

Cont. From Page 1

Modi reviews security, safety of seafarers amid West Asia conflict
to guide India's response to emerging challenges arising from the crisis, it added.

"The Prime Minister also underscored the importance of accelerating India's transition towards energy independence by expanding renewable energy capacity, including solar power and other non-fossil fuel sources, to reduce vulnerability to external disruptions," the statement read. The PM further directed that a unified and coordinated monitoring mechanism should be put in place to track developments in West Asia regularly and ensure swift implementation of measures necessary to protect national interests and minimise the impact on citizens, it said.

The meeting was attended by Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, Cabinet Secretary TV Somanathan and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister PK Mishra. Union Ministers J P Nadda, Piyush Goyal, Hardeep Singh Puri, and Sarbananda Sonowal attended as special invitees.

Anti-paper leak amendment bill passed with stricter punishment
tion of being irresponsible by walking out and said, "It is unfortunate that many of the members who are most vociferous in raising objections have chosen to walk out when their issues were to be responded to". The minister claimed that the Bill is comprehensive and it not only covers the issue of paper leaks but also takes a holistic view of the examination reform process. The Bill does not cover the NTA alone; it also covers other examinations, including those conducted by the UPSC, SSC and banks, Singh said.

Referring to members' charge that the Radhakrishnan committee report has not been implemented, the minister said, in fact, 76 per cent of the panel recommendations have already been implemented. He also took on the Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge on his claims that 152 leaks have happened, saying the LoP has not mentioned paper leaks in Punjab and Karnataka, which are not ruled by the NDA. On the suggestion to abolish the NTA, Singh pointed out that more paper leaks have happened through state-level agencies, the state public service commissions, through state service boards and not necessarily through NTA.

The minister claimed that 15 years ago, "our youth were looking to leave the country. But, today, many of them are looking to come back now". Singh also listed a host of measures taken by the government in not just providing job opportunities to the youth but also creating an atmosphere to promote the culture of entrepreneurship and self-employment opportunities.

He also listed out steps taken to increase seats in medical colleges and said the government has "made earnest efforts to liberate medical education from management quota". The amendment bill seeks to empower all the state governments and Union Territories administrations to designate any court of session to be a special fast-track court to try offences under the proposed law.

It also provides that the proceedings in such courts are continued on a day-to-day basis and the trial is completed within three months from the date of filing of the charge sheet. The Bill also empowers the central government to constitute a special task force for investigation of any offence. The 2024 law was brought in when the government faced raging paper leak controversies. Before this legislation, there was no specific substantive law to deal with unfair means adopted or offences committed by various entities involved in the conduct of public examinations by the central government and its agencies.

Earlier, participating in the debate, members of several Opposition parties attacked the government over the police action against the agitating students and no accountability fixed for it, even as ruling party members claimed the BJP regime was sensitive to the issues raised by students.

Heavy rain alert for J&K
Forecast Bulletin, widespread rainfall is likely over Haryana, Chandigarh & Delhi, and Punjab during July 30-August 4. Similar rainfall was also expected over Himachal Pradesh and Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh-Gilgit-Baltistan-Muzaffarabad during the same period. The IMD has forecast isolated heavy rainfall over Haryana, Chandigarh & Delhi, and Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh-Gilgit-Baltistan-Muzaffarabad during July 30-August 4. Punjab and Himachal Pradesh were likely to receive isolated heavy rainfall during August 1-4, with isolated very heavy rainfall over Punjab and Himachal Pradesh during July 30-31.

The bulletin has also warned of isolated thunderstorms, lightning and gusty winds with speeds reaching 30-40 kmph, gusting to 50 kmph, over Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh-Gilgit-Baltistan-Muzaffarabad during July 30-August 4.

Current weather conditions were influenced by a deep depression over central Chhattisgarh and northern interior Odisha. The system moved westward in the past six hours and is expected to continue across Chhattisgarh, east Madhya Pradesh, and Vidarbha, gradually weakening into a depression within 24 hours.

Labour Dept organises Stakeholder Awareness Programme on Labour Codes in Srinagar

SRINAGAR, JULY 30: As part of its continued efforts to strengthen labour governance and promote awareness of recent labour law reforms, the Labour Department, organised a Stakeholder Awareness Programme on the Labour Codes here today. The programme was attended by representatives of various trade unions from across Kashmir and served as a platform for constructive dialogue on labour rights, social protection, and regulatory reforms. The programme commenced with the registration of participants, followed by the inaugural session. Delivering the introductory address, S. Charandeep Singh, Labour Commissioner, J&K, highlighted the significance of the Labour Codes in creating a modern, transparent, and worker-centric labour administration. He emphasised that sustained awareness among trade unions and other stakeholders is essential for en-

suring smooth implementation of the new labour law framework and for safeguarding the rights and welfare of workers. He said that the Department remains committed to promoting awareness, strengthening institutional capacity, and fostering collaborative partnerships with all stakeholders to facilitate effective implementation of the Labour Codes. The Labour Commissioner also urged trade unions to act as vital partners in disseminating awareness among workers and ensuring that the benefits of labour reforms reach every workplace. The programme was graced by Pawan Kumar Parihar, Special Secretary to Government, Labour & Employment Department; Umesh Sharma, Additional Secretary to Government, Labour & Employment Department; Masarat Hashim, Deputy Labour Commissioner (Central); and Najwan Nazki, Deputy Labour Com-

Udh-Chenani stretch of NH to remain closed
slides, mudslides and continuous falling of loose debris at the vulnerable hillside, posing a serious threat to commuters and official men & machinery.

