



Major ISI-linked terror network busted ahead of I-Day: Amit Shah

Says 253 detained, over 200 arrested, 80 FIRs filed in 14 states against Shahzad Bhatti network

Sajid Raina

New Delhi, Aug 17: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday said that ahead of Independence Day Prime Minister Narendra Modi led Govt destroyed an ISI-backed terror network ahead of Independence Day, with security forces successfully thwarting the Shahzad Bhatti terror network's plans to carry out subversive attacks across the country.

In a post on X, the Union Home Minister, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Modi govt destroyed the ISI-backed terror group Shahzad Bhatti Network ahead of Independence Day and thwarted its plans for subversive attacks by arresting more than 200 operatives."

"Indian security forces ripped apart the network by launching coordinated operations across different locations in 14 states upholding a brilliant example of India's zero-tolerance towards



terrorism," Shah said.

The Union Home Minister said, "Improvised explosive devices (IEDs), grenades bearing Pakistan Ordnance Factory markings, pistols, live cartridges, and CCTV cameras used for espionage were recovered from the ISI-funded group and the network was involved in several

terrorist activities."

Meanwhile, in a statement, the MHA said the terror syndicate was busted in a "major multi-state crackdown. "Two hundred and fifty-three (253) people were detained across 14 states. More than 80 FIRs stand registered and over 200 arrests have been recorded

against the Shahzad Bhatti Network as part of the zero-tolerance policy towards cross-border terrorism."

It said, "The operation was carried out in coordination with state police forces and followed intelligence inputs on activities linked to the network. In Uttar Pradesh 62 people, in Haryana 52, in Delhi 51, in Punjab 44, in Rajasthan 15, in Maharashtra 8, in Uttarakhand 5, in Karnataka, Gujarat and Bihar, 3 each, and Telangana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Kerala 2 each, were detained."

"Fresh FIRs were registered in Delhi and Karnataka during the operation. The cases have been registered under provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Arms Act, Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act and Explosive Substances Act," the statement said.

According to the statement, Shahzad Bhatti | [More on P6](#)

India's spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, Kashmiriyat reflect confluence of cultures: LG

Says dialogue not merely exchange of words but bridge between hearts

KT News Desk

Pulwama, Aug 17: Asserting that India's soil has for centuries, welcomed faiths, cultures, and traditions from across the world, weaving them into the fabric of the country, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday said this confluence of traditions is visible today in the philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam—the world is one family—and in the ethos of Kashmiriyat.

Addressing Mulaqat programme in Pulwama, an initiative of Save Youth, Save Future Foundation, dedicated to fostering interfaith dialogue, harmony, and the preservation of India's shared heritage, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Confluence of traditions is visible today in the philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam—the world is one family—and in the



ethos of Kashmiriyat, which teaches that true identity lies in conduct and humanity, not in labels of faith or community."

The Lieutenant Governor emphasized that dialogue is not merely an exchange of words but a bridge between hearts, a means of nurturing trust and a path to peace and prosperity.

Quoting ancient wisdom from the Rig Veda—*"S a n g a c h c h a d h w a m Samvadadhwaam, Sam Vo*

Manamsi Janatam", the Lieutenant Governor reminded the gathering that walking together, conversing together and making space for one another in our hearts is the essence of India's civilizational ethos. He noted that diversity is not a weakness but the nation's greatest strength, a heritage safeguarded through mutual trust and respect.

"Mutual trust and respect to all faiths and | [More on P6](#)

Centre should not interfere in state matters: CM Omar

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Aug 17: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday called for greater devolution of powers to states, saying issues such as education and health should be left to state governments and the Centre should focus on matters under its domain.

Speaking with reporters, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), he asked the Centre to leave the state issues to the state and focus on their own issues.

He said the weakening of states was not solely the result of policies pursued by the BJP, arguing that successive central governments had also contributed to the trend.

Referring to the previous Congress-led UPA government, he said they too have played a role in centralising powers.



"It is not only the fault of BJP. Different central governments have played this role of weakening the states," he said.

He said the resignation of Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over NEET row is an example of the consequences of excessive centralisation.

On the BJP's protest against the National Conference-led government in Jammu, he said the opposition party was expected to | [More on P6](#)

Embrace your responsibility towards nature, living beings: LG Sinha to youth

Asks people to ensure dev remains sustainable, in harmony with nature Visits Shri Ramakrishna Mahasammelan Ashram in Anantnag

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Aug 17: Urging people to ensure that development remains sustainable and in harmony with nature, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday urged the youth to embrace their responsibility towards rivers, forests, animals, and all living beings.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), LG Sinha today visited the Shri Ramakrishna Mahasammelan Ashram in Anantnag on the auspicious occasion of Samadhi Pratishtha Divas, Nag Panchami Mahotsav, and the Purnahuti of the Yajna. He also laid the foundation stone for initiatives dedicated to heritage and cultural



preservation.

While addressing the gathering LG Sinha said, "Indian civilisation has always seen spirituality and nature as inseparable."

Quoting the Isha Upanishad, he reminded the gathering that the Divine pervades all

creation. He reminded the youth about their responsibility towards the nature and other living beings.

The Lieutenant Governor expressed deep reverence for the Ashram, which has preserved the wisdom of sages. Paying homage to Swami Ashokanand Ji Maharaj, the Lieutenant Governor recalled his visionary resolve in 1937, which transformed the Ashram into a vibrant spiritual centre. He noted that Swami Ashokanand Ji Maharaj envisioned not merely a place of worship but a living institution that carried forward the eternal message of Sanatana Dharma while serving the real needs of society.

"His legacy of service, discipline, and | [More on P6](#)

LG flags off holy Shri Budha Amarnath Ji Yatra

Wishes devotees embarking on sacred journey



KT News Desk

Jammu, Aug 17: Marking the commencement of the annual spiritual journey, the Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha today flagged off the first batch of devotees for the holy Shri Budha Amarnath Ji Yatra from the Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas, while extending warm wishes to all pilgrims for a safe and spiritually fulfilling pilgrimage.

The Lieutenant Governor expressed deep appreciation to the Baba Amarnath and Budha Amarnath Yatri Nyas along with VHP and Bajrang Dal, local authorities, langar organisations and civil society groups for their meticulous coordination and comprehensive arrangements ensuring the smooth conduct of the pilgrimage and the Budha Amarnath Ji Mela.

"The sacred journey to Baba Budha | [More on P6](#)

Woman dies, husband injured after scooter car collision

KNO Correspondent

Kathua, Aug 17: A woman died while her husband sustained injuries after the scooter they were travelling on was hit by an Alto car near Hiranagar Morh in Kathua district on Monday, officials said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the accident occurred near a petrol pump at Hiranagar Morh when an Alto car collided with the scooter.

He said that in the incident, the woman was killed while her husband sustained injuries. Both were shifted to a hospital, where the woman later succumbed to her injuries.

The deceased was identified as Reena Devi (42),

'J&K, Ladakh record negative power variation'

Riyaz Bhat

Srinagar, Aug 17: Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh have witnessed a negative variation of over 11 percent in power requirement during the solar hours and minus 7.2 percent during peak hours in the previous month.

According to the official documents showing the anticipated power supply position v/s actual power supply position (Provisional) of Northern Region during the month of July-2025 states that in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh it has anticipated power availability of 2520 MU's and requirement of 1775 MU's respectively.

The official figures accessed

by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) further reveal that the actual power availability was 1562 MU's whereas the requirement was 1570 MU's. It also states that there was a variation of minus 11 percent in power requirement and during the peak hours the union territories recorded a variation of minus 7.2 percent in power requirement respectively.

It also states that during the peak, NRPC has anticipated that there will be a peak power availability of 4130 Megawatts (MW's) and power requirement of 2964 MW's.

The documents said that there was variation of minus 7.2 percent | [More on P6](#)

23,000 govt vacancies fast-tracked this year in J&K: Minister

'1.35 lakh enterprise units planned for over 5 lakh youth; 33,000 trained under Mission Yuva'

Waris Fayaz

Srinagar, Aug 17: With youth employment emerging as a key focus, Jammu and Kashmir has fast-tracked 23,000 government vacancies this year and set a target of establishing 1.35 lakh enterprise units under Mission Yuva to support over five lakh youth.

During his Independence Day speech at Baramulla, Cabinet Minister Javed Ahmad



Dar, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said the 23,000 vacancies have been forwarded to the concerned recruitment agencies.

He exuded hope that the recruitment process would be completed soon, while stressing that the process of filling government vacancies would continue.

The Minister said the government is pursuing

employment opportunities through both government recruitment and the private sector, while entrepreneurship and skill development remained key components of its youth-focused initiatives.

"Under Mission Yuva, the government has planned 1.35 lakh enterprise units aimed at creating opportunities for more than five lakh youth across Jammu and Kashmir. More than one lakh applications had been received under the initiative so far, while over 29,000 units had received funding through banks, he said, adding that over 33,000 youth have also received skill training under Mission Yuva," he said, adding | [More on P6](#)

Man killed, 11 injured in Rajouri accident

KNO Correspondent

Rajouri, Aug 17: A man was killed while 11 others were injured after a vehicle skidded off the road in the Thadikassi Tandwal area of Rajouri district on Monday, officials said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the accident occurred around noon when a vehicle bearing registration number JK11G-8874 skidded off the road and hit several vehicles in the area.

He said that following the accident, a rescue operation was launched and the injured were immediately evacuated to Government Medical College (GMC) Rajouri for treatment.

The official added that a man identified as | [More on P6](#)

SIA Kashmir arrests absconding narco-terror operative in Jammu

Uncovers wider conspiracy involving Pak/PoK-based operatives linked with Hizb | SIA secures Interpol Red Corner Notice against terrorist handler, narco-terror operative

Srinagar, Aug 17: Marking a significant breakthrough in its investigation into the smuggling of narcotics from across the Line of Control (LoC) and the alleged use of drug proceeds to finance terrorist activities, the State Investigation Agency (SIA) Kashmir has arrested an absconding operative allegedly involved in a narco-terror financing network.

In a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) a SIA spokesman said the accused Manoj Kumar Bhat alias Pintu, son of P

K Bhat of Rehari Colony, Bakshi Nagar, Jammu was apprehended during a special operation conducted in Jammu.

Bhat was wanted in connection with FIR No. 13/2022, registered by SIA Kashmir on June 3, 2022, in connection with the alleged smuggling and distribution of narcotics and channelisation of the proceeds towards terror financing. He had reportedly been evading arrest for nearly four years, the spokesman said.

"The SIA investigation has uncovered a wider narco-terror

conspiracy allegedly involving Pakistan/PoK-based operatives linked with the Hizbul Mujahideen (HM). Narcotics were allegedly trafficked into Jammu and Kashmir, distributed through a local network and the proceeds from their sale subsequently channelled towards activities sustaining the terrorist ecosystem," he said, adding, "Bhat allegedly played a role in facilitating the sale and distribution of narcotics in the Jammu division. His arrest followed sustained efforts involving technical surveillance,



human intelligence and coordinated investigative measures."

The investigation, the spokesman said, has also

revealed alleged links with Pakistan/PoK-based terrorist handlers, including Imtiyaz Ahmad Kandoo alias Kandoo, son of Abdul Khaliq Kandoo of Kralteeng, Sopore, and Manzoor Ahmad Khan, son of late Abdul Majeed Khan of Baramulla, Panzala, Baramulla. "These individuals facilitated the trafficking of narcotics from PoK, which were subsequently collected, distributed and sold through a network operating in J&K," he said.

