as well and I feel with some more experience I can fight towards the front of the grid. I feel ready for a full championship next year," she

said. Atiqa's father Asif Mir, India's first national karting champion, felt she exceeded expectations with her performance against drivers with a lot more experience.

"Atiqa showed a lot of maturity far beyond her age. She was up against all star karters of the world including Formula 1 junior development drivers. Her speed in qualifying against them was very encouraging with only a tenth of a second separating her from the fastest time.

She still has a lot to learn and driving amongst the best drivers in the world gives her an opportunity to learn from them. We feel we will be in a championship fight next year. She is only 11 so she has time of her hands," said Asif.

In May, Atiqa had created another record by becoming the youngest Indian to finish sixth in Round 2 of the FIA European championship in Spain.

The European Championship is the highest level of karting and is run directly by the sport's governing body FIA.

U-23 Commonwealth Fencing Indian fencers add seven more medals on Day 2



PTI

New Delhi, Aug 11: Indian fencers continued their impressive run at the U-23 Commonwealth Fencing Championship in Lagos, Nigeria, by clinching seven medals on the second day of competition.

India had secured 17 medals, including four gold, at the event on the opening day, dominating both the men's and women's individual events.

Competing across the senior individual events in women's Sabre, women's Epee, and men's Foil, India added one gold, two silver, and four bronze medals to its growing tally on Monday night.

The Indian squad staged a stellar display in the senior women's Epee event, asserting strong control over the podium. Tanishka Khatri won

the gold medal while teammate Khushi Dabhade secured silver. Prachi Lohan added to the tally by sharing the bronze with Australia's Harrison Asley.

In the senior women's Sabre individual category, India delivered another impressive performance by bagging three podium spots.

Aakhari fought her way to a hard-earned silver medal behind England's Brierley, who won the gold. Jefarlin and Shruti Joshi both claimed bronze medals for India.

Meanwhile, in the senior men's Foil event, Tejas Patil delivered a strong performance against a tough international field, securing a bronze medal alongside England's David William, but behind gold medalist Alex Tophalidas of Cyprus and silver winner Oliver Starange of England.

Fewer bilateral series in future but difficult to think cricket without ODIs: Jonty Rhodes

PTI

Mumbai, Aug 11: Former South Africa cricketer Jonty Rhodes has said there could be fewer bilateral ODI series in the future, but said it is difficult to imagine cricket without the 50-over format.

Rhodes believes fans will continue to turn up to support their teams regardless of the format, while acknowledging that the 50-over game could face challenges in the years ahead.

"When T20 cricket first started, people were saying it is going to put pressure on Test cricket and amazingly it has not. Some of the Test cricket looks like T20 at times, there is some aggressive batting and bowling," Rhodes told the media during the jersey launch of European T20



Premier League (ETPL) team Rotterdam Dockers here on Tuesday.

Rotterdam Dockers, co-owned by Rhodes, will feature in the inaugural edition of the ETPL, to be held in Voorburg, the Netherlands, and Dublin from August 26 to September 20.

"For me, it is always understanding that 50-overs

cricket might be the one format where -- because we bring in such a fresh crowd and a different perspective into the game -- possibly 50-overs cricket might be in trouble in the years ahead.

"From a point of view, we're really fortunate that what 50-overs cricket has is that you've got really passionate fans who will support their

team no matter what format or version it is," Rhodes said. Rhodes continued, "At this stage, I think there will be fewer and fewer bilateral series... but it is very difficult to think of cricket without the 50-over version."

Rhodes said the growing number of T20 leagues around the world could prompt players to retire from international cricket earlier.

"We've seen a FIFA World Cup football and the passion that people have for playing for their country, it's often the case because they don't get to play that often. So outside of a FIFA World Cup year, most of those international stars are playing for their clubs and their franchises and you might see more and more of that happening on a cricketing perspective," he said.

"To have three different formats within cricket competing with franchise cricket around the world, players will start making a choice and that choice will be ending their international career slightly earlier," Rhodes added.

Rhodes expressed confidence that South Africa can go the distance at next year's ODI World Cup, which the country will co-host with Zimbabwe and Namibia.

"We as South Africans are looking forward to hosting it. It's been a while and it's great that it's come around again. Good timing for us, the team is playing pretty well," he said.

"There's a few things that we would like to settle and one of those is obviously winning an ICC limited-overs trophy," Rhodes added.

INOX SRINAGAR Schedule

WEDNESDAY, 12TH AUGUST

Movie	Language	Time
SPIDER-MAN: BRAVE NEW DAY	3D	11:00 AM, 03:10 PM, 07:10 PM, 09:15 PM
SPIDER-MAN: BRAVE NEW DAY	3D	11:00 AM, 03:10 PM, 07:10 PM, 09:15 PM
SPIDER-MAN: BRAVE NEW DAY	3D	11:00 AM, 03:10 PM, 07:10 PM, 09:15 PM
THE ODYSSEY	English	12:15 PM, 06:15 PM

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