



Nari Shakti transforming border economies: LG Sinha

Calls upon young generation of frontier villages to dream big like people in metro cities

KT News Desk

Jammu, Aug 20: Commending the role of Nari Shakti in transforming border economies, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday said women are scripting a new chapter in the history of Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing a gathering at Karol Krishna, a border village in Kathua district, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, “Under the National Rural Livelihood Mission, over 1,300 self-help groups have been formed, benefiting more than 12,000 families.”

“Women are engaged in tailoring, embroidery, crafts, and small enterprises, strengthening both household and village economies,” he added.

LG Sinha during his visit to Karol Krishna, a border village in Kathua district called upon the young generation of frontier villages to dream big like



people in metro cities.

The village along with Rathua, Gujjar Chak, Gajnal, Bobiya, Kadiyala comes under the Vibrant Village Programme-Phase-2 (VVP-2). The Lieutenant Governor handed over benefits under several government schemes to local families and appointment letters to youth.

Addressing the residents from 6 strategic villages under

VVP-2, the Lieutenant Governor emphasized that border villages are not India's last villages, but its first villages, the frontline of the nation's identity and development.

He noted that for decades, the word “border” carried a sense of distance and these villages were far from the priorities of governance. However, under the leadership PM Modi, border villages have been

brought into the mainstream of development.

“When the story of India's development is written, its first chapter should begin in villages like Karol Krishna, Rathua, Gajnal, Bobiya, Kadiyala and Gujjar Chak, where India's border breathes and the tricolour flutters,” he said.

216 BORDER VILLAGES OF KATHUA NOW CONNECTED BY ROAD, | More on P6



Harvest season begins in Ganderbal's 'Grape Village'

Pic: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)

Union cabinet approves High Court bench for Ladakh: Home Minister

Says govt committed to dev, constitutional safeguards for UT

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Aug 20: Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah on Wednesday welcomed the decision of the Union Cabinet to establish a Bench of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir in Ladakh.

In a post on X, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Amit Shah announced that the Union Cabinet, under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has decided to set up a Bench of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir



in Ladakh.

He said the move will significantly enhance access to justice for citizens living in remote areas of Ladakh by reducing the time required to avail themselves of the legal services they are entitled to.

“The Government is fully committed to the all-round development of Ladakh and to ensuring constitutional safeguards,” he wrote on X. (KNO)

Pak-US row matter between Islamabad-Washington, not mine: CM Omar

Says Rs 31-cr Sgr abattoir revived; AIIMS block may open this year | ‘Pvt universities likely soon; film festival to promote local talent’

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Aug 20: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said Pakistan's summoning of the US Charge d'Affaires following his meeting with the American envoy was a matter between Pakistan and the United States.

Speaking to reporters in Srinagar, CM Omar as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that Pakistan had summoned the US Charge d'Affaires, not the US Ambassador. “The issue concerns Pakistan and the United States. I have nothing to do with it,” he added.



Responding to questions on the Congress party's remarks, the Chief Minister said the party is entitled to its political

viewpoint and he doesn't want to get into a “war of words” over the issue.

On the modern | More on P6

US ambassador Sergio Gor arrives in Leh



Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Aug 20: United States Ambassador to India, Sergio Gor, reached Leh on Thursday as part of his visit to Ladakh.

Gor, who met Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in Srinagar on Wednesday, flew to Leh today after his flight was delayed due to adverse weather conditions.

Sources told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the Ambassador took part in river rafting in Leh. “He visited the Zaskar-Indus confluence at Nimmu and joined a rafting expedition along the stretch from Tsogti,” they said. Gor's visit to Leh coincides with the presence of Tibetan spiritual leader, | More on P6

Second consecutive lotus bloom renews hopes of Wular's ecological revival

Now we cook like our grandmothers did: Chef

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Aug 20: Lotus flowers have bloomed for the second consecutive year in Kashmir's Wular Lake, renewing hopes among local communities that the revival of the iconic aquatic plant could help restore traditional livelihoods and revive a cherished part of the region's culinary heritage.

The lotus had disappeared from large parts of the lake for nearly three decades after massive siltation, particularly following the devastating floods of 1992, disrupted its habitat.

The renewed blooming

follows restoration and desilting work undertaken by the Wular Conservation and Management Authority (WUCMA), which has been working to improve the ecological health of the wetland.

For people whose families traditionally harvested nadru (lotus stem), the return of the flowers has been especially significant.

Bashir Ahmad, a 65-year-old fisherman whose family depends on Wular, said the return of the lotus was once considered almost impossible.

“We threw seeds into the lake hundreds | More on P6

J&K scours universities to ‘wipe out radical narratives’

Riyaz Bhat

Srinagar, Aug 20: In an aggressive push to scrub radical narratives from higher education, J&K Higher Education Department (JKHED) has ordered a blanket ban on any literature promoting violent extremism, secessionism, or national sovereignty threats across all J&K universities and campus libraries.

In this regard, the department has issued the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for evaluation, selection, procurement, publication, acceptance, quality assurance and periodic review of books and other educational resources in universities of Jammu & Kashmir.

According to the news

agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), JKHED in an order said that the Universities of Jammu & Kashmir, through their respective academic, administrative and library systems, procure and provide books, journals, reference materials, e-resources and other educational resources for the benefit of students, research scholars, faculty and other academic stakeholders.

“Such resources constitute an important component of the academic and research ecosystem of Universities and are required to support teaching, learning, research, innovation and the overall intellectual development of students and scholars,” it reads.

It also said that | More on P6

Rain lashes J&K parts; MeT forecasts hot, humid weather till Aug 27

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Aug 20: Rain lashed parts of Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, with several areas receiving light to moderate showers as the Meteorological Centre forecast generally hot and humid conditions with intermittent rainfall across the Union Territory till August 27.

The weather department said one or two spells of light to moderate rain or thundershowers are likely at scattered to many places from August 21 to 22, with brief intense heavy showers possible in a few districts during the early morning and afternoon hours.

According to details obtained by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), from



August 23 to 27, generally hot and humid weather is expected, with brief spells of rain or thundershowers at scattered places during the early morning and afternoon hours.

According to the India Meteorological Department's evening weather bulletin,

Pahalgam received 4.4 mm of rainfall between 8:30 am and 5:30 pm on Thursday, while Gulmarg recorded 2.4 mm during the period.

Gulmarg received 14.2 mm of rainfall in the preceding 24 hours, while Katra recorded the highest rainfall among the stations listed in the bulletin at 39 mm. Jammu received 0.2 mm during the daytime period and 4.1 mm in the preceding 24 hours.

Pahalgam recorded 1.4 mm of rainfall in the preceding 24 hours, while Batote received 3.8 mm, Banihal 1.6 mm and Baderwah 1.1 mm. Kukernag received 2.4 mm during the preceding 24 hours.

Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 29.0 degrees Celsius, | More on P6

Once a popular stop, Titanic Viewpoint now in state of neglect

1977 movie Apnapan's popular song ‘Aadmi Musafir Hai’ location now forgotten, say locals; seek restoration to revive tourism

Umaisar Gull Ganie

Qazigund, Aug 20: The Titanic Viewpoint, located near Lower Munda in Qazigund, around two kilometres from the historic Jawahar Tunnel on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, is fast losing its charm amid alleged official apathy and lack of maintenance.

Once a popular stopping point for travellers entering the Kashmir Valley, the viewpoint offers scenic views of the valley, lush green mountains

and surrounding landscapes. The place also has a cinematic connection, as the popular song “Aadmi Musafir Hai” from the 1977 Bollywood film Apnapan, sung by Mohammed Rafi and Lata Mangeshkar, was filmed in the area around Titanic Point, with the sequence depicting a journey towards Srinagar.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the opening of the 8.5-km Banihal-Qazigund Road Tunnel in 2021 has left the



Titanic Viewpoint in a state of neglect, with locals alleging

that little attention is being paid to the area. Since most of

the traffic now uses the new tunnel, the flow of vehicles through the historic Jawahar Tunnel has reduced. Fuel-laden tankers and trucks carrying gas cylinders and other hazardous materials use the Jawahar Tunnel. Some vehicles from nearby villages and towns also use the Jawahar Tunnel.

The decline in traffic has also affected scores of shopkeepers and kiosk owners who had been earning their livelihood along the old highway route from Lower Munda to Banihal.

Mohammad Shafi, Trade President Qazigund, told KNO that the reduced traffic has badly affected businesses operating along the old route. “Earlier, thousands of travellers would stop here, and the shops and roadside businesses remained busy. After the opening of the new tunnel, the traffic has reduced drastically, affecting the livelihood of local traders. If the Jawahar Tunnel and surrounding areas are developed as tourist attractions, it can revive local businesses

and create employment opportunities,” he said.

Locals said they have pinned their hopes on plans to beautify the Jawahar Tunnel, B-Top (old Cart Road) and surrounding areas and develop them as tourism destinations.

Tariq Ahmad Wani, a local, said Titanic Viewpoint has both tourism and historical value. “This is one of the first places where travellers get a beautiful glimpse of Kashmir after crossing the Jawahar Tunnel. The place is | More on P6

Reviewing Administrative Reforms

CS Atal Dulloo launches online DPC Portal to fast-track promotions

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 20: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Thursday reviewed the functioning and performance of the Administrative Reforms, Inspections (ARI) & Trainings Department, with a focus on key governance and administrative reform initiatives, including finalization of Recruitment Rules, cadre restructuring, resolution of Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS) issues, and operational efficiency of the J&K Board of Professional Entrance Examinations (BOPEE) and Government Press.

The meeting, as per an official statement, attended by Commissioner Secretary, ARI & Trainings Department; Chairperson, J&K BOPEE; General Manager, Government Press; and other senior officers.

Issuing directions for expediting the ongoing reforms, the Chief Secretary called for smooth and time-bound operationalisation of the online DPC Portal, besides ensuring swift completion of Recruitment Rules for all departments and their respective services. He stressed that the digital mechanisms should translate



into tangible improvements in administrative efficiency and timely disposal of service-related matters.

The Chief Secretary further directed that a comprehensive mechanism be devised to ensure filling up of all available seats/vacancies in professional courses through BOPEE, with the objective of achieving optimum utilization of the infrastructure, faculty

and other resources available in institutions of higher learning across the Union Territory.

The Chief Secretary thereafter took a detailed live demonstration of the DPC Portal's end-to-end workflow. Developed through BISAG-N under the supervision of the ARI & Trainings Department, the portal is designed to fully digitize and streamline the process of holding DPCs

across the Union Territory, thereby reducing procedural delays and ensuring greater transparency and efficiency in processing promotion cases.

During the demonstration, the Chief Secretary reviewed the portal's multi-tiered workflow, under which cases move seamlessly through designated administrative levels of Maker, Checker and Approver.

He emphasized that the digital platform should help eliminate administrative bottlenecks and facilitate the time-bound conduct of DPCs. The portal has now been formally handed over to the General Administration Department (GAD), which will function as the Super Admin and issue necessary circular instructions for its immediate adoption and onboarding of all Government departments.

The meeting was also apprised of the Online Portal for Processing Recruitment Rules, developed in collaboration with BISAG-N. The portal has successfully cleared its security audit through the Information Technology Department, incorporates active SMS alerts, is hosted at the State Data Centre and

is being integrated with the e-Office system.

Commissioner Secretary, ARI & Trainings, Shabnam Kamili, apprised the meeting of the ongoing modernization of service guidelines. She informed that the Standing Committee has held 61 meetings since January 2024 and has cleared Recruitment Rules for 36 services, while another 13 services have been cleared through Executive Orders. Preliminary meetings have also been concluded for 88 additional services.

On human resource optimization, the Commissioner Secretary stated that a structured calendar is being devised for reviewing individual departments with a view to undertaking budget-neutral cadre restructuring and resolving MTS-related issues in consultation with the concerned line departments.

The meeting was further informed that the Union Territory's progress under the national iGOT Karmayogi platform has received appreciation from the Capacity Building Commission, Government of India. The ARI & Trainings Department has successfully

onboarded participants and trained 222 officers and officials through five intensive one-day Karmayogi Kartavya Karyakram batches conducted by certified State Master Trainers.

Reviewing the functioning of the J&K Board of Professional Entrance Examinations (BOP-EE), the meeting was informed that the Board has transitioned completely to digital operations, with all counselling rounds for the 2026-27 session being conducted through the online e-Counselling platform. An advance examination calendar has also been issued, while examination centres are being expanded beyond Jammu and Srinagar to facilitate students from rural and remote areas.