The spokesman said that the case was initially registered

following the recovery of one kilogram of heroin from Zeeshan Ahmad Sofi and Waseem Ahmad Khan at Nowpora, Sopore. Subsequent investigation led to the recovery of seven kilograms of poppy straw and four kilograms of poppy seeds. The SIA had earlier also recovered 15 grams of heroin from the residential premises of Manoj Kumar Bhat. "One motorcycle and electronic gadgets have also been seized and are currently undergoing forensic and technical examination," | [More on P6](#)

Sakeena Itoo calls for time-bound completion of projects, optimal utilisation of funds

Reviews progress on implementation of various projects in Health, Education, Social Welfare Deptts

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 17: Minister for Health & Medical Education, School Education, Higher Education and Social Welfare, Sakeena Itoo Monday chaired a high-level meeting to review the action taken and progress achieved on decisions taken during earlier review meetings, with particular focus on major infrastructure and development projects being implemented by the Health, Education and Social Welfare departments across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by Commissioner Secretary Education, Ram Niwas Sharma; Special Secretaries of Higher Education, Health and Education Departments; Directors of Health Services Jammu and Kashmir; Directors of School Education Jammu and Kashmir; Principals of Government Medical Colleges and other senior officers of the concerned departments.

The Minister undertook a comprehensive review of the physical and financial progress of various ongoing projects, including infrastructure works, Capex and SASCI projects, utilisation of funds, procurement of equipment and implementation of decisions taken in previous review meetings.

Emphasising the importance of translating sanctioned projects into tangible outcomes for the



people, Sakeena Itoo directed the officers to ensure strict adherence to timelines, close monitoring of execution and clear accountability at every stage. She stressed that financial expenditure must correspond with actual physical progress and called for immediate resolution of bottlenecks causing delays.

Reviewing healthcare infrastructure in Kashmir, the Minister was informed that the 125-bedded District Hospital at Reshipora, Budgam has achieved 75 per cent physical progress and is targeted for completion by March 2027. The status of various SASCI projects was also reviewed.

The meeting was further informed that a proposal for establishment of a Critical Care Hospital Block at Uri has been initiated, with five kanals of land identified at Mohara.

In Jammu division, the

Minister reviewed the proposed Trauma Centre at Surankote, new UT Capex works and the 100-bedded Hospital at Sunderbani. She was informed that construction of the Sunderbani hospital is nearing completion, while equipment worth ₹66 lakh has been requisitioned and the facility is expected to be made operational shortly.

The Minister also reviewed infrastructure and other development works at GMC Handwara, GMC Srinagar, SKIMS Medical College Bemina, GMC Rajouri, Government Ayurvedic College Akhnoor, GMC Kathua, GMC Jammu and GMC Anantnag.

At GMC Rajouri and GMC Kathua, she took stock of Capex and CSS works, functioning of Dental Units and procurement of essential equipment. The meeting was informed that

the upgradation of the GNM Nursing School to a Nursing College at GMC Rajouri has achieved 65 per cent progress, while construction of the Teaching Hospital at GMC Kathua is at an advanced stage.

At GMC Jammu, the Minister reviewed the status of Capex and CSS works and was apprised that several projects have either been completed or are nearing completion. The functioning of the Emergency Dental Unit and District Early Intervention Centre at SMGS Hospital was also assessed.

Sakeena Itoo directed the concerned officers to accord top priority to procurement of critical medical equipment and completion of healthcare infrastructure, noting that timely availability of facilities and equipment has a direct bearing on the quality and accessibility of patient care.

Budgam's Kani Craft shines on National Stage

DC hails artisans for National Handloom Award

KT News Desk

BUDGAM, AUGUST 17: Deputy Commissioner Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, has extended warm congratulations to renowned Kani artisans of Kanihama village, Fayaz Ahmad Wani and his student Manzoor Ahmad Hajam, on being conferred the prestigious National Handloom Award 2025 by President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu.

The award, as per an official statement, was presented to the duo in New Delhi on August 7 in the weaving category for their exceptional craftsmanship showcased through a Chanddar Kani Shawl, reflecting Kashmir's exquisite artistic heritage and centuries-old weaving tradition.

The DC felicitated both artisans during the award ceremony of Independence Day function at Sports Stadium Budgam and lauded them for bringing distinction to Budgam and Jammu & Kashmir at the national level, describing the honour as a proud moment for the district and a significant recognition of Kashmir's rich handloom legacy.

He appreciated their dedication and perseverance in reviving a nearly 400-year-old Kani design and transforming it into a masterpiece through traditional techniques. The award-winning shawl reportedly took over 15 months of painstaking work to complete.

The Deputy Commissioner particularly commended Fayaz Ahmad Wani for keeping the traditional craft alive



and passing the skill to successive generations. Having trained more than 50 people in Kani weaving, his contribution has helped preserve the craft while creating avenues for sustainable livelihoods.

He also appreciated Manzoor Ahmad Hajam, who has been associated with his teacher's Kani weaving unit for the past 25 years, describing their achievement as a fine example of the traditional Guru-Shishya tradition through which Kashmir's indigenous crafts have been preserved across generations.

The DC stressed the importance of promoting traditional crafts among the youth, encouraging young

artisans to take up Kani weaving and other indigenous crafts as avenues for livelihood, entrepreneurship and cultural preservation.

He said national recognition to local artisans provides renewed impetus to efforts aimed at safeguarding Kashmir's unique artistic traditions and ensuring that traditional knowledge and skills continue to flourish among future generations.

The District Administration Budgam reiterated its commitment to supporting artisans, weavers and craftsmen and creating an enabling environment for the promotion of local handlooms and handicrafts.

District Admin Bandipora marks Har Ghar Tiranga culmination with giant Map of India at SK Stadium



KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, AUGUST 17: District Administration Bandipora, in collaboration with the Department of School Education, Bandipora, organised the grand culmination of the Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign-2026 at SK Stadium, Bandipora, in connection with the 150 Years' Commemoration of

"Vande Mataram."

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, presided over the programme as the Chief Guest. The event, as per an official statement, witnessed enthusiastic participation of around 10,000 students along with teaching and non-teaching staff from educational institutions across the district.

Despite the hot weather, the students participated with great enthusiasm, carrying the Tricolour and joining in various activities that reflected patriotism, national unity and pride in the nation.

A major highlight of the programme was the creation of a giant Map of India by the students, who collectively formed and filled

the map, presenting a striking visual expression of national unity and the spirit of Vande Mataram.

The initiative showcased the creativity, discipline, coordination and patriotic enthusiasm of the students and emerged as a special attraction of the event.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner appreciated the enthusiasm and spirit displayed by the students. She lauded the students for their remarkable presentation of the Map of India and said that such initiatives serve as a source of encouragement and inspire everyone to contribute more towards the nation.

The DC also appreciated the efforts of teachers and educational institutions for facilitating the participation of students and nurturing in them the values of patriotism, unity and respect for the National Flag. The students participated with pride in the celebrations and joined in the singing of the National Anthem.

DC reviews Farmer's ID Generation Camp under Agristack project in Kulgam

KT News Desk

KULGAM, AUGUST 17: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam along with Additional Deputy Commissioner, Vikar Ahmad Giri Monday visited the Farmer's ID generation camp organized under the Agristack Project at Tehsil Kulgam, to take an on-the-spot assessment of the ongoing registration and digitisation drive.

During the visit, the DC supervised the entire process and interacted with the revenue staff present at the camp especially scheduled for Tamiloo village. He took a detailed overview of the data being submitted, verified and approved on the Agristack portal to ensure accuracy and transparency at every stage.

Addressing the officials, the DC described Agristack as a landmark initiative and a milestone in the history of the Revenue Department. He said that generation of unique Farmers ID will create a comprehensive digital database of farmers,

which will streamline delivery of all agriculture-related benefits and schemes in a hassle-free manner.

"The Farmers ID will serve as a single digital identity for every farmer. It will enable direct benefit transfer, crop insurance, soil health cards, and access to institutional credit without duplication and delays," the DC said. "Our aim is to ensure that no eligible farmer is left out," he added.

The DC, as per an official statement, directed the revenue officials and field staff to expedite the process and complete the exercise efficiently and within the stipulated timeline. He stressed on maintaining data quality, proper verification, and prompt updation on the portal to avoid pendency.

He also urged the field functionaries to create wider awareness among farmers about the benefits of Agristack and to extend full support to farmers, especially elderly and marginal farmers, during the registratpn process.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

DIRECTORATE OF TOURISM, KASHMIR

Email : dydirectorestates@gmail.com, Tel / Fax 0914 - 2502279 / 2502281

E- Bid Document (Auction ID:)

Out-sourcing of "Operation Management" of 1 DBL Bedroom Hut at Reshwari Langate for a period of 03+02 years on License Basis through GeM Portal.

No: Estates / 285 / DTK /375 dated:- 14 / 08 /2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of J&K Union Territory, e - bids are invited online through GeM Portal for Outsourcing the "Operation Management" of 1 DBL Bedroom Hut at Reshwari Langate for a period of 03+02-years on License Basis through GeM Portal. The details are as under:

S.No	Particulars	Date/Amount	Remarks
1	PQ (Pre-Qualification) Submission Start Date	18.08.2026 10:00 AM	Nil
2	PQ (Pre-Qualification) Submission End Date	25.08.2026 04:00 PM	Nil
3	PQ (Pre-Qualification) Assessment End Date & Time	28.08.2026 04:00 PM	Nil
4	EMD Start Date	31.08.2026 10:00 AM	Nil
5	EMD End Date	01.09.2026 4:00 PM	Nil
6	EMD (Bid Security) Amount in shape of CDR/FDR/DD	Rs. 12,000 /- (Rupees Twelve Thousand Only)	To be pledged in favour of Accounts Officer, Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir.
7	Bid Submission/Auction Start Date	03.09.2026 10:00 AM	Nil
8	Bid Submission/Auction End Date & Time	04.09.2026 4:00 PM	Nil
9	Reserve Bid Amount	Rs.1,20,000/- (Rupees One Lakh and Twenty Thousand Only)	Nil
10	Bidding Time Extension	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

The e-auction shall be finalized by the Outsourcing Committee under the Chairmanship of Director Tourism, Kashmir. Reliable/ resourceful and experienced agencies/persons, who fulfill the ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA (PRE QUALIFICATION) detailed as under shall only be eligible to participate in the e - bidding process.

PRE -QUALIFICATION (PQ) CRITERIA (TO BE UPLOADED ON GEM PORTAL)

- The bidder should be a domicile of J&K shall upload a valid domicile certificate or state subject.
- The bidder shall have to upload a Character Certificate from the concerned Additional Dy. Commissioner (ADC) / Police Station or alternatively copy of a valid PASSPORT.
- The bidder shall have to upload self-attested PAN Card & Aadhar Card.

DIPK-4635/26
DATED: 17-08-2026

Sd/-
Dy. Director Tourism,
Estates.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, WATER WORKS DIVISION SRINAGAR

HQ:-Kothibagh Srinagar

Phone No.: 0194-2477207, email:- xen-wwdsgr@jk.gov.in ; xenwwd@gmail.com

Short Term E-NIT. No. 30/WWDD/Sgr/Civil of 2026-27 Dated 13.08.2026

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor UT of J&K, e-Tenders are invited from Registered/Approved and valid Civil Class of Contractors/Agencies/Firms registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments and whose registrations are renewed for current financial year for the following works on "Percentage Basis in Double Cover System":

Table-I						
S. No	Name of Work	Estd. Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Tender Doc. Fee (in Rs.)	Head of Account	T.O.C in Days
1	Improvement of water supply from Abdul Rashid Sofi to Abdul Rashid Bhat at Hera Angan Hyderpora	0.95	1900/-	100/-	CDF	15 Days
2	Improvement of water supply from main to House of Mr Taugeer at Al Farouq Colony Rawalpore.	0.77	1540/-	100/-		15 Days

Position of AAA:- Accorded

The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings (if any), Book of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms, conditions of contract and other details can be seen / downloaded from the website: www.jktenders.gov.in As per schedule of dates given below

Table (II)

01	Date of publishing of Tender Notice (Online)	14.08.2026
02	Period of downloading of bidding documents	14.08.2026 TO 24.08.2026 4:00 PM
03	Bid Submission Start Date	14.08.2026
04	Bid submission End Date	24.08.2026 04:00 PM
06	Date and time of opening of Bids (Online)	25.08.2026 2:00 PM

No:-WW/Sgr/CC/3749-59 Dated: 13.08.2026

DIPK-4645/26
DATED: 17-08-2026

CM Omar meets delegations, individuals

- Discusses public, tourism and trade-related issues
- Felicitates MMA fighter Owais Yaqoob



KT News Desk

Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday met several delegations and individuals at Raabita here and discussed a range of issues concerning public welfare, tourism, sports, labour, trade and industry in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Chief Minister met MLA Beerwah Dr Shafi Ahmad Wani, who apprised him of various matters concerning his constituency. A delegation from the constituency, also accompanied the Legislator during the meeting.

The Chief Minister also met emerging professional MMA fighter from Pulwama, Owais Yaqoob, and congratulated him on his achievements in

the field of mixed martial arts. He felicitated Yaqoob with a cash award of ₹1 lakh in recognition of his impressive performances on the international stage. Yaqoob recently secured a first-round TKO victory over Bulgaria's Delian Georgiev.

A delegation of the Travel Agents Association of Kashmir (TAAK), led by its Secretary General Sajad Ahmad Kralyari, also called on the Chief Minister and discussed various issues concerning the tourism sector.

The Chief Minister further met a delegation of the Kashmir Labour Union's Federation, led by its President Mohammad Ashraf Gani.

The delegation apprised him of its concerns and

suggestions regarding the Draft Code on Social Security (Jammu and Kashmir) Rules, 2026.

Senior Vice President of the Bari Brahmana Industrial Association, Tarun Singla, also called on the Chief Minister and discussed various issues related to trade and industry in Jammu and Kashmir.

On the occasion, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary and Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani were also present.

The Chief Minister gave a patient hearing to the delegations and individuals and assured them that their genuine concerns would be examined and addressed on priority.

Div Com chairs J&K's 1st Int'l Film Festival prep

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Aug 17: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg on Monday chaired a meeting to review preparations for the 1st International Film Festival of J&K (IFFJK), scheduled to be held from September 7 to 10 and organised by the Department of Information and Public relations jammu and kashmir.

The meeting deliberated on the objectives of the festival, the proposed programme of events, and coordination among various government departments and stakeholders to ensure its successful conduct.

Director Information and Public Relations Shreya Singhal, at the outset, made a detailed presentation outlining the vision and objectives of the festival, including promotion of cinematic excellence, cultural exchange, creative collaboration, emerging filmmaking talent and international industry engagement.

He apprised the meeting of the planned activities, including the opening and closing

ceremonies, curated film screenings, masterclasses, panel discussions, jury and filmmaker interactions, film tourism initiatives, networking and business meetings, and dedicated engagement with students and young filmmakers.

While reviewing the arrangements, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir directed all the concerned departments to designate nodal officers for effective inter-departmental coordination and seamless execution of the film festival-related activities.

He also directed the Director Information and Public Relations to prepare a comprehensive work chart for the event manager and participating departments, clearly defining roles, responsibilities and timelines.

Emphasising the promotion of Kashmir's tourism potential, particularly emerging destinations, Anshul Garg directed the Tourism Department to undertake focused branding of new tourist locations to attract filmmakers and international visitors. He also called for appropriate branding of shikaras and boats being utilised



during the festival. The Divisional Commissioner further stressed the need to integrate cultural programmes with the festival and showcase Kashmir's rich handloom and handicraft products at identified venues.

He advised the

preparation of food menu suited to national and international guests and directed that bilingual service providers be designated through the outsourced agencies to facilitate effective communication. Anshul Garg also called for organising

heritage tours to locations identified by JKTDC and the Handicrafts & Handloom Department. He reviewed plans for customised tour packages, sightseeing programmes and transportation arrangements for visiting guests.

The Divisional Commissioner issued a series of directions to officers from the Airport Authority, District Administrations of Srinagar and Baramulla, Srinagar Municipal Corporation, Floriculture, KPDCL, Transport, Health, LCMA, AACL, Handicrafts & Handloom, Hospitality & Protocol, Education and Police departments regarding their roles and responsibilities.

The meeting was attended by the Deputy Commissioners of Srinagar and Baramulla, Commissioner SMC, Director Information and Public Relations J&K, Director Floriculture, Director Airport, Managing Director KPDCL, Vice Chairman LCMA, Joint Director Information Headquarters, Joint Director Information Kashmir, besides senior officers of the Information Department and other concerned departments.

Thousands offer 'Khoja Digar' at Naqshband Sahib shrine

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Aug 17: An ocean of devotion swept through Srinagar's Old City on Monday evening as thousands of devotees rushed towards the historic Naqshband Sahib shrine to participate in the centuries-old tradition of 'Khoja Digar'.

From elderly devotees carrying memories of the tradition for decades to young faithful joining the congregation with their families, the gathering brought together generations of Kashmiris at Khawaja Bazar, Srinagar.

"I have been attending the prayer for decades. Earlier, I used to come with my elders, and now I come with children and grandchildren," Mohammad Salam Dar, 70, from Habba Kadal said.

For other devotees, the annual gathering is not only a religious observance but also a way of keeping alive a tradition passed down through generations.

"It is important for us to be here and be part of this tradition. We have heard about it from our elders, and now we want the younger generation to experience it too," said Mukhtar Ahmad, a devotee in his 30s.

The traditional prayer, observed on the third day of Rabi-ul-Awwal, is associated with Hazrat Khwaja Naqshband



Sahib (RA) and the Naqshbandi spiritual order.

The shrine and adjoining streets remained packed as devotees offered Asr prayers and recited Awraad-e-Asriya, with special prayers also offered for peace, prosperity and the well-being of Jammu and Kashmir.

The congregation extended onto the Nowhatta-Khanyar road stretch, as devotees from different parts of the Valley joined the annual observance.

Authorities and shrine management had made arrangements for security and the convenience of devotees, while the huge gathering also affected traffic movement in several downtown areas.

Long queues of vehicles were reported in Rainawari, Khanyar, Nowpora, Bohri

Kadal, Hawal and adjoining areas following the closure of the Khawaja Bazar road for the congregation.

Meanwhile, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, who traditionally leads the Khoja Digar prayers, said he had been placed under house arrest and prevented from attending the gathering.

"Ahead of the centuries-old tradition of Khoje Digar at the shrine of Naqshband Sahib, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq has been placed under house arrest, barring him from delivering the traditional sermon and offering prayers at the historic shrine," the Mirwaiz Manzil said in a post on X.

Despite his absence, thousands continued to gather at the shrine, turning the historic lanes of downtown Srinagar into a sea of prayer, faith and tradition—(KNO)

BJP hold massive protests in Jammu

KNO

Jammu, Aug 17: Hundreds of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) workers on Monday staged protests at several locations in Jammu against the National Conference-led government, alleging failure to fulfil election promises and address issues related to unemployment, civic amenities and development. Three separate protests, led by J&K BJP president Sat Sharma, MP Jugal Kishore Sharma and Leader of Opposition in the J&K Assembly Sunil Sharma, were held at Dogra Chowk, Maheshpura and Panjirthi respectively before marching towards the Civil Secretariat through Shalimar Road.

Carrying party flags and placards, the protesters raised slogans against the NC-Congress alliance and burnt effigies of the government.

Police and paramilitary personnel were deployed along the protest routes and around the Civil Secretariat. BJP Mahila Morcha workers also participated in the demonstration. Sat Sharma accused the NC-led government of failing to deliver on promises made during the elections and alleged that the issue of restoration of statehood was being used to divert public attention from governance-related concerns.

He said the BJP wanted the government to work effectively and would continue to act as a "constructive opposition", but warned that the party would intensify its agitation at district, town and local levels if public concerns were not addressed.

Jugal Kishore Sharma alleged that the government had failed to provide adequate basic amenities, including roads, electricity and drinking water, despite repeated assurances. He demanded that the government take responsibility for its alleged failures.

LoP Sharma accused the administration of corruption and poor governance, saying the BJP had initially sought to confine its role to constructive opposition but was compelled to take its campaign to the streets over what he described as continued failures.

MLA Sham Lal Sharma alleged discrimination against the Jammu region and said the government would be held accountable both inside the Assembly and on the streets.

MLA Vikram Randhawa also criticised Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, alleging that the government was more focused on protocol and political posturing than addressing public concerns.

BJP Mahila Morcha president Neha Mahajan raised issues concerning employment opportunities for youth, unemployment and commitments made to women during the elections.

The BJP leaders also questioned the NC government over its demands for restoration of statehood, stating that the Centre had already indicated that statehood would be restored at an appropriate time, and alleged that the government had failed to deliver on its electoral commitments—(KNO)

Journalists in Press Colony raise concern over stray dog menace

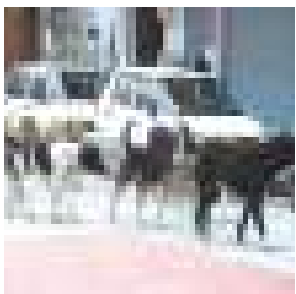
Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Aug 17: Getting to work turned into a run for safety for journalists at Srinagar's Press Colony on Monday, after a pack of stray dogs chased senior journalist and Kashmir Monitor newspaper founder Zafar Meraj outside his office.

Meraj fell while trying to escape and sustained injuries, but was not bitten.

The episode has also left other journalists concerned.

Umar Ganie, a photojournalist with Kashmir Monitor, told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that he was forced to avoid the main entrance and enter



his office through the back door as the dogs continued to remain around the premises.

"The dogs have created a scary situation here. I had to enter the office through the back door today," Ganie said.

Later, SMC workers reached the spot and removed two

dead puppies lying in front of a newspaper office, while their mother remained there. "The mother dog in front of the newspaper office is aggressive and cannot be relocated," an SMC worker who arrived with a dog-catching van said.

The incident has once again highlighted the stray-dog menace in Press Colony, where journalists and other employees have repeatedly raised concerns over the presence of stray dogs.

Last week, a correspondent of JKNS and Daily Gadyal was bitten by stray dogs near the R2 quarters in Press Colony.