The meeting also reviewed intake trends across various professional courses and noted high seat occupancy in streams including M.Sc. Nursing, Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing and CET Engineering. It was observed that the Higher Education Department may engage with AICTE for suitable modifications in course streams in line with emerging market requirements, enabling BOPEE to conduct additional counselling rounds wherever necessary.

JKEDI organises entrepreneurship orientation programme for RRIUM faculty, research scholars

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 20: The Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) organised a one-day Entrepreneurship Orientation Programme (EOP) for faculty members and 25 postgraduate research scholars of the Regional Research Institute of Unani Medicine (RRIUM), Srinagar.

The programme, as per an official statement, aimed to familiarise participants with entrepreneurial thinking, innovation and the evolving startup ecosystem, while encouraging a shift from conventional approaches towards problem-solving, opportunity identification and value creation.

The programme commenced with an interactive session on "Why Entrepreneurship?", highlighting the role of entrepreneurial thinking in addressing contemporary economic and social challenges. Subsequent sessions focused on traditional entrepreneurship, the changing startup ecosystem and opportunities for transforming academic knowledge and research into viable entrepreneurial ventures.

The programme concluded with an interactive session on Business Plan Formulation, which familiarised participants with the essential components of developing a structured and sustainable business proposition. Addressing the participants, Chand Kishore Sharma (JKAS), Joint Director, JKEDI, encouraged faculty members and research scholars to embrace innovation and explore avenues for translating research and knowledge into meaningful entrepreneurial ventures. Sh. Barun Verma (JKAS), Accounts Officer, JKEDI, also participated in the programme.

DDC Shopian reviews District Capex Works

Directs timely completion

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, AUGUST 20: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta, Thursday chaired a meeting to review the progress of developmental works being executed under the District Capex Budget, with particular emphasis on timely tendering and completion of projects.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone, ACD, CEO, CMO, XEN PDD, BDOs and other concerned officers from various executing agencies.

During the meeting, the DDC took a comprehensive review of the status of works, tendering processes, physical and financial progress, and implementation of projects on the ground.

He directed all concerned departments to expedite the tendering and execution of works, address bottlenecks promptly and ensure effective coordination among all stakeholders. He stressed that projects must be completed within the prescribed timelines while maintaining the required standards of quality.

The DDC also called upon executing agencies to closely monitor ongoing works and ensure optimal utilization of allocated funds. He underscored that timely completion of developmental projects is vital to providing tangible benefits to the public and strengthening infrastructure across the district.

The concerned officers were further directed to submit regular progress updates and maintain strict accountability, transparency and quality throughout the execution of all works.

DC Kupwara visits Tekipora Lolab, reviews development, public issues



KT News Desk

KUPWARA, AUGUST 20: Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, Thursday visited Tekipora village in Lolab and interacted with local residents to take stock of various issues and developmental concerns.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner, as per an official statement, met members of the Shiv Mandir Committee and reviewed the pending issues concerning the temple. He discussed the matter with the concerned officers and committee members and directed coordinated efforts to ensure that the pending works

are expedited and completed within a fixed timeframe.

The villagers also put forth several demands, including the establishment of a library and installation of solar lights at the local Ziarat. The Deputy Commissioner assured the residents that their concerns would be examined and appropriate action taken on priority. The Deputy Commissioner also inspected the NTPHC Tekipora and reviewed the functioning and availability of healthcare services at the facility.

SDM Lolab, CPO and other concerned officers accompanied the Deputy Commissioner during the visit.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR School Education Department Civil Secretariat, Jammu/Srinagar

Subject: Appointment to the post of Lecturer in the discipline of Urdu in the School Education Department.

Reference:

- No. Edu-GEN/35/2024-01(7383282) dated 12.11.2024 issued by School Education Department.
- No. PSC/DIR/Lectt-Urdu/SED/2024(7843766) Dated 01-06-2026 received from J&K Public Service Commission, Resham Ghar Colony, Bakshi Nagar, Jammu.
- Character and Antecedents report received from Criminal Investigation Department, J&K.

Government Order No: 332- JK(Edu) of 2026

Dated: 19.08.2026

On the recommendations of Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission, sanction is hereby accorded to the appointment of following candidates as Lecturers in the discipline of Urdu in the School Education Department in Pay Level- 9 ('52,700- '1,66,700) with immediate effect:

No.	Name	Parentage	Address	Category
1	Shaheer Ahmad Dar	Basheer Ahmad Dar	152 Banger Mohalla Hajin	OM
2	Masood Ahmed	Mohd Nazir	01 Haveli/Arai Mandi	ST/OM
3	Hadi Ahmad Beigh	Mehboob Ali Beigh	38 Beigh Lane Budgam	OM
4	Aabid Hussain Ganie	Rafiq Ahmad Ganie	Gund I Umer Nowpora Dooru Dooru	OM
5	Gulzar Ahmad Dar	Habibullah Dar	Waripora Bala Waripora Bala Kreeri	OM
6	Shahid iqbal	Mohd Rashid	Nil Village Qusba Haveli	ALC/OM
7	Gh. Hassan Wani	Ab Aziz Wani	09 Check Wazir Punu Budgam	OM
8	Mohd Shaheel	Mohd Bashir	Village ARI BPO ARI Mendhar	ST/OM
9	Irfan Rasheed Dar	Abdul Rasheed Dar	Kocheck Mohalla 193 Kochak Mohalla Hajin Hajin	OM
10	Manzoor Hussain Kumar	Abdul Satar Kumar	10 Waghama Bijbehara	SLC/OM
11	Attaulah Yatoo	Ab Gaffar Yatoo	49 Ganie Mohalla	
12	Talib Hussain	Abdul Rashid Dar	chanderhama pattan OM(PHC) 206 Dogripora Awantipora	RBA/OM
13	Fulaill Singh	Radha Krishan	Village Garh Paddar Garh	
14	Raman Kumar	Sain Dass	Padder Atholi	SC
15	Mubarak Lone	Ghulam	Village Showa PO Ranjan 00067 Khadniyar Baramulla	RBA
16	Ranjeet Kumar	Roshan Lal	46 Rahal Thaker Pora Ward No.4 chatroo	RBA
17	Mohd Younis	Khazar Mohd Dar	Tujan Tujan Rajpora	RBA
18	Mohd Arif	Mohd Latif	RO Hatha PO Upper Hatha Sunderbani	ST-1
19	Raza Ahmed	Mohd Azam	173519 Village Chhajla BPO Chhajla Tehsil Mankote	ST-1
20	Sajad Ahmed	Nazir Mohd	7 village kallar kattal Surankote	ST-1
21	Riaz Ahmed	Khadam Hussain	R/O Chikri ban Chikri ban Mandi	ST-1
22	Qammer Muzaffar	Hussain	R/O ward no 07 Panchayat hari lower left Surankote	ST-2 Poonch
23	Khalid Hussain	Manzoor Hussain	village Dhundak Dhundak surankot	ST-2
24	Mohd Arshaq	Ali Asgar	41 Village Mankote Tehsil Mankote	ALC/IB
25	Javid Yousuf	Mohd Yousuf	09 Badoora Achabal Hajam Kokernag	SLC
26	Nazir Ahmad	Kumar Ali Mohd Kumar	25 Ramnagri Shopian SLC Ramnagri Shopian	SLC
27	Saima Akhter	Ghulam Ahmad Lone	60 Bramri Drugmulla	EWS

The appointment is subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. The appointees belonging to Jammu Division shall report to Director, School Education, Jammu and those belonging to Kashmir Division shall report to Director, School Education, Kashmir within a period of twenty one (21) days from the date of issuance of this appointment order. In the event of failure to join within the prescribed period, the appointees shall forfeit the right to appointment and this order shall be deemed to have been withdrawn ab-initio without any further reference or notice. The formal posting order shall be issued separately by the Competent Authority in due course.

2. The appointment shall remain provisional and shall be subject to verification of the educational, professional and/or technical qualifications claimed by the appointee from the concerned issuing authorities. In the event of any discrepancy, misrepresentation or adverse finding during the verification process, the appointment shall be liable to cancellation without prejudice to any other action permissible under the applicable rules.

3. The appointees shall be allowed to join only on the production of the following certificates in original:

i. Academic Qualification Certificates.

ii. Matriculation/Date of Birth Certificate.

iii. Health Certificate from the concerned Chief Medical Officer.

iv. Domicile Certificate issued by Competent Authority.

v. Category certificate, if any.

4. The appointees shall furnish an affidavit, duly attested by a Competent Authority, affirming that:

i. All the certificates/documents submitted in support of the appointment are authentic, valid and have been issued by the Competent Authorities concerned.

ii. In the event that any certificate/document is subsequently found to be fake, forged, tampered with or otherwise invalid upon verification from the concerned issuing authority, the appointment shall be deemed void ab-initio and liable to cancellation forthwith, without prejudice to such legal, disciplinary or other action as may be warranted under the applicable laws, rules and regulations.

5. If the appointee has taken loan for self-employment from DIC/Employment Department, to be ascertained from the District Industries Centre (DIC) and District Employment and Counseling Centre of the domicile district, he/she shall relinquish the proprietorship of unit/enterprise and also stakes, if any, in such self-employment unit/enterprise before joining the Government service. He/she shall be required to repay the entire loan liability in suitable EMIs to be worked out by the DDO concerned from his/her salary. DDO concerned shall obtain an affidavit from the concerned appointee regarding both relinquishment of proprietorship and stakes, if any, in such a self-employment unit/enterprise and recovery to be made, and also personally monitor its recovery.

6. The release and disbursement of salary in favour of the appointees shall be subject to receipt of a satisfactory verification report in terms of 4(ii) above. No pay or allowances shall be authorized until such verification is duly completed and found satisfactory.

7. The appointees shall be governed by the provisions of the New Pension Scheme (NPS) in accordance with SRO-400 dated 24.12.2009, as amended from time to time.

8. The appointees shall be liable to serve at any place within the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir in accordance with administrative exigencies and public service requirements.

9. The Director, School Education, Jammu/Kashmir shall furnish the joining report of the appointees to the Administrative Department for further allocation and placement against available vacancies in Higher Secondary Schools in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

10. The inter-se seniority of Lecturers shall be determined in accordance with the order of merit assigned by the Jammu & Kashmir Public Service Commission in the select list.

The appointment shall also be subject to the outcome of writ petition(s), if any, pending before any Competent Court of Law.

By Order of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir.

Dated: 19.08.2026
No. Edu- Lectt/112/2026- 01- (7760422)

DIPK-4790/26
Dated: 20-08-2026

Sd/-
(Ram Niwas Sharma) IAS
Commissioner/Secretary to the Government

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT DEGREE COLLEGE DOORU

ANANTNAG J&K—192211

Affiliated with University of Kashmir Srinagar

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NAAC ACCREDITED
No: DCD/26/Canteen-Notice/515

e-mail:-principal.gdcdooru@jk.gov.in
website: gdcdooru.jk.gov.in

Dated: 20-08-2026

Extension Notice

In continuation to this office notice inviting sealed tenders issued vide No. DCD/26/Tender/427 dated 02-08-2026 for running College Canteen at GDC Dooru, it is hereby notified for the information of all concerned that the last date for submission of tenders has been extended. The period of contract shall now be w.e.f. 01-09-2026 to 31-08-2027.

Interested bidders/vendors are once again informed to submit their tenders along with all requisite documents, in the office of the undersigned within 05 (Five) days from the date of publishing of this extension notice.

The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason thereof.

Principal
(GDC Dooru)

DIPK-4800/26
Dated: 20-08-2026

Delayed breast cancer diagnosis can be life-threatening: Docs

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Aug 20: Breast cancer can become life-threatening if it is not detected and treated at an early stage, as the disease may spread to other organs, including the bones, liver and lungs, doctors said, stressing the importance of awareness, regular screening and timely medical intervention.

Doctors said advanced breast cancer can lead to serious complications, significantly affect a patient's quality of life and, in severe cases, prove fatal. Beyond the physical burden, the disease often places considerable emotional and financial pressure on patients and their families, particularly when treatment continues for a prolonged period.

"Once cancer spreads to other parts of the body, the complications become much more serious. Patients may experience considerable pain, disability and deterioration in their overall quality of life. The disease also takes an emotional and financial toll on families," oncologist Dr Aijaz Shah said.

He said that while certain risk factors, including genetic predisposition, cannot be



modified, several preventive measures and lifestyle changes can help reduce the risk of breast cancer. According to Dr Shah, women

should remain alert about changes in their breasts and undergo appropriate screening as recommended. "Self-breast examination,

clinical breast examination and mammography after the age of 40 can play an important role in detecting breast cancer at an early stage," he said, adding that early diagnosis substantially improves treatment outcomes.

He further advised women to maintain a healthy body weight, remain physically active, avoid smoking and limit alcohol consumption, as these measures can contribute towards lowering the risk.