KNO had earlier reported

Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in

Bear attacks keep Khonmoh on edge

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar: Khonmoh outskirts of Srinagar city, re-mained on edge on Monday after a 30-year-old man was injured in a bear attack, the third such incident reported in the area within the past 24 hours, officials said.

The latest attack took place at Sarhandi Colony, where Muzaffar Ahmad Bhat, son of Ghulam Hassan Bhat, was attacked by the bear and later shifted to SMHS Hospital, Srinagar. His condition is stated to be stable.

An official from the Wildlife Division, Khonmoh that a cage has been installed, and teams are continuing search-es to trace the animal. "The bear had come in search of food and shelter. There are several corn fields in the area and human habitation is nearby. We have been searching for it since yesterday and have also installed a cage," the official said.

The latest attack follows an attack on a man on Monday morning and another on a 57-year-old woman on Sunday, making it the third bear attack reported in Khonmoh within 24 hours. The Wildlife Department has intensified searches in the area as efforts continue to capture the bear—(KNO)

'Fisheries Dept seizes 4,000 gill nets'

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Aug 17: Chief Project Officer (CPO) of the Fisheries Department Dr Nahida Akhter on Monday said that gill nets are illegal in Kashmir and strict action will be taken against those involved in their use.

Akhter said the use of gill nets poses a threat to fish production as the nets trap juvenile and smaller fish, affecting the sustainability of fisheries as well as the livelihood of professional fishermen.

"Gill nets are illegal. They trap small and juvenile fish, which automatically affects fish production and directly impacts the employment of fishermen," she said.

Explaining the difference between permitted and illegal fishing practices, Akhter said professional fishermen generally use cast nets, which allow them to target marketable fish, while gill nets with smaller mesh sizes can indiscriminately trap smaller fish.

"We are trying to stop illegal fishing. Our staff works in the field day and night. Whenever we receive information about illegal fishing, our teams immediately move to the



spot and take action," she said.

The department has seized around 4,000 gill nets since the end of March, Akhter said, adding that about 150 such nets had been seized so far this year.

She said the number of illegal nets being used appeared to be declining as awareness among people

increased.

The department also undertakes annual stocking of fish seed to support the fishing community and improve catches, she said.

Akhter said the Fisheries Department issues different categories of licences, including rod licences for recreational or sport fishing and

professional fishing licences for registered fishermen who depend on fishing for their livelihood.

She said line fishing involving multiple hooks is also prohibited and violators can be fined.

On enforcement in Dal Lake, Akhter acknowledged that the department faces staff shortages despite the need for round-the-clock monitoring. "Dal Lake is a very large area. We need at least 20 to 25 employees to cater to it, but there is a shortage of staff," she said.

According to her, the available personnel work in rotations and remain alert to complaints of illegal fishing. Teams equipped with motorboats are deployed to reach reported locations as quickly as possible.

Akhter also said the department had issued more than 1,870 licences up to March last year and had already issued over 500 licences so far this year as part of its routine licensing process.

The department is also targeting a 10 per cent increase in revenue from registered fishermen compared with last year, she said, adding that the number of licence holders was also increasing—(KNO)

EDITORIAL

Build Back Better: Every Reconstructed Asset Must Be More Resilient

The review of Jammu and Kashmir's Rs 1,579 crore disaster recovery package is a welcome step, but it also raises a fundamental question: are we finally learning from our disasters, or are we simply rebuilding what was lost? Departments have prepared costed action plans worth Rs 1,225.78 crore, with the housing sector achieving 100 per cent commitment

of its Rs 193.19 crore allocation, covering over 9,000 households. The Roads & Bridges component has planned its entire Rs 461.64 crore allocation for restoring nearly 1,231 kilometres of roads and over 4,400 metres of bridges. These are significant achievements. However, the true test of this recovery programme lies not in how much money is spent, but in how wisely it

is spent. The government's emphasis on the 'Build Back Better' approach is the most important takeaway from the meeting. For too long, we have treated disaster recovery as a mechanical exercise—restoring roads, bridges, and houses to their pre-disaster condition, only to watch them crumble again in the next flood or cloudburst. This cycle must end. The directive to incorporate

disaster-resilient features—compliance with Seismic Zone IV/V requirements, elevated plinths, and slope stabilisation measures—is long overdue. Similarly, the insistence on geo-tagging all projects and uploading them on the BEAMS digital platform will bring much-needed transparency and accountability to the recovery process. The cross-verification of beneficiary lists with major

ongoing schemes to avoid duplication is another sensible step. Public money is scarce, and every rupee must count. What is particularly encouraging is the focus on grievance redressal, with a clear 15-day timeline for resolving E-Samadhan and CPGRAMS complaints. This shows that the administration is serious about ensuring that relief reaches those who need it most.

The recovery programme must deliver more than just rebuilt infrastructure. It must deliver a more resilient Jammu and Kashmir—one that can withstand the next disaster with greater strength and less suffering. The government has set the right tone. Now it is up to the executing agencies to translate this vision into reality. The people of Jammu and Kashmir deserve nothing less.

How Corporations Can Mitigate An AI Jobocalypse

Many large firms are still running pilots and postponing hiring or firing decisions as they await more clarity

Raghuram G. Rajan

Artificial intelligence-related job displacement is coming, though no one knows how fast it will proceed, how far it will go, and which sectors it will affect most. Much depends on the pace at which individual firms apply the technology to their operations. A recent US Census Bureau Business Trends and Outlook Survey indicates that only 20 percent of firms with fewer than 20 employees currently use AI, compared to 37 percent of businesses with at least 250 employees. While larger firms are doing more with the technology, 37 percent is still quite meager considering the survey's low threshold for answering in the affirmative (whether AI is used "in any business function").

For now, adoption is being impeded by the difficulty of integrating already astonishing AI capabilities into existing workflows in a way that will allow companies to reap the benefits fully. Doing so requires models that are not only trained on existing data but also adaptive to new data generated through everyday use. Another factor inhibiting adoption is uncertainty about cost. Many large firms are still running pilots and postponing hiring or firing decisions as they await more clarity. Eventually, however, competitive pressures will force them to adopt the technology more fully.

The outlook for jobs is not entirely pessimistic. If companies continue producing the goods and services they currently produce, AI adoption will have the effect that any new technology has. Yes, some jobs will be rendered redundant (implying displacement); but some jobs will be made more productive and exciting as AI removes drudgery and assists with tasks humans do less well, and new jobs will be created (such as AI engineers who supervise the technology's implementation).

Moreover, if AI adoption occurs because of the productivity increases it brings (rather than because it costs less in taxes than human effort), firms' ability to



produce more for less will allow them to reduce prices and increase sales. This is the famous Jevons effect, which should also increase the number of jobs.

Yet another reason for optimism is that AI may help create new businesses. Jill might hesitate to become an entrepreneur selling driftwood furniture pieces because she also needs a web programmer and an accountant to start up. With AI performing both those roles, perhaps she can set up a sole proprietorship at significantly less cost. The number of startups increased significantly during the pandemic and has increased further in recent quarters.

As the economist David Autor points out,

AI can also equip moderately skilled workers with higher-order skills, as in the case of a nurse practitioner who can diagnose and treat many more illnesses with the help of medical AI. Given the enormous demand for medical services worldwide, and also services more generally, there is plenty of room for further job creation.

But even if the jobocalypse is less severe than many feared, minimizing its effects is still necessary to maintain social solidarity, and corporations will need to be enlisted in the effort. After all, it is they who will have the best sense of the new opportunities that their employees can re-train for. The first task for any government, then, is

to identify and address all the ways the tax system biases corporations against human labor. For example, a US firm contributes social security payments for every worker, but not for AI.

In a world where governments are already cash-strapped, one way to level the playing field is to levy a tax on the AI tokens a firm uses. The precise tax rate will need to be calculated carefully to avoid impeding AI deployment, but it can be set low initially and then gradually raised with experience. While payments to domestic AI providers can be tracked easily, foreign providers would also have to be brought into the net; but this is not an

insoluble problem.

Recognizing that the first round of AI displacement will not be the last, it will be even more valuable to get firms to re-train workers periodically, and to retain workers whenever possible. Perhaps governments could consider a tax credit for additional training provided to workers, with one-third of the value usable each year a worker retains employment (and not necessarily with the firm that provided the latest training). If the government wants to apply such a policy to AI adopters, it could even require the credit to be used only to offset the token tax.

More important than tax incentives, however, will be firms' acknowledgement that they are fully engaged in helping their employees cope with an uncertain future. As employment uncertainty grows, even the best and brightest may worry about accepting offers from an employer who could fire them whenever it finds that AI can do as well or better. Employers who promise to support their employees may ultimately enjoy an additional bonus: As their reputation grows, they will have a wider pool of high-quality candidates to choose from.

The trend here is encouraging. In ongoing work, Luigi Zingales, Pietro Ramella, and I find that the share of US Fortune 150 CEOs declaring in their letters to shareholders that they care about employee development which increased steadily, from around 20 percent in 2008 to 44 percent in 2023. We cannot rule out the possibility that this is all cheap talk. One hopes not. The more that corporations engage in what may be the defining business challenge of our time — providing good jobs for humans — the more we can all look forward to a future of plenty.

Raghuram G. Rajan, a former governor of the Reserve Bank of India and chief economist of the International Monetary Fund, is professor of finance at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

Courtesy: Project Syndicate

Are We In An Era Of 'Joyless Decadence'? Comparison is the thief of joy: Teddy Roosevelt

Ira Israel

The second time I met Esther Perel, I told her that she was a tremendous poet. The musicality of her ingenious ditties such as "How can you desire what you already have?" render them immediately iconoclastic and deliciously memorable.

Similar is the case for Michèle Mendelssohn and Charlie Tyson's concept expressed recently in The Guardian defining our current malaise—the simmering low-level dysthymia of our epoch—with a poetic twist worthy of Rilke: joyless decadence. The term aims to capture our era of people ceaselessly optimizing and going to extremes to appear hip, cool, rich and sexy yet remaining ultimately unsatisfied.

Twenty years of private practice psychotherapy have taught me what the famous Harvard longitudinal study demonstrated: that the quality of our intimate relationships predicts happiness more reliably than any other variable researchers have measured—more reliably than income, achievement, and the outside appearance of the body we incarnate. Everyday I meet people who on the outside have attained enviable

wealth and fame and yet feel dead inside.

The underlying competition in our social games of optimizing and maxxing—trying to take the coolest vacation, wear the coolest baseball hat, drive the coolest car, have the coolest shoes and handbags, and shop at the coolest stores—engenders constant comparison. This measuring ourselves against others, against our family and friends even, is the thief of joy.

So there is ultra-decadence as reported on our screens every morning and yet there is little joy. Life feels flat even though we're walking our 10,000 steps and taking all of our supplements, and getting thousands of likes on social media.

I'll give you a hint as to where this is going: Ten years ago in "How To Survive Your Childhood Now That You're An Adult," I wrote "One hug equals one million LIKES." In my office, where people come to escape the competition of unceasingly performing their exclusive lifestyle's beauty and success at their local cafes and gyms (and videoing it), I hear about daily loneliness. It turns out that all of this decadence is rather solitary; this "being the best version of myself" and "living my best life" is

at best solipsistic.

Ironically, even the optimizing of sensual pleasures—us gourmands—has grown increasingly joyless. The brief ecstasy of Erehwon's famous \$25 strawberry (yes, one strawberry) is more about the competition to acquire one of these trophies than the actual 30 seconds of savoring it.