An oncologist, Dr Zahoor Ahmad Mor, said breastfeeding has also been associated with a reduced risk of breast cancer, while a balanced diet can support overall health.

"A diet containing adequate fruits, vegetables and whole grains, while limiting highly processed foods, is beneficial for maintaining overall health," he said.

Doctors urged women to seek medical advice if they notice any unusual changes in their breasts. Warning signs, they said, may include a new breast lump, unusual nipple discharge, changes in the size or shape of the breast, alterations in the skin, nipple changes or other persistent abnormalities.

Any unusual or persistent change should

not be ignored, doctors said, adding that seeking medical advice at the earliest can make a significant difference because breast cancer is treatable, particularly when it is detected before it spreads.

Doctors said awareness should not be limited to Breast Cancer Awareness Month or particular campaigns, but should become part of routine health-care practices among women. They added that regular check-ups, timely screening, awareness of symptoms and adoption of a healthy lifestyle remain among the most effective measures for reducing the burden of breast cancer.

They appealed to women to overcome hesitation and fear surrounding breast-related symptoms and consult qualified healthcare professionals without delay.

Early detection, doctors stressed, remains one of the strongest weapons against breast cancer. Women should know their bodies, recognise warning signs and seek medical attention promptly rather than waiting for symptoms to worsen, they said—(KNO)

DGP Prabhat directs hassle-free Kounsarnag Yatra



KNO

Srinagar, Aug 20: Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat on Thursday asked the officers to ensure that upcoming Kounsarnag Yatra in South Kashmir passes off smoothly.

While chairing a security review meeting at Police Control Room Kashmir to review the security arrangements for the annual Kounsarnag Yatra, DGP Prabhat directed the officers to maintain a high level of preparedness, strengthen security arrangements along the Yatra routes, and ensure

close coordination and seamless communication among all stakeholders.

He reviewed various security-related aspects and stressed the need for enhanced coordination among all concerned agencies to ensure comprehensive security and effective management of the pilgrimage.

The DGP said, "Safety and security of pilgrims remains a top priority. All necessary security measures need to be put in place for the peaceful and smooth conduct of the Kounsarnag Yatra."

The meeting was attended by Special DG

Coordination J&K S.J.M Gillani, IGsP of (Kashmir Zone, Jammu Zone), range DIsG of SKR & UR, SSP Kulgam, SSP Reasi, SSP PCR Kashmir, CO 33RR, CO 58RR, CDR 14 Sector RR and other senior officers.

The meeting focused on reviewing the existing security arrangements and strengthening the security framework in view of the upcoming Kounsarnag Yatra.

The meeting concluded with directions to all concerned officers to ensure meticulous planning, close coordination, and effective implementation of the security arrangements—(KNO)

‘Outstanding sportspersons’ end 15-day long hunger strike

Yogesh

Jammu, Aug 20: ‘Outstanding sportspersons’ in Jammu on Thursday called off their prolonged hunger strike after Youth Services and Sports Minister Satish Sharma gave a written assurance that the controversial SO 12 selection list would be reviewed and kept on hold.

According to the details available, Minister Satish Sharma had earlier visited the protest site on August 15 and interacted with the agitating sportspersons. "His visit had opened a channel for dialogue with the protesters and paved the way for discussions on their concerns regarding the selection process," said an official.

Pertinently, the agitation, led by athlete Ranjodh Singh, was centred on allegations of nepotism, back-door entries and irregularities in the selection process for government posts under S.O. 12. The protesting athletes had been demanding a transparent review of the selection process and corrective measures to ensure fairness for deserving sportspersons. Athletes were sitting on indefinite hunger strike near the Maharaja Hari Singh statue in Jammu, drawing support from various civil society groups, local bodies and political delegations. The Yuva Rajput Sabha and several regional political representatives also extended support to the protesting sportspersons.

Following the Minister's visit on August 15, discussions continued between the protesting athletes and the administration. The matter was subsequently taken forward with a written commitment from the Youth Services and Sports Department to review the selection list and keep it on hold. The assurance also included examining the existing sports recruitment framework and taking steps towards reframing policies to make the selection process more transparent and responsive to the concerns of deserving sportspersons.

Following the written assurance, Ranjodh Singh and the other protesting athletes suspended their hunger strike, bringing the agitation to an end—(KNO)

Omar should have raised J&K people’s ‘concerns’ with US envoy: PDP Chief



Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Aug 20: Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti on Thursday said Chief Minister Omar Abdullah should have used his meeting with US Ambassador to India Sergio Goro to raise the "concerns" and "hardships" faced by the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Mufti said she agreed with the Chief Minister that the issues of Jammu and Kashmir could not be resolved by Washington and that New Delhi would have to address them.

"I agree with Omar Sahib that the issues of Jammu and Kashmir cannot be resolved by

America. New Delhi will have to resolve them," she said, speaking with reporters here.

The PDP chief however, questioned why the Chief Minister did not raise the "concerns" of people with the US envoy. "Issues such as security operations, arrests, termination of employees, raids and property attachments should be highlighted before the Centre," she said.

The former Chief Minister also alleged that visits of foreign dignitaries to J&K had become "curated" after 2019, saying ambassadors earlier met people from different sections of society, including representatives of tourism, trade and travel.

"But after 2019, the tours of these foreign dignitaries are curated. They come, meet the Chief Minister, meet the Governor, go for a shikara ride and leave," she said.

Mufti said there is no need to approach Washington to resolve J&K's issues, but Omar should persuade New Delhi to address the genuine hardships being faced by people.

Referring to the tenure of her late father and former Chief Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, Mehbooba said his government had pursued dialogue with different sections and Pakistan and had also facilitated the opening of cross-border routes.

She said CM Abdullah should also press the Centre for reopening the Muzaffarabad and Rawalakot trade routes, which remain suspended.

On the US envoy's indication that Washington could review its travel advisory for J&K and increase economic engagement, the PDP chief said she welcomed such a move if it benefited the people and generated employment, particularly in horticulture and handicrafts.

She added that there is no need to take the US too seriously, arguing that American intervention had caused destruction in several parts of the world—(KNO)

‘Outsider’ hire triggers J&K Assembly protest

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Aug 20: It was an unusual day in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly on Wednesday, as the staff staged protests over the appointment of an "outsider" as Deputy Secretary in the Assembly Secretariat.

The employees of the Assembly Secretariat, this morning opposed the posting of Bilal Ahmad Mir, JKAS, Sub-Registrar Khansahib, as Deputy Secretary in the Legislative Assembly. Shouting slogans, the staff demanded immediate withdrawal of the order, accusing the government of undermining and interfering with the autonomous character of the Assembly Secretariat.

A group of employees alleged that the appointment of the JKAS officer was a direct interference by the executive in the domain of the legislature. "There is separation of powers between the executive, legislature and judiciary. The executive is accountable to the legislature, and it cannot control the legislature," they said.

It is worthwhile mentioning that the Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, provides that the Legislative Assembly shall have a separate secretariat staff. The Act also empowers the Assembly to regulate the recruitment and conditions of service of persons appointed to the Secretariat staff by enacting a law.

Furthermore, it stipulates that until the Assembly passes such laws, the Lieutenant Governor, in consultation with the Speaker, has the authority to frame rules for recruitment and service—(KNO)

GMC protesting staff defend demands as reasonable



Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Aug 20: The indefinite peaceful protest by Non-Gazetted employees of the five newly established Government Medical Colleges (GMCs) in Jammu and Kashmir entered its fourth consecutive day on Thursday, with employees holding simultaneous road marches at GMCs Anantnag, Baramulla, Doda, Kathua and Rajouri to press for the finalisation and notification of their Recruitment/Service Rules.

The employees, who began their agitation on August 17, said they have yet to receive any concrete response or

meaningful communication from the Jammu & Kashmir Health and Medical Education (JKHME) Department regarding their long-pending demand.

As part of Thursday's protest, employees at all five institutions participated in peaceful road marches within their respective campuses and institutional premises. The protesters raised slogans in support of their demand and urged the administration to expedite the process of finalising the Recruitment/Service Rules.

The employees said the prolonged delay in framing and

notifying the rules has created uncertainty over their service conditions, promotional opportunities, career progression and future prospects.

"We reiterate that our demand is neither unreasonable nor confrontational. We have served these institutions with dedication for years and only want clarity regarding our service conditions, promotional avenues and career progression. The finalisation and notification of the Recruitment/Service Rules is a legitimate demand," the protesting employees said.

They appealed to the Lieutenant Governor's administration, the Minister for Health and Medical Education and senior officials of the JKHME Department to take immediate cognisance of the issue and initiate a meaningful dialogue with their representatives.

The employees reiterated that the indefinite peaceful protest would continue until they receive a concrete and satisfactory response from the authorities.

The five institutions involved in the agitation are GMC Anantnag, GMC Baramulla, GMC Doda, GMC Kathua and GMC Rajouri—(KNO)

Driver dies after dumper comes in contact with power line

KNO

Uri, Aug 20: A 45-year-old dumper driver was killed after suffering an electric shock when the vehicle he was driving came in contact with a 33-KV power line while unloading in the Rajarwani area of Uri in north Kashmir's Baramulla district on Thursday, officials said. An official said that the incident occurred when the dumper vehicle accidentally came in contact with the overhead 33-KV power line during unloading.

He said the driver suffered an electric shock and was immediately shifted to Sub-District Hospital (SDH) Uri in critical condition, where doctors declared him brought dead.

CASO launched in Reasi's Pouni after suspicious movement report



KNO

Reasi, Aug 20: Security forces on Thursday launched a Cordon and Search Operation (CASO) in remote areas of Pouni in Reasi district following reports of suspicious movement. Sources said that locals spotted some suspicious persons in the area and immediately alerted the police.

They said that following the information, joint teams of the police, Army and Special Operations Group (SOG) launched a CASO in the suspected area and adjoining locations. "Security personnel are conducting searches to trace the suspected individuals and ascertain their identity and movement," they added—(KNO)

Body recovered from Nowshera river

KNO

Rajouri, Aug 20: An unidentified body was recovered from a river in the Nowshera area of Rajouri district on Thursday, officials said.

An official said that locals engaged in contract-related work spotted the body floating in the river and informed the police.

He said a police team along with

personnel from the SDRF reached the spot and recovered the body from the river. "The body has been taken into custody, while the identity of the deceased has not been ascertained," he said, adding that the body is in a decomposed condition, making identification difficult.

Meanwhile, an investigation has been taken up and a probe has begun—(KNO)

EDITORIAL

Friday Brief: A Quranic And Prophetic Perspective Of Life

What is the purpose of life? This question has occupied the greatest minds of every era. Philosophers have pondered, scientists have researched, and poets have sung about it. Yet, the clearest answer comes from the Creator Himself. The Quran declares, "I did not create jinn and mankind except

to worship Me" (51:56). This does not mean life is limited to rituals. Rather, worship in Islam is a comprehensive concept—every action done with the intention of pleasing Allah becomes worship. Eating, working, smiling, helping others, and even sleeping can be acts of worship when performed with the right intention. The

real meaning of life, therefore, is to live in conscious submission to Allah, striving to fulfil His commands while benefiting humanity and the world around us. The Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) said, "The best of people are those who are most beneficial to others." This tells us that a life of purpose is a life of service. Life

is also a test. The Quran reminds us, "We have created man into toil and struggle" (90:4). Trials are not punishments but opportunities for growth, patience, and spiritual elevation. Every difficulty is a chance to draw closer to Allah, to purify our character, and to earn rewards that will last beyond this temporary world. Moreover, life is a

journey toward a greater reality. This world is not our permanent home; it is a planting ground for the Hereafter. The Prophet (PBUH) said, "Live in this world as if you are a traveller or a passerby." This perspective frees us from the shackles of materialism and reminds us that true success lies not in accumulating wealth but in securing

our place in the eternal life to come. In essence, the real meaning of life is to know Allah, to worship Him, to serve His creation, and to prepare for the meeting with Him. It is to live with purpose, gratitude, and hope—knowing that every moment is an opportunity to earn His pleasure and draw closer to the ultimate reality: Jannah.

The Meaning Of Life: A Philosophical And Religious Reflection

Mohd Abbas Abdul Razak

Among the many topics that have dominated human minds for centuries is the question of 'what the meaning of life is'. This issue concerning the purpose of our lives has been an obsession that has disturbed the sleep of many thinkers and philosophers throughout history.

From ancient Greek philosophers to modern times, the question of how humans came to exist on this planet and what our purpose is has been a topic of great interest. To answer such questions is not an easy task. I would say that it is a rather complex matter to deal with.

For Socrates (c. 470-399 BCE), the purpose of life is to pursue virtue (aretē) and wisdom. As the father of philosophy, Socrates believed that knowledge and wisdom lead human beings to virtue. In turn, virtue leads them to happiness. On one occasion, he famously said, 'The unexamined life is not worth living.' He also shared the well-known maxim, 'Know thyself,' with his students. Too often, as human beings, we neglect to take the trouble to know ourselves.

Conversely, Plato (c. 428/427-348/347 BCE), the most prominent disciple of Socrates, had a different view on the purpose of life. To him, life should be spent pursuing justice and the Good, which Plato regarded as the highest principle governing truth and all virtues. In addition, he emphasised the importance of cultivating wisdom, moderation, justice, and courage.

In his concept of the Ideal World (or the World of Forms), Plato believed that the human soul has come from a different realm and is trapped in this body of flesh, veins, and blood. He further reiterated that the soul had prior knowledge of everything it would experience in this earthly life. As such, human learning in this mundane life is nothing more than the soul remembering what it had already learned in the Ideal World.

As the founder of Realism, Aristotle (384-322 BCE) thought that the purpose of human life is to attain eudaimonia. This Greek word goes beyond happiness, describing a life that fully realizes human potential and puts it into practice. Moreover, human flourishing happens when one lives a life of virtue guided by reason.

To Epicurus (341-270 BCE), who spent an enormous amount of time exploring and philosophizing about the subject of happiness, a good life is one lived in a state of happiness



and pleasure, free from pain and suffering.

According to the Stoic philosophers, such as Zeno of Citium (c. 334-262 BCE) and Marcus Aurelius (121-180 CE), a good life is one lived according to reason and nature. The Stoics believed that human beings cannot control other people's opinions, wealth, fame, death, or the events that occur in their lives. At the same time, however, they have control over their own thoughts, actions, judgments, and choices. Simply put, to live a meaningful and happy life, one only has to take care of one's thoughts and emotions and not be bothered by what others think of them.

Apart from the Greek philosophers, the quest to discover the meaning of life has also caused great pain and anxiety for many modern European philosophers. Some even experienced suicidal thoughts when they were unable to discover the true meaning of life. A classic example is Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951), who was a genius at solving many philosophical problems, yet could not find the true meaning of his own life. On many occasions, he contemplated taking his own life, but fortunately, he never acted upon those thoughts.

In contrast, the handsome Albert Camus (1913-1960) approached the same problem in a more composed manner. To Camus, since life is meaningless or absurd and he could not find a convincing answer to the purpose of human existence, one should simply enjoy the moments that life has to offer. Then, when it is time to leave this world, one should simply depart. Based on his philosophy, Camus lived a life full of activity and excitement until he was killed in a car accident.

Some Religious Perspectives on Life

Hinduism is one of the world's oldest religions and teaches that a good life is one pursued by following the four basic goals known as the Purusharthas. A practising Hindu must observe Dharma (righteousness and duty), pursue Artha (material wealth), enjoy Kama (pleasure and desire), and seek Moksha (the liberation of the soul from worldly attachment and its reunion with the Ultimate Reality).

Buddhism, which emerged from the religious and philosophical tradition of ancient India, retains many of the ideas taught by Hinduism. It modifies some of the ideas with which it disagrees and presents a fresh perspective based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama Buddha (c. 563-483 BCE). According to this founder of Buddhism, the birth of an individual is associated with the concept of Dukkha, which refers to the pain, suffering, and sorrow experienced in life. Since Buddhism teaches that life is a cycle of rebirth (Samsara), one's existence in this world aims to end that cycle and attain Nirvana. From the Buddhist perspective, one can attain liberation through self-purification by detaching oneself from worldly pleasures, engaging in meditation, and performing meritorious deeds.

In comparison to Hinduism and Buddhism, Christianity teaches that every child born into this world inherits the 'Original Sin' committed by Adam and Eve (Romans 5:12). A child or an individual is traditionally understood to be absolved

from this sin through Baptism, which is associated with spiritual rebirth and renewal through the Holy Spirit (John 3:5). Furthermore, the Bible teaches that human beings are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27).

Life from an Islamic Perspective

According to Islam, no one comes into this world by one's personal choice. On the contrary, human presence on this planet is a choice made by Allah. In Islam, human life on this planet begins on a positive note. According to Prophet Muhammad (SAW), every child born into this world is born in a state of purity and innocence. In the religious teachings of Islam, there is no concept of 'Original Sin'. As such, the child is not burdened with the sin committed by Adam and Hawwa while they dwell in the Garden of Eden.

Since there is no concept of 'Original Sin' in Islam, a child is not burdened with the transgression committed by Adam and Hawwa while they dwell in the Garden of Eden. In fact, the Qur'an narrates that Adam and Hawwa sought Allah's forgiveness, saying, "Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we will certainly be among the losers" (Qur'an, 7:23). Allah accepted their repentance (Qur'an, 2:37).

Moreover, the Qur'an states that the iniquities (sins) of one person will not be borne by another. Every sinner must bear his or her own sins. Therefore, each individual is personally accountable before Allah for his or her own deeds (Qur'an 19:95). In Islam, salvation comes through one's own righteous deeds.

In Islam, man is created as the Khalē fah (vicegerent) of Allah on earth (Qur'an 2:30). As a Muslim, he is expected to maintain a good relationship with his God, himself, nature, and his fellow human beings. Fulfilling these responsibilities is an essential part of living according to the divine purpose for which humanity was created.

Turning to the question of why human beings are created, the Qur'an explains that the human race is created to worship and obey Allah (Qur'an 51:56), and that life itself is a test to determine who performs the best deeds (Qur'an 67:2).

At this juncture of the essay, it is important to mention that the Qur'an teaches Muslims that life in this world is both a test and a temporary phase of existence (Qur'an 67:2; 57:20). The righteous servants of Allah

will attain ultimate felicity only when they are blessed to enter the Garden of Paradise in the Hereafter (Qur'an 9:72; 89:27-30).

In this worldly life, every individual will be tested. During times of happiness, we should be grateful to Allah, while in times of misfortune, we should remain patient and engage in self-reflection (muḥā sabah) to identify our shortcomings and understand where we may have gone wrong. Muslims are taught that, regardless of what happens in our lives, there is always wisdom behind every event.

Besides explaining our personal lives, the Qur'an emphasizes that a Muslim must uphold fairness and justice (Qur'an 4:135; 5:8). A Muslim has to treat fellow human beings, as well as the flora and fauna, with kindness and compassion (Qur'an 16:90; 6:38). Islam preaches that there is no room for racism and prejudice against other people. The Qur'an reminds humanity that all people were created from a single pair of male and female, and that diversity among nations and tribes is a sign of Allah's wisdom (Qur'an 49:13).

In Islam, people of different colours and backgrounds are brothers and sisters in faith, while non-Muslims are their brothers and sisters in humanity. No single race is above another, as the Qur'an states that the most honoured among people are those who are most conscious of Allah (taqwā) (Qur'an 49:13). Therefore, the concept of "the chosen ones of God" based on race or ethnicity is not present in the Qur'an.

My final say on this topic is that the Muslim philosophy of life is one that is both beautiful and meaningful. All that a Muslim has to do is follow the guidance revealed by God Almighty in the Qur'an, try to walk in the footsteps of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), and keep away from evil things, evil people, and evil ideologies. A Muslim is expected to lead a decent life and work towards the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. Since life and death, happiness and misfortune, health and sickness, and the other experiences that come our way are tests from God, Muslims should neither be carried away by worldly pleasures and distractions nor fall into despair or entertain rebellious thoughts against Him.

The author is an Assistant Professor, Department of Fundamental & Inter-Disciplinary Studies, International Islamic University Malaysia. This article has been taken from IslamiCity

When Arabic Calligraphy Meets Japan: Art As A Bridge Between Cultures

Majd Arbil

Across centuries and continents, calligraphy has transformed written language into something more than communication. In both the Islamic world and Japan, the written word has become an artistic and even spiritual discipline. Today, artists from both cultures are discovering remarkable connections between these traditions, creating a unique bridge between the Arab and Japanese worlds.

Saudi artist and designer Noha Raheem represents this emerging cultural fusion. Fascinated by Japanese Kanji, along with Katakana and Hiragana, Raheem began experimenting with Arabic letters rendered in a Japanese-inspired style. Drawing particularly from Kufic and freestyle Arabic calligraphy, she discovered that the extraordinary flexibility of Arabic script allows letters to take unfamiliar forms while retaining their identity and meaning.

Raheem uses traditional Japanese materials—including Sumi ink, calligraphy



brushes, rice paper and hanging scrolls—to create Arabic poetry, sayings and Qur'anic verses with a distinctly East Asian visual character. For her, the experiment

demonstrates not only the beauty of Arabic but its remarkable adaptability.

The cultural exchange also flows in the opposite direction.

Japanese master calligrapher Honda Kouichi has devoted much of his life to Arabic calligraphy. Born in Tokyo in 1946 and trained in Arabic language, Honda encountered the art while working in the Middle East. He later studied under renowned Turkish calligrapher Hasan Çelebi and received an ijaza, or traditional authorization in Arabic calligraphy.

Honda's work combines the disciplined tradition of Arabic script with a Japanese sensitivity toward nature, color and empty space. His celebrated Blue Desert, for example, evokes the Saudi landscape while Qur'anic words flow through brilliant blue desert forms. His works have earned international recognition, including a place in the British Museum collection.

For Honda, Arabic calligraphy carries a profound spiritual dimension. Historically refined through the desire to beautifully preserve and present the words of the Qur'an, calligraphy became one of the great artistic traditions of Islamic civilization.

Yet its appeal extends far beyond

Muslims. Japanese students often encounter Arabic without understanding the language and are nevertheless captivated by the beauty of its letters.

That fascination inspired the establishment of the Japan Arabic Calligraphy Association (JACA) in 2006. Through classes, exhibitions and cultural exchanges, the organization seeks to introduce Japanese audiences to Arabic calligraphy while deepening understanding of Arab and Islamic civilization.

The journeys of Raheem and Honda demonstrate something larger than artistic experimentation. One moves from Arabic toward Japanese aesthetics; the other from Japan toward the artistic heritage of Islam.

They meet through the written line. In an age often defined by cultural divisions, their work reminds us that beauty can become its own language—one capable of crossing borders, nurturing curiosity and revealing unexpected common ground between civilizations.

Courtesy: IslamiCity

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

Strengthening knowledge, skills, technical capabilities of farmers vital for transforming agricultural sector: Javid Dar

Flags off 250 farmers for training at CITH

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 20: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperatives and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, Thursday flagged off a group of 250 farmers for a one-day training programme at the Central Institute of Temperate Horticulture (CITH), Rangreth, Srinagar.

The initiative was aimed at strengthening the farmers' technical capacity and familiarising them with the modern, scientific and sustainable agricultural practices.

MLA Lal Chowk, Sheikh Ahsan Ahmad Pardesi besides others was present during the flag-off ceremony.

During the training programme, organised by the Kisan Advisory Board, J&K, the farmers will interact with the agricultural and horticultural experts and scientists. They will find solutions to various issues, challenges and field-level concerns being faced by them in crop cultivation in their respective areas.

Addressing the participating farmers, Javid Ahmad Dar emphasised the importance of continuous capacity building, knowledge enhancement



and exposure to the emerging technologies in agriculture and allied sectors. He said that such programmes are aimed at providing the farmers with practical and scientific knowledge of modern farming techniques, including improved crop management practices, balanced and judicious use of fertilisers and pesticides, adoption of advanced technologies and promotion of sustainable agricultural methods.

He stressed the need to encourage environmentally sustainable and natural farming practices while simultaneously ensuring higher productivity, improved quality of produce and enhanced profitability for farming families.

Javid Dar said that it is being ensured that such training programmes, exposure visits and farmer-oriented

capacity-building initiatives are organised on a regular basis so that the farming community remains abreast of the latest innovations, technologies and best practices. He maintained that strengthening the knowledge, skills and technical capabilities of farmers is vital for transforming the agricultural sector, enhancing farm incomes and making farming more productive, resilient and sustainable.

The Minister urged upon the participating farmers to interact freely with the experts and scientists, seek technical guidance and share their field-level experiences and concerns. He said that such direct interactions would help in developing practical and locally relevant solutions to the challenges confronting the farming community. He underscored the importance of strengthening the linkage

between research institutions, extension agencies and farmers so that scientific innovations and technologies reach the field effectively and translate into tangible benefits for the farming community.

The Minister appreciated the Kisan Advisory Board and the concerned departments for organising the training programme. He called for sustained efforts towards empowering the farmers through knowledge, technology and institutional support.