Mendelssohn and Tyson describe an elite that treats even sexual vitality as a competition, something gamified by Our rings and Apple watches. They cite an OB-GYN who poetically branded her followers as the "Billionaire's Vagina Club"—women tracking their hormones for self-optimization, similar to the way many finance guys track and optimize their investment portfolios.

Y'see, joy is the real measure of the good life. You can have a large bank account and six-pack abs but neither correlate strongly scientifically with authentic happiness.

I took one of those "Navy Seal workout classes for rich people" in Brentwood last week. (It was a 10 am class, which suggested to me that nobody in the room had a 9-5 job.) It was an extremely rigorous exercise routine, and by the end of class my mat had the consistency of clam chowder. Like cultural anthropologist

Margaret Mead, here's what I observed: 30 people depositing their Louis Vuitton, Vuori, and Erehwon sacks gently in the back of the room, namedropping recent travel victories, and adding in push-ups during resting periods, obviously trying to rival Matt Damon's biceps (that are really not his biceps, according to the NY Times). This to me is the joyless decadence of looksmaxxing and biohacking that will eventually land in my office as dysthymia. "I'm doing everything right—so why do I feel dead inside?"

How Did Our Culture Become So Misguided?

Yes, you might attract a higher status mate with a billion dollars in crypto or a vagina worthy of a billionaire, but will that mate have the emotional capability of making you feel loved? Or will they be too busy reading their sleep and ovulation scores and other bio-metrics to spend quality time looking you lovingly in your eyes or hugging you?

If you've taken my classes, you know that I believe America is a giant resentment factory and the optimization culture that Mendelssohn and Tyson describe in their articles is its engine. We are raised to believe that being liked is a matter

of being impressive, that the body, the income, the gloss, and the glitz of our highly curated selves are the instruments of seduction that will make another person love us, so we spend our time performing an optimized persona instead of exposing our messy authentic selves to a cruel judgmental world. A dilemma: to be liked for who you are not or be left alone?

Trust me, only a fool wants it to say "Was Admired" on their tombstone.

Instead of competitive Navy Seal workouts, we need classes on how to connect authentically with other humans. And I'll give you a hint: it's not by comparing elite travel victories, handbags, or business cards à la "American Psycho."

Rather than teach people to optimize their physiques or pursue the kind of elective enhancement marketed to the wealthy as vitality, we should teach courses in the skills the Harvard study actually validates: having a sense of wonder, curiosity as a daily practice, active listening as a discipline, validating each other's emotional experiences, creating a balanced lifestyle, and choosing our words carefully. As Bruce Fink says, "Every speech act is a request for love." Ditto for every social media

post.

Yes, I live in a bizarrely beautiful and entertaining part of planet Earth, but if I had to find the most poetic way of describing the general feeling of the extreme California fitness and wellness craze, it would be "joyless decadence": engaging in outer and outward maxxing while feeling dead inside. Hoping that the latest and greatest trend will finally nourish our souls and give us the one thing we really crave: unconditional love.

But we've been duped. Happiness is an inside job. And competition and comparison are only fomenting more and more sad-sexy-rich people.

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Ira Israel, LMFT, is a therapist and author. Courtesy: Psychology Today

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CEO, FSSAI reviews food testing facilities in J&K Assesses infrastructure, capacity enhancement measures

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 17: Chief Executive Officer, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), Rajit Punhani, Monday visited Food Laboratory, Kashmir during his visit to Srinagar, to have on spot assessment about it's functioning.

During the visit, the CEO FSSAI, as per an official statement, took round of various sections, including Microbiological Section, Chemical Section and HEE Sections and interacted with the technical staff of the Laboratory.

Subsequently, the CEO FSSAI chaired a meeting which among others was attended by State Drug Controller J&K, Joint Commissioner Food Safety, Deputy Commissioner Food Safety Kashmir, Accounts Officer FDA and Food Analyst Food Testing Laboratory Srinagar and Jammu.

Commissioner, Food & Drugs Administration, J&K, made a detailed presentation outlining the laboratory's analytical capabilities, testing performance, NABL accreditation, infrastructure, manpower position and



the roadmap for strengthening food testing facilities across the Union Territory. It was informed that the Food Laboratory, Kashmir is an FSSAI-notified and NABL-accredited facility equipped with advanced instruments, including GC-MS/MS, LC-MS/MS and ICP-MS. The laboratory presently has a NABL scope covering 354 parameters, comprising 77 quality and 277 safety parameters.

The presentation highlighted

the testing workload handled during the last three financial years. The laboratory analyzed 11,479 samples in 2023-24, 9,938 in 2024-25 and 6,722 in 2025-26, out of which, 440, 266 and 381 samples respectively, were found to be non-conforming.

The meeting was informed that the steps have been initiated to expand the scope of Laboratory to 3500 parameters by end of 31st March, 2027

covering key commodities including milk and milk products, fruits and vegetables, cereal and cereal products, oils and fats and Indian sweets and achieve wider coverage of 5,000 parameters in the long run.

The Commissioner brought to the notice of the CEO, FSSAI the key constraints affecting the laboratory's functioning, including inadequate infrastructure, shortage of technical manpower. He also sought his intervention in approval of the proposal for hiring of Technical Manpower, Chemicals, CRMs Consumables etc. He requested the CEO, FSSAI for providing financial and technical assistance for construction of new laboratory building at Srinagar and Jammu and upgrading the facility to improve quantity and volume of testing.

The Food Laboratory, Kashmir is presently housed in an old, shared Drug & Food Laboratory complex, with limited space for modern equipment and dedicated instrument sections.

As part of the long-term strategy, the Department proposed developing an integrated Food Testing Laboratory network

across Jammu and Kashmir by leveraging the existing facilities in government institutions, including SKUAST and IUST, with suitable technical and manpower support. The initiative is intended to expand the overall testing capacity and facilitate timely analysis of samples received from different parts of the Union Territory.

The Commissioner, Food & Drugs Administration, J&K, expressed gratitude to Rajit Punhani, CEO, FSSAI, for visiting the Food Laboratory, Kashmir and for taking a keen interest in its functioning, analytical capabilities and capacity-building requirements.

The CEO, FSSAI expressed satisfaction on the working of laboratory and called upon the J&K FDA officials to continue their efforts for strengthening it further.

The visit and review are expected to provide further impetus to the department's efforts towards modernization of food testing facilities, expansion of NABL-accredited analytical capacity and establishment of a robust, integrated and scientifically strengthened food laboratory network across Jammu and Kashmir.

Directorate of Horticulture urges fruit growers to utilize dedicated Rail Parcel Services

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 17: In a major initiative aimed at facilitating efficient, reliable and cost-effective transportation of Kashmir's horticultural produce, the Directorate of Horticulture Kashmir has urged fruit growers, traders and other agricultural stakeholders across the Valley to actively utilize the dedicated Rail Parcel Services operated by Northern Railway.

The dedicated service, JPP-RCS, has been operating successfully since September 2025 and connects Badgam (BDGM) with Adarsh Nagar Delhi (ANDI) via Jammu, with an intermediate stoppage at Bari Brahmana.

The availability of this cost-effective, time-efficient and all-weather rail transportation facility assumes considerable importance for the horticulture sector, particularly during the fruit harvesting and marketing season. The service provides reliable and timely connectivity to major markets across the country, thereby facilitating

smoother movement and marketing of Kashmir's horticultural produce.

It is pertinent to mention that Train No. 00462, Ex-Badgam to Adarsh Nagar Delhi, has so far successfully transported 332 VPs carrying approximately 7,400 tonnes of produce, including apples, e-commerce and mixed goods. On the return journey, 786 VPs carrying approximately 17,450 tonnes, mainly comprising e-commerce and mixed goods, have also been transported, reflecting the growing utility and operational efficiency of the rail parcel service.

The Directorate has accordingly called upon fruit growers, traders and other stakeholders to make optimum use of the dedicated rail facility for transportation of horticultural produce, particularly during the peak harvesting season.

For commercial inquiries and booking details, stakeholders may contact the Office of the Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Northern Railway, Jammu Tawi, at Mobile/CUG: 9596732950 or through email at srdcmjat@gmail.com.

Awareness Vehicle launched in district Kishtwar to promote Census-2027 Phase II activities

KT News Desk

KISHTWAR, AUGUST 17: An awareness vehicle was Monday flagged off by Additional District Development Commissioner Vinod Kumar Behnal here, marking an important initiative to strengthen public awareness and encourage active participation in Census-2027 Phase II.

The awareness campaign, as per an official statement, aims to educate and sensitise the general public to the ongoing Self-Enumeration process in difficult areas and the subsequent house-to-house population enumeration.

Self-Enumeration commenced on 17th August and shall continue till 31st August 2026, providing citizens with an opportunity to furnish their related information through the designated Census platform.

The Self-Enumeration exercise shall be followed by the main population enumeration activity from 1st September to 30th September 2026, during which trained Enumerators and Supervisors would visit households across the district for door-to-door population enumeration.

The ADDC highlighted that reliable and accurate Census data is crucial for effective developmental planning and informed policy formulation, thereby contributing to the overall socio-economic development of the district and the nation.

The awareness vehicle will disseminate information across different areas of the district, particularly reaching remote and far-flung habitations, with the objective of ensuring that no household and no individual is left out of the Census exercise.

Shri Baba Budha Amarnath Ji Yatra First batch of 2041 pilgrims accorded warm reception by District admin Rajouri

KT News Desk

RAJOURI, AUGUST 17: With devotion in their hearts and the sacred spirit of pilgrimage guiding their journey, the first batch of 2041 pilgrims of Shri Baba Budha Amarnath Ji Yatra was warmly received Monday at Yatra Ground in Rajouri, marking the commencement of the annual pilgrimage to the revered shrine.

The first batch comprised 1013 males, 1000 females, 26 children and 2 Sadhus. The pilgrims, as per an official statement, arrived in a fleet of 50 vehicles, including 42 buses, a MMV and seven LMVs. The pilgrims were received at Base Camp Rajouri by Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma.

Atal Peethadeshwar Shri Shri 1008 Swami Vishwatma



Nand Sanswati Ji Maharaj was also present on the occasion. He blessed the pilgrims, adding a deep spiritual and auspicious touch to the welcome ceremony.

Earlier, the Deputy Commissioner took stock of the arrangements and facilities put in place for the brief stay of the pilgrims at the Yatra Station, including drinking water, power supply, toilet facilities, langar, sanitation, medical care and security arrangements.

He directed the concerned officers to ensure all necessary facilities are available through the yatra period and that pilgrims have a convenient and memorable experience during their sacred journey.

The district administration extended a warm welcome to the devotees and reiterated its commitment to ensuring a safe, smooth, comfortable and spiritually fulfilling pilgrimage of the abode of Shri Baba Budha Amarnath Ji.

NALSA Child-Friendly Scheme 2024 DLSA Ganderbal, organises legal awareness programme

KT News Desk

GANDERBAL, AUGUST 17: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Ganderbal, under the chairmanship of Abdul Nasir, Chairman, DLSA Ganderbal, and under the guidance and supervision of Sheikh Babar Hussain, Secretary, DLSA Ganderbal, organised a legal awareness programme on the NALSA Child-Friendly Scheme, 2024 at Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Saloor, Ganderbal.

The programme was conducted with the objective of sensitising students about their legal rights and creating awareness regarding child-friendly access to justice, protection and legal assistance available to children.

Adv. Bilal Ahmad Bhat and Adv. Burjeena Hameed, Members

of the Legal Services Unit for Children (LSUC), sensitised the students about various legal rights of children, protection from abuse, exploitation and violence, and the importance of ensuring a safe, secure and child-friendly legal environment.

During the programme, Adv. Bilal Ahmad Bhat elaborated upon the role of Legal Services Authorities in providing free legal aid and assistance to children, particularly those belonging to vulnerable and disadvantaged sections of society. He also apprised the students about the avenues through which children can seek legal assistance and protection whenever required.

Adv. Burjeena Hameed highlighted the fundamental rights of every child to dignity, care, protection and access to justice,

while emphasising the collective responsibility of parents, teachers, institutions and authorities in safeguarding children from abuse, exploitation and violence.

The students were encouraged to speak up against any form of abuse or exploitation and to approach their parents, teachers, police authorities or Legal Services Institutions whenever they require help, protection or legal assistance.

The programme concluded with an interactive session, wherein the students actively participated and raised queries concerning their legal rights, protection mechanisms and available legal remedies. Their queries were appropriately addressed by the resource persons.

Census 2027 Phase II District Admin Kupwara organises training session

KT News Desk

KUPWARA, AUGUST 17: District Administration Kupwara Monday organized a training session for District Officers, Charge Officers, and census related officials under Census 2027 Phase II at the Meeting Hall of the ACD Complex, Kupwara.

The training session was aimed at sensitizing and equipping the designated Charge Officers and officials with the necessary knowledge and skills for the effective implementation of the second phase of Census 2027.

During the session, participants, as per an official statement, were briefed on various aspects related to the census process, including their roles

and responsibilities, field-level procedures, and adherence to the prescribed guidelines and protocols.

On the occasion, ADC Kupwara, Gulzar Ahmad Khan who is also the District Census Officer emphasized the importance of accuracy, coordination, and timely completion of census-related activities to ensure smooth and effective implementation at the district level.

He reiterated commitment from District Administration to ensuring meticulous preparations and coordinated efforts for the successful conduct of Census 2027 in the district.

CPO Kupwara, Tehsildars, Master Trainers, Staff from DSEO Kupwara, and other concerned officials were present during the training session.

Sacrifice of Freedom Fighters DIPR Shopian organises Photo Exhibition showcasing life stories, struggle

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, AUGUST 17: The District Information & Public Relations (DIPR), Shopian, organised a photo exhibition showcasing the life stories, struggles, sacrifices and contributions of freedom fighters and martyrs as part of the ongoing Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign.

The exhibition featured photographs and accounts highlighting the lives and struggles of national heroes and their significant role in the nation's journey towards freedom. It provided visitors, particularly the younger generation, an opportunity to learn about their

courage, patriotism, determination and selfless sacrifices.

The life stories of the freedom fighters and martyrs served as a source of inspiration, reminding visitors of the immense sacrifices made for the country and the values of courage, unity and national service.

The exhibition formed part of a series of patriotic activities being organised in Shopian under the Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign and celebrations marking 150 years of Vande Mataram, aimed at fostering patriotism and keeping alive the inspiring legacy of the nation's heroes.

JKCIP Mobilisation Drive SKUAST-K emphasises handholding, strengthening of Rural Collectives

KT News Desk

BARAMULLA, AUGUST 17: A mobilisation drive under the Upscaling Collectivisation Component of the IFAD-sponsored Jammu and Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement of Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project (JKCIP) was organised by The Harvesting Harmony Farmer Producer Organisation Cooperative Ltd., Pattan, in collaboration with the Directorate of Extension, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K).

Prof. (Dr.) Raihana Habib Kanth, Director Extension and Dean, Horticulture, SKUAST-Kashmir, was the Chief Guest on



the occasion.

More than 185 prospective members and farmers participated in the programme, which aimed at creating awareness about the importance of Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), encouraging farmers to join the collective and strengthening farmer-led institutions for sustainable agricultural development.

Addressing the gathering, Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth emphasised the need for sustained handholding, capacity building and institutional strengthening of rural collectives to enable FPOs to emerge as effective farmer-led enterprises. She said FPOs can play a transformative role in agriculture by enabling farmers to access modern

technologies, quality inputs, institutional credit, value addition and organised markets through collective action.

She urged farmers to actively participate in FPOs and make full use of the opportunities being created under the IFAD-supported JKCIP to enhance farm incomes and build resilient and sustainable farming enterprises. She also highlighted the crucial role of SKUAST-Kashmir in providing continuous technical guidance, capacity building and extension support to strengthen farmer institutions across the Union Territory.

Dr. Waseem Hassan Raja underscored the importance of scientific farming, capacity building and collective marketing in improving

the economic status of farmers. He encouraged the participants, particularly women and rural youth, to actively engage with the FPO and adopt improved agricultural technologies for enhancing productivity and profitability.

Dr. Mohammad Iqbal Bhat, Coordinator, Upscaling Collectivisation, JKCI, SKUAST-Kashmir, elaborated on the objectives of the component and the institutional support mechanisms being extended to FPOs under the project. He stressed that increased farmer membership and active participation are essential for developing strong and self-sustaining producer organisations capable of addressing production, value addition and marketing challenges.

Sakeena Itoo chairs 46th BoDs meet of JKSCSTBC Development Corporation



KT News Desk

Srinagar, Aug 17: Minister for Social Welfare, Education, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo chaired the 46th meeting of Board of Directors (BoDs) of the Jammu & Kashmir Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe & Backward Classes (JKSCSTBC) Development Corporation Limited at Civil Secretariat here on Monday.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary Planning Development & Monitoring, R. Alice Vaz; Commissioner Secretary, Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs, Achal Sethi, Director General, Budget; Sultan Malik, MD JKSCSTBC Development Corporation; Ranjeet Singh; Director Finance SWD, Seema Bhasin and other members of the Board, besides senior officers of Social Welfare department and JKSCSTBC Development Corporation.

During the meeting, the Board deliberated upon various important administrative, financial and policy matters concerning the functioning of the Corporation and took several key decisions.

Speaking during the meeting, the Minister emphasised on the need for the Corporation to function with greater efficiency, transparency and responsiveness, with a focused approach towards ensuring that the intended benefits of welfare and development schemes reach eligible beneficiaries in a timely manner.

She called for strengthening institutional mechanisms, streamlining procedures and improving coordination among the concerned stakeholders to facilitate easier access to financial assistance, self-employment opportunities and other support measures for the

targeted communities.

“Welfare interventions should translate into tangible improvements in the socio-economic conditions of beneficiaries, particularly through initiatives that encourage entrepreneurship, sustainable livelihoods and economic self-reliance”, she observed.

The Minister directed the Corporation to maintain close engagement with beneficiaries and community representatives, identify emerging requirements and take necessary measures to address genuine concerns within the prescribed framework.

She also appreciated the efforts of the Corporation and stressed upon all concerned officers to ensure transparency, accountability, efficiency and timely implementation of the decisions taken by the Board in the larger public interest.

During the meeting, the Board directed the Corporation to intensify and expedite the recovery of outstanding loans, particularly long-pending dues, and adopt all permissible measures for effective follow-up and timely recovery. They asked the Corporation to establish online system for recovery and disbursement of various schemes.

The Board further approved the Budget Estimates for the financial year 2026-27, covering the revenue and capital requirements of the Corporation and providing for effective implementation of its developmental and welfare-oriented programmes.

The Board emphasized the need for greater financial discipline, improved recovery of outstanding loans, timely implementation of approved programmes and effective delivery of benefits to eligible beneficiaries belonging to the Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and Backward Classes communities.

Trump wants more economic pressure on Iran. What are his options?

REUTERS

Washington, Aug 17: US President Donald Trump last week vowed to hit Iran hard economically, a day after Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said that Washington would impose measures on Tehran that have “never been seen” as soon as next week.

The United States, United Nations and European Union have applied sanctions, implemented trade embargoes and frozen assets since the late 1970s over Iran’s nuclear program, human rights violations and support for militant groups.

Since the Iran war began in February, Washington has levied additional maritime, energy and financial sanctions and started a naval blockade.

Data from the US Treasury Department’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) shows the agency has imposed sanctions on more than 1,000 people, vessels and aircraft since Trump began his second term.

Recent measures have targeted Iran’s shadow oil fleet; shipping insurers; entities and people enabling Iran’s acquisition of weapons; and digital exchanges, freezing an estimated \$500 billion in Iran-linked cryptocurrency.

Experts say the Trump administration also can try these options:

SANCTIONS ON CHINESE ‘TEAPOT’ REFINERS

Chinese independent refineries known as “teapots” account for a quarter of Chinese refinery capacity. They operate with narrow and sometimes negative profit margins.

China buys more than 80 percent of Iran’s shipped oil, according to 2025 data from analytics firm Kpler. Independent refineries absorb much of this trade, exposing them to so-called secondary measures that penalize entities helping a primary sanctions target.

Past US sanctions have deterred larger independent refineries from buying Iranian oil. But the independent refineries are somewhat immune since they have little exposure to the US financial system, sanctions experts say.

SANCTIONS ON CHINESE BANKS

OFAC has imposed secondary sanctions on smaller China- and Hong Kong-based entities accused of processing billions of dollars in Iranian oil and helping to fund weapons procurement.

Treasury has warned two larger Chinese banks they

could face secondary sanctions if Iranian funds were found moving through their systems, but has stopped short of designating them.

Hitting those two banks, which US officials have not publicly identified, or imposing other sanctions could have a chilling effect on bigger financial institutions, sanctions experts said, although they warned it could also trigger retaliatory actions by Beijing.

Trump administration officials have sought to play down tensions between Washington and Beijing ahead of an expected meeting between Trump and President Xi Jinping later this year. They worry that China could curtail exports of critical minerals that are essential to advanced technology production at a time when the US and Western allies are still trying to develop their own supplies.

‘WHACK-A-MOLE’

The United States could continue targeting Iranian individuals and entities, as well as others in China and the Gulf, that are helping Tehran evade sanctions to collect revenues for its war effort.

Treasury recently issued sanctions against firms that are springing up to facilitate

Iran’s trading of oil revenue for imports. But such measures amount to a “whack-a-mole” approach that has not altered Iran’s behavior, said Brett Erickson, managing principal of Obsidian Risk Advisers, noting that Tehran simply creates new entities to replace them.

Miad Maleki, a sanctions expert with the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, said Bessent was likely signaling a sharpened enforcement push against oil shippers, purchasers and currency exchangers who help Iran pay for its imports.

Further aviation sanctions were also possible, aimed at degrading Iran’s ability to move trade now that the US has blocked shipping via the Strait of Hormuz, he added.

LAND BLOCKADE

Some US and Israeli officials have floated the prospect of a land blockade, which would require assistance from Iran’s neighbors: Iraq, Türkiye, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Armenia.

The Trump administration has varying degrees of closeness with all those countries except Afghanistan, but that border is mountainous and extremely difficult to patrol

anyway.

Trump may have leverage over Pakistan, which recently sought a \$10 billion currency swap line from Treasury, and Türkiye, which is seeking to rejoin the US F-35 warplane program.

A land blockade could increase pressure on the Iranian people by halting their imports of food, energy and textiles, but experts say such a move would be difficult to execute and might not result in protests or internal pressure.