Director Horticulture Kashmir, Secretary Kisan Advisory Board, Director Agriculture Kashmir, Managing Director JKHPMC, Director J&K Horticulture Marketing and Processing and other senior officers of the concerned departments were present on the occasion.

PAC reviews functioning, Audit Paras of PWD (R&B) department

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 20: The Committee on Public Accounts (PAC) of the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly Thursday conducted a detailed review of various Audit Paras pertaining to the Public Works (R&B) Department.

The meeting was chaired by Chairman PAC, Surjeet Singh Slathia and attended by members of the Committee including Mubarak Gul, Shamim Firdous, Qaysar Jamshaid Lone, Altaf Ahmad Wani (Kaloo), Ranbir Singh Pathania, Ch. Mohammad Akram, Vikram Randhawa and Tanvir Sadiq.

The meeting was also attended by DGAT, Engineer in Chief, Chief Engineers, Superintending Engineers, Executive Engineers, Director Finance PWD and other senior officers of PWD, besides Secretary JKLA, Manoj Kumar Pandit and other officers of Assembly Secretariat.

During the meeting, the Committee examined the Action Taken Reports (ATRs) furnished by the Department on various observations contained in the reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India and reviewed the status of pending Audit Paras.

While examining one of the Audit Paras, the Committee took serious note of the issues involved and directed the Department to institute a departmental inquiry to fix responsibility.

The Chairman directed the department to submit the



Action Taken Report within two months for consideration and appraisal of the Committee.

Emphasizing the importance of financial discipline and transparency in the execution of public works, the Chairman observed that public money must be utilized with utmost responsibility and accountability. He stressed that all developmental works should be executed strictly in accordance with prescribed rules, procedures and codal formalities.

The Chairman also underscored the importance of environmental responsibility while undertaking construction and infrastructure projects. He observed that it is the collective moral responsibility of all stakeholders to ensure that developmental activities do not compromise environmental sustainability.

He further directed the Department to ensure that Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) are prepared through a proper and well-defined mechanism, with all necessary technical, financial and administrative requirements duly complied with, so as to minimize procedural deficiencies and avoid audit objections in future.

The Chairman laid particular emphasis on strengthening the capacity of field-level functionaries. He called upon senior officers to provide regular guidance, handholding and mentoring to ground-level staff, particularly newly recruited Junior Engineers, to enhance their technical capabilities and ensure adherence to prescribed procedures.

He stressed that effective supervision by senior officers, coupled with regular monitoring of works at the field level, is essential for improving the quality and timely execution of projects. He also called for strengthening the Department's internal audit and monitoring mechanisms to identify and address procedural and financial irregularities at an early stage.

The Committee directed the department to ensure strict compliance with financial rules, codal procedures and CAG guidelines in the planning and execution of all future projects.

The Members reiterated that transparency, accountability, environmental responsibility, quality and timely execution of works must remain the core priorities of the PWD (R&B) Department.

DC Rajouri reviews progress of PMGSY Roads in Darhal, subdivision Thanamandi



KT News Desk

RAJOURI, AUGUST 20: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma Thursday chaired a meeting to review the status and progress of PMGSY road projects in Darhal, subdivision Thanamandi.

The meeting was attended by ADDC Malikzada Sheraz Ul Haq, CPO Maqsood Ahmed, SDM Abid Hussain Shah, DFO Mohd Naveed, Executive Engineer PMGSY Shahid Mustafa, AEE PMGSY Ahtjaz Shafeeq Choudhary and other concerned officers. During the meeting, the status of eight PMGSY roads in Darhal, subdivision Thanamandi was reviewed in detail.

It was informed that work on six roads is presently in

progress, while two roads are awaiting requisite forest clearance.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned officers to ensure close coordination and timely resolution of issues affecting the execution of the projects. He directed the DFO concerned to fast-track the forest clearance process for the two pending roads to facilitate commencement of work at the earliest.

The DC also directed the executing agencies to expedite the pace of work on all ongoing projects and ensure their timely completion while maintaining the prescribed quality standards. He emphasized that all concerned departments must work in close coordination to remove bottlenecks and ensure improved road connectivity.

VB-G RAM G Act

CBC's 2-day awareness programme concludes in Kargil

KT News Desk

Kargil, August 20: The two-day Integrated Communication and Outreach Programme (ICOP) organised by the Central Bureau of Communication (CBC) on the theme of Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Act concluded in Kargil on Thursday. The programme was being held at the Syed Mehdi Memorial Auditorium Hall.

Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Kargil Ghulam Mohammad was the Chief Guest on the occasion. Addressing the gathering, which consisted largely of school students from around Kargil, the ADDC appreciated the efforts of CBC for organizing the programme and stressed upon the need to take such awareness programmes to the grassroot level so that there is a better understanding of what the Act has to offer to the people and how they can benefit from it.

Mohammad asserted that the stakeholders at the block level should be involved with the Act at all stages, from planning to execution, as it is only then that

the Act will be implemented in the true sense of the term. He further suggested that development works should be planned in such a way that livelihood generation is given preference at all stages.

Talking about the availability of resources in rural areas, the ADDC, as per a PIB statement, said that we should try to reduce our dependence on other areas when it comes to items of daily consumption and should try to become self-sufficient in whatever way we can. He said that this objective can be achieved to a great extent if proper planning and execution of works permissible under the VB-G RAM G Act is done meticulously.

The programme also consisted of expert lectures by resource persons who talked at length about the various aspects of the VB-G RAM G Act. Haider Ali, Gram Rozgar Sewak, Taisuru Block deliberated upon how the VB-G RAM G Act is better than the acts that had been introduced in the past. He said that it is for the first time that a provision has been kept that registered beneficiaries of the VB-G RAM G Act can take a break from work during

harvesting and sowing seasons when agricultural activities are at their peak. He said that such considerations had never been thought of previously.

Mohammad Towha, Village Level Worker, Kargil, talked about how the VB-G RAM G Act is a landmark legislation to ensure comprehensive development of rural areas. He said that this Act provides opportunities for various government departments to work in close coordination with one another. He added that children should act as catalysts to spread awareness about the Act and take the message to their homes and neighbourhoods.

As part of CBC's integrated communication strategy, the programme also featured an exhibition on the VB-G RAM G Act and live cultural performances by empannelled cultural troupes.

The programme also witnessed enthusiastic participation from students who gave cultural presentations and delivered speeches on the theme of the programme. An open quiz and drawing competition were also conducted as part of the programme and prize winners were felicitated at the end of the programme.

Six MAITRIs provided AI Kits, essential equipment under Rashtriya Gokul Mission

KT News Desk

DODA, AUGUST 20: Six trained MAITRIs (Multi-Purpose Artificial Insemination Technicians) under the Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM) were provided with Artificial Insemination (AI) kits and other essential equipment at the Office of the Chief Animal Husbandry Officer (CAHO), Doda.

The programme was graced by Deputy Director, Central Animal Husbandry Department Jammu Dr. Adris Ahmed Malik as the Chief Guest in the presence of Chief Animal Husbandry Officer Doda Dr. Irfan Ali Wani.

During the programme, all six trained MAITRIs were provided with AI kits, cryocans, diplomas, marks cards, identity cards and other essential materials required for providing Artificial Insemination services in the field. The MAITRIs completed their specialized training at Bathinda, Punjab and are now equipped to deliver AI services in their respective areas.

The deployment of trained MAITRIs at the grassroots level is expected to significantly strengthen doorstep livestock breeding services, particularly in far-flung and remote areas

where livestock farmers often face difficulties in accessing timely Artificial Insemination facilities. Their availability within local communities will facilitate prompt and accessible breeding services for livestock owners and contribute towards improving the productivity and quality of the local livestock sector.

The initiative will also create opportunities for self-employment and livelihood generation for the trained MAITRIs, enabling them to utilize their technical expertise while contributing to livestock development in their respective communities. By bringing scientific breeding services closer to farmers, the MAITRIs will play an important role in enhancing livestock productivity and strengthening the economic well-being of rural households.

The officers appreciated the efforts of the trained MAITRIs and encouraged them to discharge their responsibilities with dedication, sincerity and professionalism, keeping the interests of livestock farmers at the forefront.

The programme highlighted the Department's continued efforts towards expanding quality livestock breeding services in rural and remote areas.

KU's EMMRC begins two-day orientation programme on MOOCs

KT News Desk

Srinagar Aug 20: The Educational Multimedia Research Centre (EMMRC), University of Kashmir (KU), commenced a two-day orientation programme on Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) at the Main Campus, aimed at familiarising academics with digital learning platforms and encouraging greater integration, visibility and enrollment of MOOCs in higher education.

Titled "Promoting MOOCs in Higher Education: Integration, Visibility and Enrollment," the programme brought together faculty members from universities and colleges across Kashmir. It seeks to strengthen the capacity of teachers to develop and engage with digital learning resources and platforms, while promoting wider access to quality education beyond conventional classroom spaces.

In her message Vice Chancellor, KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, emphasised the importance of embracing digital



transformation in higher education and highlighted the role of MOOCs in expanding access to quality learning and strengthening the academic ecosystem.

"MOOCs have emerged as an important instrument for widening access to quality education and connecting learners with knowledge beyond geographical and institutional boundaries. As higher education continues to evolve with technology and AI, it is important that our teachers and institutions remain prepared to embrace these changes and make meaningful use of digital platforms," she said.

Speaking on the inaugural session, Dean Academic Affairs, KU, Prof. Shariefuddin Pirzada,

stressed on the need for academic institutions to focus on developing human resources capable of competing at the international level.

"Initiatives like MOOCs provide us an opportunity to take education to everyone. It provides us an opportunity to build human resources that are digitally equipped, globally competitive and prepared for the changing demands of education," he said.

In his remarks Registrar, KU, Prof. Naseer Iqbal, highlighted the valuable role of EMMRC in strengthening digital education at the University and encouraged faculty members to make greater use of the Centre's expertise and resources.

Speaking on the occasion Registrar, Cluster University Srinagar, Prof. Wilayat Hussain Razvi, highlighted the digital education initiatives of the Ministry of Education and the changing role of teachers in the digital learning landscape.

Senior Producer, EMMRC KU, Shaqut Habib, shared his experiences in MOOC production and

highlighted the Centre's contribution to digital learning initiatives.

Earlier Director, EMMRC, KU, Prof. Syeda Afshana, in her welcome address, emphasised the importance of taking education beyond conventional classroom spaces and described the programme as a beginning towards greater academic interaction and collaboration.

Prof. Afshana, who recently took over the role of the Director EMMRC KU, stressed on the importance of human resource management in the contemporary times.

"There is now new technology, challenges, opportunities, and AI. However, we must remember that the most valuable is our human resource, and we must know how to nurture and manage it effectively," she said.

The two-day programme features ten technical sessions led by resource persons from within and outside EMMRC, covering diverse aspects of digital learning, MOOC development, integration, visibility and outreach.

YSS Bandipora hosts inter-district provincial-level Girls Kabaddi Competition

KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, AUGUST 20: The Department of Youth Services and Sports (YSS), District Bandipora, hosted the Inter-District Provincial-Level Girls Kabaddi Competition for the Under-14 and Under-17 categories at Higher Secondary School Nadihal on Thursday.

The event commenced with an impressive opening ceremony attended by Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Bandipora Nazir Ahmad Mir, Chief Education Officer (CEO) Bandipora, District Youth Services and Sports Officer (DYSSO) Bandipora, and the Principal of HSS Nadihal.

Addressing the gathering, the ADDC welcomed the participating teams from various districts of Kashmir and encouraged the young athletes to display their talent and competitive spirit. He said that Kashmiri girls possess immense



talent and have the potential to excel at national and international sporting events.

The opening round featured several exciting and closely contested matches, with the young players showcasing impressive skill, discipline, teamwork and determination.

In the first round, Bandipora defeated Baramulla, while Ganderbal secured victory over Shopian. Kupwara also

emerged victorious against Kulgam.

The competition provides an important platform for young female athletes to showcase their sporting abilities, gain valuable competitive exposure and develop teamwork, discipline and sportsmanship. It also reflects the department's continued efforts to promote girls' participation in sports at the grassroots level.

Chinar Premier League 2026

CS inaugurates knockout phase; says tourney brings together youth from Jammu, Kashmir, Ladakh

KT News Desk

Baramulla, Aug 20: The historic Chinar Premier League (CPL) 2026 entered its much-awaited knockout stage on Thursday with a spectacular ceremony held at General Bipin Rawat Stadium, Baramulla, witnessing a massive gathering of around 6,000 spectators, including school students and sports lovers.

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo inaugurated the tourney while Commissioner Secretary, Youth Services & Sports Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, attended the event as the guest of honour.