SECONDARY TARIFFS

Trump has repeatedly threatened tariffs on goods from countries that do business with Iran, although the Supreme Court struck down the legal basis for such taxes.

The Senate passed a sweeping Russia sanctions bill last week that included new Iran sanctions and would give Trump new tariff powers that he could potentially use against countries that aid Iran’s commerce and weapons procurement.

That legislation must still pass the US House of Representatives, which could prove challenging given widespread concerns among Democrats and some Republicans about the tariff measures.

‘Shipping slows through Strait of Hormuz after tanker attacks’

REUTERS

Singapore, Aug 17: Shipping through the Strait of Hormuz slowed over the weekend, data showed on Monday, following attacks on tankers, while U.S.-Iran talks to resolve the Middle East conflict stalled.

Five commodity vessels transited the strait on Saturday, with none registered for Sunday, shiptracking data from Kpler showed, versus 31 in the prior weekend.

Ships entering the strait on Saturday included an empty Very Large Crude Carrier with its Automatic Identification System switched off and an Indian-flagged Very Large Gas

Carrier that used the Iranian route, Kpler data showed.

A small tanker laden with Iranian fuel oil exited, it showed.

Shipping appeared to grind to a near standstill after the United Arab Emirates said three vessels operated by the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company were attacked in transit last week.

The United States said it could maintain a naval blockade of Iran indefinitely.

Some ships may pass through undetected with transponders off, but the figures are far from the more than 130 ships a day that traversed the Strait of Hormuz before the war launched by

the U.S. and Israel on Iran in February.

Washington must meet Iran’s conditions regarding the strait in order for shipping to resume, Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said in an interview with local media on Saturday.

The waterway handled a fifth of the world’s shipments of crude oil and liquefied natural gas before the war.

At the Bab el-Mandeb strait, where Yemeni Houthis declared a naval blockade on Saudi Arabia on July 20, Kpler data showed 49 weekend transits by commodity vessels, down from 55 in the prior week. There were no tracked Saudi oil shipments.

Iran blames US presence for Gulf waters pollution after oil spills

AFP

Tehran, Aug 17: Iran’s foreign ministry on Monday blamed pollution in Gulf waters on US military operations in the region, after several oil spills were reported.

“This environmental damage stems from the US military presence and the wars it has waged in the region over the past five decades,” foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei told a news briefing.

“The damage caused to the environment of the Arabian Gulf and the Sea of Oman is not solely linked to this war.”

He called for the United States to be held accountable, estimating the damage at “trillions of dollars.”

Last week, Iran called for compensation after an oil slick in the Strait of Hormuz reached the island of Qeshm, affecting beaches and an environmentally sensitive mangrove forest. At the time, Baqaei cited preliminary evidence identifying “a foreign bulk carrier” as the source of the spill, which Iranian officials later said had been “completely cleaned up.”

Earlier, Omani state media reported that an oil slick from a tanker that ran aground off Oman had reached the coastline.

An AFP investigation previously found that the vessel had been stranded for weeks near Oman’s Al-Qibliyyah island after it was damaged by explosions.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Modi govt destroyed

Network is based in Pakistan and has been linked to grenade, improvised explosive device and petrol bomb attacks as well as targeted killings in India.

“The network also allegedly paid local operatives to conduct reconnaissance of police, defence and religious sites and install closed-circuit television cameras for surveillance,” it said, adding, “Security agencies recovered improvised explosive devices, pistols, live cartridges and closed-circuit television cameras during investigations, while some grenades recovered from the accused bore Pakistan Ordnance Factory markings.”

The statement said the August 12 operation was conducted using a real-time intelligence-sharing mechanism involving central agencies and state police forces. “Investigations into the network and its associates are continuing.” (KNO)

India’s spirit

beliefs was an integral part of our way of life. The civilisation of our beloved Bharat gave us a profoundly beautiful message 6,000 years ago to walk together, converse together and make space for one another in our hearts,” he said.

Acknowledging the efforts of the Save Youth Save Future Foundation, the Lieutenant Governor commended the young volunteers working against drug abuse and promoting brotherhood. He urged that such initiatives be expanded on a broader scale.

“Such initiatives need to be expanded on a much broader scale. I believe that another meaning of true peace is that it begins when we start understanding one another. From that perspective, our gathering here is not merely a social meeting. The true meaning of Mulaqat is to listen to one another, understand one another, respect one another and, wherever there is distance between hearts, take the first step towards dialogue.

Through programmes such as Mulaqat, we must create a culture in which people belonging to all faiths, all systems of worship and all sections of society sit together, discuss issues, examine the truth and assess reality. Wherever a wall has been erected between people, everyone must work together to bring it down,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

He also outlined a six-point roadmap for

the future and called upon administration and all sections of society to Institutionalise regular interfaith dialogues in schools, colleges, and community centres to foster understanding among youth. He stressed on Youth Peace Ambassadors and called upon youth to lead initiatives in cultural exchange, community service, and environmental protection.

He noted that preserving historical and cultural sites as common heritage through joint participation of citizens and administration is significant. The Lieutenant Governor urged youth to promote digital literacy and counter misinformation to safeguard public trust.

“It is the collective responsibility of the public and the administration to ensure that youth receive an education that teaches them to ask questions, access to technology that guides them towards progress, and the character that inspires patriotism and nation-building,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

He also highlighted the role of social justice and equal opportunities for progressive society and asked all the stakeholders to ensure impartial systems that deliver education, employment, healthcare, and justice to all citizens. In his sixth and last recommendation, the Lieutenant Governor asked for constituting Village Peace Committees, representing all sections of society to strengthen compassion, humanity and development.

The Lieutenant Governor stressed that while governments can make laws and administrations can provide systems, true harmony is built by the people themselves. He called upon administrative officers to ensure the safety of citizens, equal opportunities in development and proper implementation of welfare schemes.

On the occasion, Lieutenant Governor flagged off the Tiranga Yatra from Sports Stadium, Pulwama. He also commended the people of Pulwama for their enthusiastic participation in the ‘Har Ghar Tiranga’ and other national integration programmes.

Javid Iqbal Matoo, DIG South Kashmir Range; Dr. Basharat Qayoom, Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama; Tanushree, SSP Pulwama; Wajahat Farooq Bhat, Chairman, Save Youth Save Future Foundation; Anika Nazir, Women’s Wing President, Mudasir Dar, Zonal President (South Kashmir) and other members of the Foundation; senior officials,

civil society members, prominent citizens, people from different walks of life and youth in large number attended the Mulaqat programme. (KNO)

Embrace your

dedication continues to inspire generations. When Swami Ashokanand Ji Maharaj left his mortal body in 1971, he left behind a living tradition of service, discipline, sadhana, and dedication that can still be felt in every activity of this ashram,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

Highlighting new initiatives at the Ashram, including the construction of a Yatri Niwas, renovation works, a dining complex, and the expansion of the Yajnashtala, the Lieutenant Governor expressed confidence that these projects would embody faith transformed into action. He stressed that spirituality in Indian culture means responsibility towards the world, performed with selfless service.

Drawing from the Bhagavad Gita, the Lieutenant Governor reiterated Lord Krishna’s teaching and underlined that when action becomes service and service becomes dedication, even ordinary work becomes sadhana.

The Lieutenant Governor praised the Ashram’s affiliation with the Swami Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari, which serves on the principle of “Atmano Mokshartham Jagad Hitaya Cha” - for one’s own liberation and for the welfare of the world. The Lieutenant Governor urged the youth to draw inspiration from Swami Vivekananda’s message of self-confidence, fearlessness, and selfless service, reminding them that true strength lies within and that every individual is the maker of their own destiny.

Reaffirming India’s timeless philosophy of unity in diversity, the Lieutenant Governor said that India’s strength lies in respecting diversity while moving forward together. The message of Sarva Dharma Samabhava (equal respect for all religions), he said, has been India’s gift to the world.

“Swami Vivekananda said that a human being’s real strength lies within, and no one needs to consider themselves weak. No matter how difficult your circumstances may be, within you lies the capacity for growth, change, and great work. Swami Vivekananda also revealed

the secret of true success and true happiness, saying that the person who is truly rich is one who serves without expecting any reward and acts with a selfless spirit. Therefore, through the Satsang of the ashram’s volunteers, devotees, and office-bearers, there is a need to inspire society towards selfless action,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

Padma Shri Brij Lal Bhat, Chairman, Administrative Committee, Shri Ramakrishna Mahasammelan Ashram, Vivekananda Kendra, Nagdandi; Brij Mohan Sharma, Principal Secretary, Culture Department; Anshul Garg, Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir; Javid Iqbal Mattoo, DIG South Kashmir; Amod Ashok Nagpure, SSP Anantnag; Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, Deputy Commissioner Anantnag; Shivanand Rohit Raina; members of Shri Ramakrishna Mahasammelan Ashram and Vivekananda Rock Memorial and Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari; senior officials, prominent citizens and devotees in large number were present on the occasion. (KNO)

LG flags off

Amarnath’s abode is a deeply enlightening experience. I firmly believe this pilgrimage brings profound transformation and reveals life’s deepest truths to every devotee,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

A large gathering of eminent spiritual leaders, religious heads, public representatives, senior civil and police administrators, security officials, prominent citizens, and enthusiastic devotees attended the flag-off ceremony.

Centre should

protest against the government. (KNO)

Man killed

Munish Kumar of Dhani Dhar was killed in the accident, while the condition of the injured persons is being ascertained.

Police have taken cognisance of the incident. (KNO)

23,000 govt vacancies

“Youth are vital to Jammu and Kashmir’s future. We need to provide them with opportunities in employment, entrepreneurship and skill development.” (KNO)

‘J&K, Ladakh

in power requirement during the peak hours as the actual power supply availability and requirement respectively was 2750 MWs.

“Negative or significant variation (≥5%) in Actual Power Supply Position (Provisional) vis-à-vis anticipated figures is observed for the month of July-2026 in terms of Energy Requirement for Haryana, HP, UTs of J&K and Ladakh, Rajasthan, and Uttarakhand and in terms of Peak Demand and similar variation is noted for Chandigarh, Haryana, HP, UTs of J&K and Ladakh, Punjab and Rajasthan.” NRPC said.

The Committee urged such states and UTs to submit reason for such variations so that the same can be deliberated in the meeting. (KNO)

Woman dies,

wife of Ranjeet Kumar, while her injured husband was identified as Ranjeet Kumar (51), son of Gian Chand. Both were residents of Ghagwal in Samba district.

Meanwhile, an investigation has been initiated and further proceedings are underway, officials said. (KNO)

SIA Kashmir arrests

hes aid, adding, “During the investigation, SIA Kashmir filed multiple charge-sheets before the competent court against Zeeshan Ahmad Sofi, Waseem Ahmad Khan, Bashir Ahmad Koli, Mohammad Ashraf Lone, Mohammad Saleem Khan and Zafraan Khan for judicial determination.”

The agency said the investigation has established the involvement of a broader network allegedly associated with Hizbul Mujahideen and its Pakistan/PoK-based handlers.

Meanwhile, SIA Kashmir has also secured an Interpol Red Corner Notice against terrorist handler and narco-terror operative Imtiyaz Ahmad Kandoo in a separate terror-related case.