The ceremony commenced with the national song followed by the National Anthem and featured vibrant cultural performances by the local school bands, adding colour and patriotic fervour to the grand sporting occasion.

The inaugural knockout match was played between Sheeri Blasters and Downtown Bijbera, marking the beginning of the decisive phase of the tournament.

"The CPL 2026 has emerged as a major sporting platform, bringing together the young athletes from Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh and providing them an inclusive space to connect, compete and showcase their talent", asserted the Chief Secretary.



The league phase witnessed unprecedented participation and public engagement, with 1.6 million viewers, around 1,600 athletes, 79 competing teams and 81 matches across eight venues. The teams were selected from 130 applicants and divided into 26 pools with 32 teams qualifying for the knockout stage.

Spearheaded by the Indian Army in partnership with BCF, the CPL goes beyond competitive cricket by promoting youth engagement, community

participation, sportsmanship and social cohesion. The initiative aims to create a vibrant platform where young people can express themselves through sport and contribute towards a positive and empowered society.

The event was attended by Major General Manoj Joshi, GOC Dagger Division; Deputy Commissioner Baramulla Dr. S.F. Hamid, Brigadier M.B. Singh, Commander, 79 Mountain Brigade; Gurinder Pal Singh, Senior Superintendent of

Police Baramulla; and the Commanding Officer, 46 Rashtriya Rifles, besides other senior officers and officials from the civil administration, police and Army, officers of the Youth Services & Sports Department, sports personalities, players, students and public.

The grand commencement of the knockout phase marked another significant milestone for the CPL 2026, reflecting the growing enthusiasm for cricket and the power of sport to bring communities together.

PTI

Chennai, Aug 20: The southern states on Thursday supported Union Home Minister Amit Shah's suggestion to resolve pending water disputes through dialogue during a southern chief ministers' meet where the delimitation issue was raised by the participating state governments.

At the 31st meeting of the South Zonal Council, Shah battled for the early resolution of inter-state water-related issues and Andhra Pradesh and Telangana agreed to resolve matters related to the division of assets and liabilities through consultations, an official release said.

Delimitation, an issue on which most southern states are on the same page, prominently figured in the meeting, with Karnataka and Tamil Nadu stressing that status quo of 543 Lok Sabha seats be maintained for another 25 years.

Shah observed that protecting the interests of one's state was not wrong. However, if the process of protecting interests results in states being deprived of water for years while it simply flows into the sea, then no actual interest is being served.

He said that linking of major rivers, from the Brahmaputra to the Cauvery and Godavari, could ensure that India faces no water shortage for the next 100 years.

"This initiative could also facilitate the creation of multiple waterways, which would not

only save fuel and improve the environment but also provide a cost-effective transportation system," he said.

Shah said that in north India, five out of the eight issues related to sharing of river waters had been persisting since the pre-British era. A final agreement was reached five months ago, and by resolving 100 per cent of the issues, spanning from Kashmir to Uttar Pradesh, a dispute-free north India has been achieved.

Further, Shah said that the southern states are the main pillars of the country's progress, and their progress depends on water. Whether it is agriculture, industry, healthy citizens or the environment, water is the soul of this region in all these four areas.

Chairing the meeting, Shah emphasised the need for the early resolution of pending water issues through joint meetings involving the Union Ministries of Jal Shakti, Home Affairs, the Inter-State Council, and the respective states. He underscored fighting against drugs, malnutrition and stunting.

The Southern Zonal Council comprises the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Telangana, and the Union Territories of Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep. It serves as an excellent forum for resolving issues and disputes between the Centre and the member States/UTs, the Centre said.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay, Andhra Pradesh CM N Chandrababu Naidu, Telangana Dy CM Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, the chief ministers of Kerala and Karnataka, VD Satheesan and DK Shivakumar, respectively, among others participated.

With his state locked in a dispute with Tamil Nadu over the Mekedatu dam proposal, Shivakumar told TN that its interests would be protected if the reservoir is constructed.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Shivakumar said he committed, in Shah's presence, that the interests of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry would be protected regarding the proposed Mekedatu dam issue. Holding five tmc ft of water for drinking water supply, the rest will be shared with Tamil Nadu, he said.

Shivakumar also urged the Southern Zonal Council to adopt a resolution asking the Union government to honour the 1971 census for delimitation, retain 543 Lok Sabha seats for 25 years and fit women's reservation within the existing seats.

Tamil Nadu CM Vijay conveyed to the union home minister that the existing freeze capping Lok Sabha seats at 543 nationally and 39 in the state should continue, state minister R Nirmal Kumar said.

Addressing reporters following the meeting held at Kovalam near here, the Energy Resources and Law Minister said the CM conveyed the state's concerns on delimitation.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Nari Shakti

FULL ELECTRIFICATION ACHIEVED

Highlighting progress since 2019, the Lieutenant Governor stated that all 216 border villages of Kathua district are now connected by road, with full electrification achieved. Telecommunication and television access, once limited, now reach every household.

"These figures are not just numbers and reports but they represent real change in your lives," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor shared data highlighting that poverty levels have declined sharply, migration to cities has halved, and rural incomes have risen by 30%. Employment opportunities have expanded, with unemployment reduced to nearly half of earlier levels. More than 2,000 individual and community bunkers have been constructed for the safety of border families.

"Our goal should be that the entire population moves above the poverty line," he said.

GENERATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

He noted that government schools now have improved facilities, digital classrooms, vocational training and full academic sessions.

"This is not a minor change but it is a generational transformation," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor outlined four key resolves for the development of border villages- Self-reliance by Connecting villages not just to roads but to markets, promoting horticulture and dairy cooperatives. Youth empowerment by creating opportunities in agriculture, tourism, defence-support services, and crafts. Improved health facilities by strengthening healthcare and tele-medicine connectivity, and the fourth resolve is robust security infrastructure by enhancing coordination between civil administration and armed forces.

DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY NOT SEPARATE GOALS

"Development and security are not separate goals but they are two pillars of the same goal. Only a secure village can become a prosperous village, and only prosperous villages can build a self-reliant and developed India," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor called upon the youth and families of Karol Krishna and neighbouring villages to take responsibility for shaping their future.

"I want to tell the youth of Karol Krishna, Rathua, Gajnal, Bobiya, Kadiyala and Gujjar Chak that your ancestors held this soil through difficulties for many decades after Independence. Now it is your responsibility to take it forward. Today, resources are in your hands, and if there is any shortfall anywhere, I promise it will be addressed immediately. Today the big question is - taking this opportunity, how far will you take your village? Will Karol Krishna be known only as a border village, or as a border village that produces the country's finest youth? That decision is now the youth's responsibility.

YOU ARE INDIA'S FIRST NAME

I also want to assure all families in border villages that we will ensure that the light of development reaches every home. The Vibrant Villages Programme is a national resolve, and from now on we will not let border villages remain behind. You are India's "first name". You are not the periphery of the country but you are the front line. You are the place from where India becomes visible. And as long as our soldier stands on the border, and behind him the border villages stand firm, India is firm. India is invincible. India is immortal," the Lieutenant

Governor said.

Addressing the demands, the Lieutenant Governor assured Kathua residents that prompt action will be taken to resolve their issues.

During his visit to the Karol Krishna Border Out Post (BOP), the Lieutenant Governor interacted with the Jawans and commended their steadfast commitment to securing the nation's borders and their exceptional service during Operation Sindoor. He emphasized the need for continuous vigilance to disrupt and neutralize any hostile attempts by the enemy.

Advocate Vijay Kumar, Member of Legislative Assembly from Hiranagar; Shaleen Kabra, Additional Chief Secretary, Jal Shakti Department; Ashwani Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary, Power Development Department; Bhim Sen Tuti; IGP Jammu; Asif Jalal, IG BSF; M Raju, Commissioner Secretary, GAD; Vikramjit Singh, Commissioner Secretary Industries & Commerce; Sarmad Hafeez, Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare Department; Ms R. Alice Vaz, Commissioner Secretary to Government, Planning and Information; Shri Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Mohammad Aijaz, Secretary, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj; Amitava Chatterjee, MD & CEO, J&K Bank; Rajesh Sharma, Deputy Commissioner Kathua; senior officials and people from different walks of life were present. (KNO)

Pak-US row matter

abattoir, the Chief Minister said the project was initially conceived in 2011-12 but got stalled for various reasons. "It stands revived by the Srinagar Municipal Corporation and is expected to be completed within one-and-a-half years."

He said the facility would ensure proper disease testing of sheep and halal certification before meat reaches the market. He said the administration also intends to revive the earlier system of inspection and stamping of meat.

"Whenever meat is sold in Srinagar, it should carry a market-authorized stamp so that people know it meets quality standards," CM Omar said.

On the international film festival, the Chief Minister said its purpose is not merely to bring Bollywood or Hollywood personalities to Kashmir, but also to expose local audiences to diverse cinema and create opportunities for local talent.

He said workshops in editing, directing, cinematography and music would be organised to help local technicians develop skills and reduce dependence on professionals from outside when films are shot in Jammu and Kashmir.

On AIIMS, CM Omar said construction work is progressing rapidly and expressed hope that one of its blocks would become operational this year, with OPD and some other treatment facilities beginning services.

Regarding the proposed Law University, he said the varsity would be established and discussions were underway regarding its location. The file, he said is almost ready and would require the necessary approvals.

The Chief Minister also said one or two private universities are expected to come to Jammu and Kashmir in the coming weeks, adding that the government had finalised and will release rules following the passage of the relevant Act during the Budget Session.

He added the process for setting up private universities had now begun and foundation stones for some projects could be laid soon.

(KNO)

US ambassador

the Dalai Lama, in the town. However, it was not immediately known whether a meeting between the two would take place. (KNO)

Second consecutive

of times, but nothing grew. It is only now, after the silt was cleared, that we see the flowers again," Ahmad told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

His brother, Mohammad Fayaz Dar, said the disappearance of lotus had also affected local food traditions.

"After the lotus stems disappeared, nadru also gradually vanished from local diets. But now, we believe it will be revived completely," Dar said.

The lotus stem has traditionally been an important ingredient in Kashmiri cuisine and is widely prepared during weddings, festivals and other special occasions.

Tavir Ahmad, a chef in Kashmir, said the return of the plant was bringing back old culinary traditions.

"Now that it is back, we are preparing dishes the way our grandmothers did -- slow, simple and full of memory," he said.

Wular, one of Asia's largest freshwater lakes, has historically supported thousands of people through fishing, lotus-stem collection and harvesting of water chestnuts. The lake is also an important habitat for migratory birds and has been recognised as a Ramsar wetland of international importance.

Over the decades, the lake suffered from silt accumulation, waste dumping, encroachment and changes in surrounding land use.

WUCMA employee Showket Ahmad said the lotus roots may have survived beneath layers of silt and began emerging after restoration work cleared sections of the lake.

"After we cleared silt from specific areas, lotus plants started re-emerging," he said.

Environmentalists have described the revival as an indication of the wider benefits of wetland restoration.

With lotus blooming again for a second consecutive year, residents hope the plant will establish itself more widely across Wular and once again become a sustainable source of livelihood. (KNO)

J&K scours

the process of selection and procurement of books and other educational resources carries with it a corresponding obligation to ensure that every publication introduced into a university is academically credible, factually accurate, relevant to the curriculum and research requirements, constitutionally compliant, legally permissible and appropriate for use in an institution of higher learning.

"It is considered expedient to institutionalize a uniform, transparent and traceable framework governing the selection, academic evaluation, content verification approval, procurement, acceptance, cataloguing, circulation, monitoring and periodic review of books and other educational resources in the Universities of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir," JKHEd said.

It also said that in the interest of maintaining academic integrity, institutional accountability, quality assurance and public confidence in the Universities, the government has issued the Standard Operating Procedures.

"These SOPs shall govern the entire

institutional lifecycle of books and other educational resources, including pre procurement selection, academic evaluation, content verification and approval; procurement and receipt; cataloguing and circulation; and post-procurement monitoring, periodic review, retention, withdrawal or replacement, wherever warranted," it reads.

JKHEd further said that these SOPs shall apply to all Universities established by or under the jurisdiction of the Government of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, including their University Departments, Schools, Centres, Campuses, Central University Libraries, Departmental Libraries and other academic units, subject to the provisions of the respective University Acts, Statutes, Ordinances, Regulations and applicable financial and procurement rules.

"The selection, procurement, publication, recommendation, acceptance, circulation and continued retention of books and other learning resources in universities shall be guided by the principles of academic excellence, factual authenticity, pedagogical suitability, constitutional values, transparency, institutional accountability and due diligence," it reads.

It also said that Every publication shall be evaluated to ensure that it contributes positively to the intellectual, moral and holistic development of students, promotes national integration, scientific temper, responsible citizenship and respect for the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India and is consistent with the Constitution of India, the laws in force and the educational objectives of the Higher Education Department.

"No publication containing misleading, distorted, unlawful, discriminatory, inflammatory or otherwise inappropriate material, or any content that directly or indirectly promotes, glorifies or legitimizes terrorism, violent extremism, secessionism, radicalization or activities prejudicial to the sovereignty, unity, integrity or security of India, shall be recommended for procurement, circulation or continued retention in the Universities of J&K," reads the order.

JKHEd also said that for ensuring a robust, transparent and accountable framework for the academic scrutiny, content verification, post-procurement quality assurance, identification of deficiencies and recommendation of appropriate corrective measures in respect of educational material procured for use in the Universities an Institutional Mechanism is established under these SOPs.

The mechanism will comprise a committee at the university level entrusted with clearly defined responsibilities for academic scrutiny, content verification, quality assurance and monitoring.

"The committee shall function in close coordination to ensure that educational material introduced in universities is academically sound, factually accurate, pedagogically appropriate, legally compliant and consistent with the constitutional values, educational objectives and policy framework of the Higher Education Department," it reads.

JKHEd said that the composition of the academic and content audit committee of the university shall be headed by Vice Chancellor of the University who will act as chairperson of the committee followed by representative of the Higher Education Department (not below the rank of additional secretary, registrar of the university, Dean Academic Affairs, Head of

the Department/Dean of the School, Librarian of the University (Member Secretary), One Subject Expert (to be nominated by the Vice Chancellor).

The committee shall conduct Annual Academic and Content Audit; undertake preliminary scrutiny of educational material; prepare audit reports; recommend retention, review or withdrawal of publications.

The concerned committee shall specifically examine relevance to existing academic programmes and courses and relevance to teaching, research and emerging areas of study.

JKHEd further said that the concerned committee shall examine the academic credibility of the author, editor and publisher and shall check the factual accuracy and scholarly authenticity.

The department also directed the concerned committee to examine the latest edition, version and continued academic relevance and the duplication of existing resources. (KNO)

Rain lashes J&K

one degree below normal, and a minimum of 21.0 degrees Celsius, 3.6 degrees above normal. Qazigund recorded a maximum of 27.4 degrees Celsius and minimum of 19.4 degrees Celsius, while Kupwara recorded 28.6 degrees Celsius and 20.1 degrees Celsius respectively. Kulkarnag recorded 27.9 degrees Celsius and 18.3 degrees Celsius.

Gulmarg recorded a maximum of 18.4 degrees Celsius and minimum of 12.5 degrees Celsius, while Pahalgam recorded 20.8 degrees Celsius and 16.4 degrees Celsius respectively.

In the Jammu region, Jammu recorded a maximum of 29.7 degrees Celsius and minimum of 23.8 degrees Celsius. Banihal recorded 25.1 degrees Celsius and 18.8 degrees Celsius, Batote 24.4 degrees Celsius and 20.4 degrees Celsius, Katra 27.0 degrees Celsius and 22.0 degrees Celsius, and Bhaderwah 25.2 degrees Celsius and 17.0 degrees Celsius.

The weather department advised people, particularly those living in vulnerable and hilly areas, to remain cautious during intense rainfall spells in view of the possibility of brief heavy showers.

It also said farmers could continue harvesting and other agricultural operations, subject to local weather conditions. (KNO)

Once a popular

naturally beautiful and also has a connection with the old Bollywood film Annapan. Unfortunately, today there is hardly any proper maintenance, cleanliness or basic facilities here," he said.

According to locals, the presence of livestock and litter has further deteriorated the condition of the viewpoint. They said the spot, which once attracted travellers who would stop to enjoy the landscape, now presents scenes of neglect.

Ghulam Rasool, a tanker driver, said the Titanic Viewpoint is more than just a roadside stop. "Titanic Viewpoint is a reminder of the first encounter with the beautiful scenery of Kashmir for many travellers. The authorities should restore its historical, natural and tourism importance so that visitors see the beauty of the Valley rather than neglect," he said.

He said preserving such historical and natural sites could help diversify tourism beyond traditional destinations and generate livelihood opportunities for communities along the old highway. (KNO)

Amit Shah slams Cong's two-para Vande Mataram decision

Calls it 'anti-national', 'appeasement', defiance of law



PTI

Chennai, Aug 20: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday launched a scathing attack on the Congress, saying its decision to sing just two stanzas of Vande Mataram was "anti-national" and aimed at appeasing its vote bank in defiance of the law.

Referring to the Congress Working Committee's decision on Wednesday to sing only two paras of the national song, instead of its full rendition, Shah traced the history of Partition and emphasised the consequences suffered by the nation following the truncation of Vande Mataram.

In a statement posted on X, Shah said the CWC decision to sing only two

stanzas of Vande Mataram instead of the full rendition is not only "anti-national" but also an "open defiance of the law" enacted by Parliament.

"In 1937, for the sake of appeasement, it was the Congress itself that fragmented Vande Mataram into two parts. From there, the two-nation theory gained strength, leading to the partition of the country.

"On the 150th anniversary of Vande Mataram, the Modi government corrected this historic mistake and gave the full song legal form. But under Rahul Gandhi's leadership, the Congress is once again treading the path of appeasement for the sake of its vote bank," Shah said. He further said that

the mistake of fragmenting Vande Mataram had already happened once, and the nation suffered the consequences.

"This is an appeal to the countrymen to unite and raise their voices against this appeasement by the Congress," he added.

The CWC on Wednesday decided to abide by the 1937 resolution of its highest decision-making body on Vande Mataram, saying only two stanzas of the national song would be sung at all party events henceforth.

BJP president Nitin Nabin slammed the Congress, alleging that the opposition party had become the "new Muslim League" for the sake of votes.

Shah in Bengal, to attend events on border security



PTI

Siliguri (WB), Aug 20: Union Home Minister Amit Shah arrived here on Thursday evening for a three-day visit to West Bengal, during which he will attend programmes related to border security, officials said.

Shah was welcomed by Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari on his arrival at Bagdogra airport from Chennai.

On Friday, the home minister will visit the SSB Frontier Headquarters in Siliguri, where he will attend

foundation-laying ceremonies for various border security projects and interact with SSB personnel, the officials said.

He will chair review meetings in Siliguri, including one related to border security, they said.

Shah's visit assumes significance as the Siliguri corridor, commonly known as the 'Chicken's Neck', is a strategically important stretch connecting the northeastern states with the rest of the country, and lies close to the nation's borders with Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh.

Police cannot investigate offences under PCPNDT Act: SC



PTI

New Delhi, Aug 20: Police cannot commence an independent investigation of the offences under the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act, the Supreme Court said on Thursday.

A bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and N Kotiswar Singh held that authorities designated under the law must take action in such cases.

The PCPNDT Act was enacted with the intent to prohibit the use of prenatal diagnostic techniques for determination of the sex of the foetus.

The top court said the police cannot be the main investigating authority and at best, it may play a supplemental role, as and when required by the appropriate authority under its supervision.

"The language of the statute, more particularly Sections 27 and 28 of the Act when read together, in light of the other provisions and the socially beneficial nature of the Act as also the requirement of sensitivity along with medical and technical know-how, indicates that the police are not meant to be the investigators for the purpose of this Act.

"This is further made clear by the fact that an FIR once registered cannot be taken to its logical conclusion as per the procedures of this Act. The restriction applies only to offences under this Act and does not restrict the police's power to investigate or prosecute independent offences disclosed under substantive criminal law (IPC/BNS)," the bench said.

The apex court said the requirement of the legislation being socially beneficial in nature and there being a requirement to protect doctors from being harassed or intimidated, has led it to take this view. The apex court's judgement came in a case concerning the police's power to register FIRs and investigate offences under the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques

(Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994.

On the question whether magistrate can take cognizance of the offence under the PCPNDT Act, the top court held that Section 28 of the Act envisions a complete statutory embargo on the taking of cognizance except in situations and scenarios provided thereunder.

"The answer has to be clear. The competent Magistrate shall not be able to take cognizance upon the filing of a chargesheet," the bench said.

Writing a separate concurring judgement, Justice Singh said if the offence is only sex determination, communication of fetal sex, prohibited use of the diagnostic technique, or another offence which clearly falls within the scope of PCPNDT Act, the police must keep their hands off that investigation unless the appropriate authority seeks their assistance.

"Conversely, if a deliberate medical act independently causes death, homicide, foeticide, or such other connected offences, and the facts satisfy the ingredients in the general penal law offence, the police may investigate those offences.

"What they cannot do is use the general offence as a gateway to take over the PC & PNDT inquiry and equally, the Special Act cannot operate as a shield against investigation of a genuinely distinct IPC/BNS offence," Justice Singh wrote.

He said that where information received by a police station, on its reasonable reading, discloses only a contravention of the PCPNDT Act or rules, the police shall make appropriate station/diary entry and transmit the information and accompanying material without avoidable delay to the notified appropriate authority.

"The police shall not commence an independent investigation of the PC & PNDT offence. The appropriate authority shall thereafter act under the applicable provisions of the PC & PNDT Act," Justice Singh said.

Six Indians aboard cargo ship hijacked by pirates off Somalia's coast

AP

Mogadishu, Aug 20: Six Indians were aboard a Cameroon-flagged cargo ship hijacked by pirates off Somalia's Puntland coast earlier this week, a Somali official said Thursday. The M/V LUTUF, which was carrying Turkish weapons, was seized on Monday and taken by the pirates toward the region's Nugaal coast.

The ship was seized about three and a half nautical miles off Marraya in Puntland's Eyl district, the official told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity, because he wasn't authorised to speak publicly about sensitive information.

The ship, owned by Polar Movement Shipping, was carrying weapons bound for a Turkish military training facility in Mogadishu, as well as communications and satellite equipment, the official said.

Delhi to see major urban expansion under MPD 2047

PTI

New Delhi, Aug 20: Master Plan for Delhi (MPD) 2047 has proposed around 200 square kilometres of area for planned urban expansion of the national capital.

It proposes a greater push for affordable housing developed in small formats, affordable rental housing, and development in land pooling and transit-oriented development (TOD) areas.

Under the land pooling policy areas, Delhi Development Authority (DDA) plans to create around 12 lakh new homes as part of the master plan.

"The area will be developed under the land pooling policy with a 600 kilometre road network. This will be government-led, infrastructure-first development, with DDA developing 30 metre and wider roads upfront to enable



planned growth and better connectivity," a DDA official said. MPD 2047 recommends development in land pooling areas with FAR up to 400-250 metre wide corridor along Urban Extension Road-II.

"The HDC Zone is envisioned to

optimise land use efficiency by promoting compact, mixed-use and high-density corridor (HDC) development along UER-II. It adopts an infrastructure-led approach, flexible development regulations and the innovative Flexi Roads concept, enabling integrated, self-sustaining neighbourhoods and reducing fragmented urban development," the plan document says.

The land pooling policy for development through assembly of privately owned lands was notified in 2013 and its modification and Regulations were notified in 2018.

TOD was introduced in 2015 to restructure the city around mass transit stations nodes. According to officials, in Sector 8B, Gadi Khasro and Ibrahimpur village, the first notified sector under land pooling policy is ready for implementation of development norms.

Expired products, non-permitted colours found in food establishments at Rly stations

PTI

Bengaluru, Aug 20: A special inspection conducted by the Food Safety and Drug Administration department of Karnataka at food establishments in 36 railway stations on Thursday revealed the suspected use of non-permitted colours in sweets, expired dairy products and food items, and fungal growth in vegetables.

The inspection was conducted at 112 food establishments at Bengaluru City Railway station (KSR), Yeshwanthpura, Krishna Raja Puram, Yelahanka, Kolar, Mysuru, Haveri, Udipi, Koppal, Gadag, Davanagere, Bagalkote, Karwar, Yadgiri, Berur and Kadur junction, Ballari, Hospet, Hubballi and Mangaluru, a statement from the food safety department said.

The teams inspected the railway pantry, railway hotel and food served



on the train.

The team found that Vande Bharat trains between Mangaluru and Kerala and Hubballi and Bengaluru were maintained clean. There was, however, 'suspected use' of non-permitted colours in food products, the statement said.

Yellow colour was found to have been used in Jalebi and pink colour in Khova Peda. Expired curd and standardised milk packets were found at a railway station in Haveri district, it said.