The latest arrest is expected to help investigators uncover further layers of the alleged conspiracy, establish additional linkages, trace the financial trail and identify the complete chain connecting narcotics trafficking with terror financing.

The SIA said its investigation remains ongoing and that efforts will continue to identify and apprehend all persons allegedly involved in the network and dismantle the structures supporting narco-terror financing. (KNO)

From the widows of Vrindavan, over 1000 rakhis for PM Modi



PTI
Mathura (UP), Aug 17: A group of widows in Vrindavan have crafted 1,100 rakhis for Prime Minister Narendra Modi to be presented to him on Raksha Bandhan this year.
The rakhis feature colourful photographs of the prime minister and have been designed and made by widows living in various

ashrams in Vrindavan, according to Nitya Pathak, Executive Con-
vener of Sulabh International.
"The widows joined the Raksha Bandhan celebration at the historical Gopinath temple in Vrindavan on Sunday, defying age-old restrictions set by the society. Rakhis were decorated and packed for Prime Minister Narendra Modi. They also danced to Krishna bhajans," Pathak said

in a statement late on Sunday.
Pathak added that the women spent several days handcrafting the colourful decorative threads. Since they consider Modi as their brother, they send him sweets and rakhis every year.
A group of five mothers will visit the prime minister's residence to tie the rakhis.
Raksha Bandhan is celebrated on August 28.

President Murmu gives assent to bill to renaming Kerala as Keralam



PTI
New Delhi, Aug 17: President Droupadi Murmu has given assent to a bill to rename Kerala as Keralam, with the legislation now becoming a law.
The Lok Sabha passed the Kerala (Alteration of Name) Bill, 2026, on Tuesday, followed by the Rajya Sabha the next day.
In the Rajya Sabha, Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai said the Kerala Assembly passed a resolution in 2024, urging the Centre to bring a law to change the name of the state to Keralam.
"The bill provides that the State of Kerala will be known as the State of Keralam, and hence there is a proposal to rename the State of Kerala to Keralam," he said. The Kerala

government had forwarded a resolution passed by the state assembly regarding the name change to the Centre in June 2024.
Subsequently, President Murmu referred the Bill to the state legislature for its views, following which the Assembly adopted a unanimous resolution agreeing with the Bill.
The Kerala (Alteration of Name) Bill provides for the alteration of the state's name and contains necessary amendments to the Constitution and consequential provisions, according to the Bill's statement of objects and reasons.
Amendments will be made in the First Schedule to the Constitution by modifying the name of Kerala as Keralam in accordance with Article 3 of the Constitution.

Seven dead in Bihar temple stampede

Tragic, admin providing all possible treatment: Amit Shah

PTI
New Delhi, Aug 17: Expressing condolences to the families of those who died in a stampede near the Ashok Dham temple in Bihar's Lakhisarai, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday said the local administration is providing all possible treatment to the injured in the "extremely tragic incident".
In a message on X, Shah said the incident at Ashok Dham is extremely tragic.
"I express my condolences to the families of all those who lost their lives in this accident. The local administration is providing all possible treatment to the injured. I pray for the speedy recovery of the injured," he said.
Seven women devotees died and 14 people were injured in a stampede near the Ashok Dham temple on Monday, officials said. The incident occurred due to a heavy rush of devotees at Ashok Dham Halt railway station, which is a short walk from the temple.
The pilgrims had gathered there to offer water to Lord Shiva at the temple in the holy month of Shravan.
Five of the seven deceased have been identified as Manimala Devi, Tinku Devi, Hemlata Devi, Lalita Devi, and Sarita.



Vande Mataram incident Delhi Police enquires into com-plaint against Sonia, Rahul

PTI
New Delhi, Aug 17: Delhi Police on Monday said it was enquiring into a complaint alleging an incident during the singing of 'Vande Mataram' at the Independence Day function held at the Congress headquarters here on August 15.
The complaint was filed at the IP Estate Police Station on August 16 by an advocate, seeking registration of an FIR against Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi.
"The complaint regarding the alleged incident during the singing of Vande Mataram at the Independence Day function held at AICC Headquarters is being enquired into," the police said in a statement.
According to the complaint, the national song was being sung during the Independence Day function when Sonia Gandhi allegedly made gestures after the initial portion had been sung. The complainant claimed the gestures appeared to indicate an objection to the continuation of the song.
It also referred to a video in which Rahul Gandhi was allegedly heard saying, "We are not singing Vande Mataram."
The complainant has sought an impartial probe and appropriate action if the two leaders are found responsible.
The BJP has accused Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge of showing "utter disrespect" towards the national song, a charge denied by the party.

TN CM 100 days in office: Making transformative milestones, says govt

PTI
Chennai, Aug 17: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay-led government is making a transformative milestone in the state's political landscape, the CM Office said on Monday.
Releasing an official video and a comprehensive suite of infographics on ruling TVK's first 100 days in office, the CMOT termed the initial days in office as "Governance for Generations."
The multimedia release stressed the government's early tenure as a swift, decisive execution of its poll promises and a definitive pivot toward long-term state development.
The 100-day report highlights a zero-tolerance policy on corruption, the deployment of the specialised "Singapenn" task force for women's safety, and an aggressive, statewide anti-drug crackdown aimed at protecting the youth.
The infographics detail unprecedented economic milestones, chief among them is securing Rs 1.02 lakh crore investment commitments through the Vettri Tamil Nadu Investment Con-clave, rollout



of Vettri Housing Scheme, agricultural loan waiver for marginal farmers, and the closure of 717 TASMAL liquor outlets.
Together, the video and visual data underscore an administration focused on institutional ac-countability, rapid infrastructure growth, and inclusive welfare designed to benefit future generations.
The video highlights the administration's commitment to delivering upon its assurances and ensuring accountability.
The infographics made specific mention of numerous

milestone in Tamil Nadu's history, ushering in a change to transparent and corruption-free governance.
Commending the chief minister for his numerous initiatives on the social welfare front, wom-en's safety, skill development for youth, and attempts to create employment opportunities in the state, the Speaker told the Assembly that Vijay has proved that the present (TVK) regime is people's government.
"The first 100 days in office marks a new change in Tamil Nadu's history, with the CM taking several appreciable initiatives on women's safety, social welfare schemes, providing 200 units free power, waiving of cooperative farm loans, announcing to construct quality homes for the poor, skill development schemes, proving that this is a government for the people," Prabhakar said.
"The milestone lays a strong foundation for the future dreams of Tamil Nadu to facilitate a transparent and corrupt-free governance, and transform the state into a prosperous and strong Tamil Nadu," the Speaker said.

Meta faces landmark US trial over claims its platforms harm children

AP
Sacramento, Aug. 17: Of the thousands of lawsuits Meta faces over child safety on its platforms, none may be more consequential than one going to trial this week in California.
US states are seeking extensive financial damages that could, in theory, total as much as USD 1.4 trillion, plus changes to how the company operates Facebook and Instagram.
The lawsuit accuses the social media giant of contributing to the youth mental health crisis by knowingly and deliberately designing features that get children addicted to its platforms. It also claims that Meta routinely collects data on children under 13 without their parents' consent, in violation of federal law.
"Meta has harnessed powerful and unprecedented technologies to entice, engage, and ultimately



ensnare youth and teens. Its motive is profit, and in seeking to maximise its financial gains," the lawsuit says.
Dozens of states filed the lawsuit three years ago. The trial set to begin Tuesday in federal court in Oakland, California, features four of the states as plaintiffs -- California, Colorado, Kentucky and New Jersey. The other 25 states are expected to have trials later. Meta said it disputes the

allegations, and the trial evidence will show its commitment to supporting young people. "We've listened to parents, worked with experts and law enforcement, and conducted in-depth research to understand the issues that matter most," the company said in a statement.
States seek to land a major blow against Meta
For Meta, which already lost two pivotal cases over harms to

children and teens this year, the stakes are high. The company reported a rare profit decline last month, in part due to USD 2.4 billion in legal expenses.
The USD 1.4 trillion figure, which Meta disclosed in a legal filing, is almost as high as the Menlo Park, California, company's entire market capitalisation -- that is, the value of all its outstanding shares on the stock market. Paying it would inevitably put Meta Platforms in bankruptcy and perhaps put the company under state ownership.
"The state attorneys general are going for the gusto," said Eric Goldman, a professor and co-director of the High Tech Law Institute at Santa Clara University School of Law. "They are trying to set the definitive precedent in this case and they have asked for extraordinary damages and they are going to seek extraordinary

structural remedies if they succeed."
Meta calls the possible penalty "untethered to any claimed violation" by the states.
"A sanction of that size has no analog in the history of consumer protection enforcement," Meta said in a July 6 filing with the US District Court for the Northern District of California.
If Meta loses the trial, the court would have wide discretion over the size of any financial penalty, and legal experts say anything close to USD 1.4 trillion would be unlikely.
"It's not plausible in the sense that Meta doesn't have that much money and could not get it," said James Grimmelmann, a law professor at Cornell Law School and Cornell Tech. "An award that large would put Meta into bankruptcy, wipe out its owners, and effectively result in the states owning Meta."

NOTICE

I Beeba akbar S/oD/oW/o Mohammad Akbar Mir R/o Gund mohalla ,brat Sopore Baramula Jammu & Kashmir 193201 do hereby declare that I have changed my name from Babby Bano to Beeba Akbar for all purposes. Including Aadhar card bearing Aadhar No 544039491056 Henceforth, I shall be known as Beeba akbar

NOTICE

I Dashma Farooq M/o Lubaba Mehraj R/o jamia qadeem Sopore Baramulla Jammu & Kashmir 193201 do hereby declare that I have changed my daughter's name from Arwah Mehraj to lubaba Mehraj for all purposes. Including Aadhar card bearing Aadhar No 348847474913 Henceforth, I shall be known as Lubaba Mehraj

NOTICE

I Javeed Ahmad Najar F/o Kashif Javeed Najar R/o Qadriya Colony Sopore Baramulla Jammu & Kashmir 193201 do hereby declare that I have changed my Son's name from Muhammad Kashif to Kashif Javeed Najar for all purposes. Including Aadhar card bearing Aadhar No 416006207318 Henceforth, I shall be known as Kashif Javeed najar

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my 5% pass discharge certificate bearing Admission No. 153 of the year 1987, now I am applying for its duplicate, in this regard if anybody is having any objections, may file the same to Headmaster Govt. Middle School Glenomulay, Zone Dangiwaicha, Rafiabab, within the period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

Hesana Alether
D/o Gh. Rasool Ganai
R/o Gundmulraj, Rafiabab
District – Baramulla.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Subject correction of father's name in HRMS portal
My self Fayaz Ahmad Rather s/o Gh Ahmad Rather R/o lassier Rafiabab district barmulla in my HRMS portal my father's name has been inadvertently recorded as Ghulam Ahmad Rather in stead of Gh Ahmad Rather.I intend to get the said error rectified and have my father's corrected Gh Ahmad Rather in my HRMS portal
If any person has any claim or objection to this correction he/she may submit the same in writing to the undersigned within in seven days from the date of publication of this notice after the expiry of the period. No objection shall be treated as final
Fayaz Ahmad Rather
S/o Gh Ahmad Rather
R/o lassier Rafiabab district barmulla
Ph. No 7780813256

Faith Fills Shehr-e-Khaas As Devotees Offer Annual Khoja Digar At Naqshband Sahib (RA) Shrine

Pics: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)