Unhygienic conditions

were observed in a hotel at KR Puram Railway Station. At Mysuru Railway Station, idlis were found to be prepared using plastic material and expired food items were also found in the kitchen, the statement added. The team also noticed fungal growth on onions and vegetables, while Chutney was found to be stored in plastic buckets that were not suitable for food storage.

"The railway authorities and designated officers concerned will be informed regarding the violations observed, and

further legal action will be initiated against the food business operators who have violated the prescribed food safety requirements," the statement said.

In response to the statement issued by the FSDAD, the South Western Railway (SWR) said it is committed to providing safe, hygienic, and high-quality catering services to passengers.

"In line with directives from the Railway Board, SWR has already launched an intensive 14-day Special Food Safety Drive across all divisions. This ongoing initiative focuses on comprehensive inspections of hygiene, cleanliness, validity of FSSAI licenses, expiry dates of food products, and overall food-handling practices across all catering and vending establishments," the SWR said in a statement.

Sajjan Kumar, on life sentence in 1984 riots case, dies

PTI

New Delhi, Aug 20: Controversial former Congress MP Sajjan Kumar, who was serving two life sentences in connection with the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, died here at the age of 80 on Thursday.

Kumar is survived by his wife, two daughters and one son, according to his profile on the Lok Sabha website.

His cremation would take place here on Friday.

Kumar was brought by police to the Safdarjung Hospital from Tihar jail around 11 am with altered sensorium. "... He was immediately admitted and resuscitation measures were initiated," the hospital said in a statement.

"Despite providing all necessary medical and life-support measures, he could not be saved and passed away at 12:30 pm," it said. "He was a known case of high blood pressure and Parkinson's disease and had a history of multiple hospital admissions in the past," the statement added.

Incidentally, the Supreme Court was scheduled to hear Kumar's plea seeking three-week parole on medical grounds concerning his ailing wife on Thursday.

According to the cause list, Kumar's plea was scheduled to be heard in the regular list but it did not come up for hearing. Kumar entered politics as a



municipal councillor from Nangloi in Delhi and later rose to become the general secretary of Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee in 1977. He was elected to Lok Sabha in 1980, 1991 and 2004.

Kumar was sentenced to life imprisonment by the Delhi High Court on December 17, 2018, in a case related to the killing of five Sikhs and the burning of a gurdwara during the anti-Sikh riots.

He resigned from the party after this conviction. Kumar was also sentenced to life imprisonment by a Delhi court in February

2025 in another case relating to the killing of two Sikh men during the riots.

The riots broke out following the assassination of the then prime minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards on October 31, 1984 and left thousands of people dead across the country, with Delhi among the worst-affected areas.

According to a report of the Nanavati Commission, constituted to probe the 1984 violence and its aftermath, there were 587 FIRs filed in Delhi. Only 28 cases of these 587 FIRs resulted in convictions. About 50 were convicted for murder, including Kumar.

Bangladesh elects ruling party veteran Alamgir as president

REUTERS

Dhaka, Aug 20: Bangladeshi lawmakers elected veteran Bangladesh Nationalist Party leader Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir as the country's new president on Thursday, making the long-time opposition figure the head of state after his party came to power in a major political transition.

The BNP returned to power in February in the long wake of the fall of Sheikh Hasina's Awami League government in 2024. While the presidency is largely ceremonial, Alamgir will serve as head of state and commander-in-chief of the armed forces. Executive authority remains with the prime minister and cabinet in the South Asian nation of about 173 million people.

Alamgir, 78, defeated Oli Ahmed, a retired army colonel and chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party and candidate of the Jamaat-e-Islami-led 11-party opposition alliance, in a parliamentary vote. Chief Election Commissioner A.M.M. Nasir Uddin declared Alamgir the winner after the 255-to-88 vote.

The BNP and its allies hold a two-thirds majority in parliament after winning



the February 12 general election, which returned the party to power after years in opposition and brought Tarique Rahman to the office of prime minister.

The resignation last month of Mohammed Shahabuddin on health grounds before the end of his five-year term triggered the presidential election.

A former Awami League politician and close confidant of Hasina, Shahabuddin was elected president in 2023 when her party was at the height of its power.

Hasina has been living in India since fleeing Bangladesh after a mass uprising ousted her government in August 2024 and has said that she intends to return in December this year.

One of the BNP's

longest-serving leaders, Alamgir served as the party's secretary-general from 2016 until his nomination for the presidency.

During Hasina's rule, he became one of the opposition's most prominent voices and faced repeated arrests and a series of legal cases.

Alamgir began his career as a teacher after studying economics at the University of Dhaka. He joined the BNP in the early 1990s and rose steadily through the party ranks to become one of its best-known national leaders.

Over the course of his political career, he held several ministerial posts, most recently serving as local government minister before stepping down following his nomination for the presidency.

Congo set to receive 70,000 Ervebo vaccines to contain Ebola outbreak: WHO

REUTERS

KINSHASA: The Democratic Republic of Congo has been allocated 70,000 doses of Merck's Ervebo vaccine for Ebola, the World Health Organization said on Thursday, as the country attempts to contain its biggest ever outbreak of the deadly disease.

Here are some details: Last week Congo had requested a release of Ervebo vaccines from the global Ebola virus disease vaccine stockpile, managed by the International Coordinating Group (ICG) on Vaccine Provision, according to WHO.

The health agency said the group allocated 70,000 Ervebo doses for Congo, of which 20,000 shots will be used in a late-stage trial to understand the impact of the vaccine on the Bundibugyo virus.

The ongoing outbreak is caused by the Bundibugyo species of Ebola, which has no approved vaccines or treatments.

"It is not known whether Ervebo may be protective against the Bundibugyo virus in humans," WHO said, stressing the importance of clinical trials to provide important new evidence.

Ervebo is approved to prevent disease caused by the more common Zaire ebolavirus strain.

The number of confirmed Ebola cases in the Democratic Republic of Congo now exceeds 5,000, according to government data.

Congo's 17th Ebola epidemic became the country's biggest on record in late July by case count, with the death toll now at 2,378 — surpassing the previous worst outbreak in 2018-2020.

Earlier this week, WHO's director-general Tedros Ghebreyesus said the Ebola outbreak in eastern Congo remains a global emergency.

Russian strikes kill 16 in Kyiv, surrounding region



AFP

Kyiv, Aug 20: Russian bombardments killed at least 16 people in Ukraine's capital and surrounding areas overnight, authorities said Thursday, with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky urging a global response to Moscow's "escalation" of the four-year war.

In the early morning hours, rescuers in Kyiv were sifting through the rubble of destroyed buildings, including a damaged children's hospital, while grieving families watched as two bodies were pulled out of an apartment block. "There used to

be a building here, and now it's gone," said 45-year-old resident Maria Abramova.

She had only just reached her children's room after the air raid alert sounded when explosions rang out, blowing her windows out and "nearly killing" her husband.

The ballistic missiles that Moscow increasingly fires at Kyiv fly up to thousands of kilometers per hour and reach the capital within minutes of an air raid warning.

The first explosions rang out over Kyiv less than three minutes after the official warning late Wednesday night — leaving

locals basically no time to reach a shelter.

Kyiv has struggled to intercept the salvos of ballistic missiles, which can only be effectively shot down by US-designed Patriot air defense systems.

The country has repeatedly appealed to its allies for additional support as Russia steps up its strikes — firing a record number of missiles in July, according to AFP analysis of Ukrainian air force data.

"Unfortunately, while Moscow is investing in ballistic missiles and escalation, the world does not always respond appropriately to such attacks," Zelensky said.

"Massive attack"

Fifteen people were killed in the capital, mayor Vitaly Klitschko said, and another person was killed in the Kyiv region.

The attack also damaged warehouses in Boryspil, outside Kyiv, authorities said.

The attack lasted nine hours in the capital, which had been bracing for a strike for a few days.

"It was a massive attack — the Russians prepared for a long time and combined various types of ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and drones," Zelensky said.

Russia launched at least 44 missiles, of which 39 were shot down, according to the air force.

Moscow said it hit "military-industrial facilities, a transportation and logistics center, and warehouses" in Kyiv and its region.

East Bengal Women rewrite Indian club football history with record 12-0 win

PTI

Kota Kinabalu (Malaysia), Aug 20: East Bengal FC secured their second consecutive victory after romping to a 12-0 win over Rovers FC (Guam) in the AFC Women's Champions League 2026-27 preliminary stage here on Thursday.

In doing so, the Moshal Girls created history by recording the biggest-ever victory by an Indian club in an Asian competition, whether men's or women's, overtaking the 9-0 win by East Bengal's men's team against Club Valencia (Maldives) in the 1985-86 Asian Club Championship.

The win puts East Bengal one win away from the group stage, with Malaysia's Sabah FA their opponents on Sunday. Having cruised to a 4-0 win over Rajshahi Stars FC (Bangladesh) on match-day one, East Bengal stamped their authority from the start, taking the lead in the sixth minute when Priyangka Devi Naorem's effort from just outside the box saw the ball hit the left post before settling in the back of the net.

Football fans launch global petition urging FIFA boss Infantino to resign over World Cup 'betrayal'



AP

Geneva, Aug 20: A collection of soccer fan groups from around the world launched a petition Thursday calling for Gianni Infantino to resign as FIFA president after he tried to sell future World Cup profits to private investors.

The petition with the hashtag InfantinoOut also calls for "FIFA to be rebuilt so that the current debacle can never happen again."

"The shameful attempt by one individual — the FIFA President himself — to sell off the World Cup to private investors exposed a betrayal football will

never forget," the petition said about Infantino's plan for a commercial spinoff, which he dropped amid a furious backlash.

The fan groups include Football Supporters Europe, Football Supporters Africa and, in North America, the Independent Supporters' Council, plus about 40 national fan groups worldwide.

Infantino has resisted calls to leave office despite European soccer body UEFA saying it has no confidence in him. He has also been criticized by the leadership of North America's CONCACAF and the Asian Football Confederation.

Worst ever El Nino to bring heavy rains, drought to Sri Lanka

AFP

Colombo, Aug 20: Heavy rains and severe drought are likely to hit Sri Lanka in the coming months as the largely agricultural nation faces its "worst" ever El Nino climate phenomenon, the environment minister said on Thursday.

El Nino is a natural climate variation that warms surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean, bringing worldwide changes in winds and rain patterns.

Human-caused climate change can amplify its impacts because a



warmer ocean and atmosphere make more energy and moisture available to feed extreme weather events.

Weather experts have forecast that Sri Lanka's current dry conditions

will give way to heavy rains from late September until December. Environment Minister Dhammika Patabendi said. But those rains are expected to be followed by a prolonged drought early next year.

The government has set up a ministerial panel to deal with the fallout from what Patabendi said would be the island's "worst" El Nino.

The forecasts pose a particular threat to Sri Lanka, a country of 22 million people where agriculture employs about a quarter of the workforce and remains a key contributor to the economy. "The drought will be very severe between January and

April, and that is when we will face serious challenges," Patabendi told reporters in Colombo.

"We are preparing to mitigate the impending crisis."

Authorities urged rice farmers last month to begin the main planting season in early October, around two weeks ahead of schedule, to take advantage of the expected early rains.

Patabendi said the government was also studying the potential impact of erratic weather on economic growth as the country recovers from its 2022 financial crisis.

2027 Women's World Cup Rio de Janeiro's Maracana Stadium to host opening game & final



AP

Rio de Janeiro, Aug 20: The Maracana Stadium in Rio de Janeiro will host the opening match and the final of the Women's World Cup next year, FIFA announced Thursday.

Brazil is the first South American nation to host

the tournament and will play in the opener on June 24 against a yet-to-be-determined opponent in the 73,000 seat Maracana, which also hosted the 2014 men's World Cup final.

The hosts will also play in Sao Paulo and Brasilia during the group phase of the 32-team competition

spread across eight Brazilian cities.

The final is scheduled for July 25.

The Maracana is one of soccer's most iconic venues, having hosted the decisive match of the 1950 men's World Cup, with Uruguay crowned champions after beating the hosts 2-1. In the final of the 2014 edition, Germany lifted its fourth title after a 1-0 extra-time win against Lionel Messi's Argentina.

So far, only Sweden's Rasunda Stadium and California's Rose Bowl have hosted both the men's and women's World Cup finals.

Spain is the defending champion. Brazil has never won the title.

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AWARAPAN 2

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES...

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OUT OF THE FURTHER

PAW PATROL

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MOVIE SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, 21ST AUGUST

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HINDI 03:10 PM, 06:00 PM

HINDI ATMOS 04:40 PM, 07:30 PM

SPIDER-MAN: BRAND NEW DAY

(3D ENGLISH) (U/A 13+)

01:45 PM

INSIDIOUS: OUT OF THE FURTHER

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