Officials said that although two-way traffic was already restored by widening the valley-side carriageway, permanent stabilisation of the affected slope required deployment of heavy machinery for removal of loose overhanging debris, a task that cannot be carried out safely while traffic remains operational. "That is why it has been decided to suspend traffic on Udhampur-Chenani stretch on July 31," the officials added.

Properties of 5 terrorists attached
the handling of arms and ammunition in terrorist camps. "They are now working for Lashkar-e-Taiba in Pakistan and have been supplying arms, ammunition and money to fuel terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir," officials said.

They were also instigating and radicalising local youth to participate in terror activities in Reasi area, the officials added. Meanwhile, police also secured proclamation proceedings against Mohammad Qasim, a top Lashkar-e-Toiba operative, who was also operating from Pakistan. Qasim's property was attached in March this year, officials said.

Oppn MPs protest in Parliament
aao' and 'who gave the order' were raised by the lawmakers.

The MPs also kept a donation box with them and they were seen putting money inside it to symbolise the alleged theft of donations at the Ram temple.

The protesting MPs lined up behind a big banner that read 'who gave the order', an apparent reference to the directions to security personnel to use lethal force against student protesters at the recent agitation against NEET paper leak.

The protest came ahead of the Rajya Sabha taking up the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026, for consideration and passing later in the day.

The protest came a day after Samajwadi Party MPs, led by party chief Akhilesh Yadav, demonstrated at Makar Dwar over the alleged theft and misappropriation of offerings made at the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Temple in Ayodhya.

23 heritage sites declared as protected monuments

Union Territory as "protected monuments" under the provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Ancient Monuments Preservation Act.

The notification was issued in view of the immense historical, archaeological and cultural significance of these sites, and marks a major milestone in the preservation of Ladakh's unique civilisational heritage.

The 23 protected monuments include petroglyph sites, ancient rock carvings, ancient caves, Gompas, caves, forts and palaces among others, that were hitherto lying in dilapidated shape and were under severe threat.

The declaration aims at strengthening heritage conservation efforts in Ladakh by providing legal protection to these historically important sites, facilitating their systematic preservation and restoration, and ensuring that future generations inherit these irreplaceable monuments in their original character and splendour.

"Ladakh's ancient monasteries, forts, caves, petroglyphs and rock carvings are invaluable testimonies to our rich civilisational heritage and cultural identity. Their preservation is not merely about protecting monuments but about safeguarding the collective memory of our people for future generations. By declaring these sites as Protected Monuments, we are laying a strong institutional foundation for their scientific conservation, documentation and sustainable management. This initiative reflects our commitment to preserving Ladakh's priceless heritage while promoting responsible cultural tourism, research and greater public awareness of our unique historical legacy," the LG said.

With this notification, the identified monuments shall now enjoy statutory protection under the provisions of the Act, enabling the Administration to undertake measures for their conservation, prevent encroachments, regulate activities that may endanger their structural integrity, and preserve their historical authenticity.

The 23 sites notified as protected monuments are: Petroglyph Site at Sharnos; Maitreya Buddha Rock Carving at Shey near Sindhu Ghat; Tingmosgang Fort; Ancient Caves at Saspol; Petroglyph Sites at Domkhar, Lehdo, Alchi and Murgi; Stongday Gonpa; Meditation Cave of Onpo at Hunder; Hunder Cave; Dechen Tsomo Khar (Fort); Stampuk Cave; Chamba Rock Carving; Zong Chamba (Rock Carving of Maitreya Buddha); Rock-Carved Buddha Statue at Hunder; Rigsum Gonbo Rock Carvings at Diggar; Chamba Karpo (White Maitreya Buddha) at Diggar; Chamba Rock Carving at Tokpo, Diggar; Folang Singey (Boulder-like Lion Face) at Diggar; Sumoor Fort; Rock Inscriptions at Yourbaltak, Kargil; and the Petroglyph Site at Mangmore, Kargil.

missioner, Kashmir. The technical sessions were conducted by Peer Zameer Ahmad, Assistant Labour Commissioner, Anantnag; Zamir Ali Ganie, Assistant Labour Commissioner, Budgam; and Waheed Ahmed, Under Secretary to Government, Labour & Employment Department.

The resource persons provided comprehensive presentations on the key provisions of the Labour Codes, including workers' rights, employer obligations, registration mechanisms, compliance requirements, grievance redressal, and the evolving framework of labour welfare and social security. The dignitaries appreciated the initiative and emphasised the importance of continuous stakeholder engagement, capacity building, and constructive social dialogue for ensuring effective implementation of the Labour Codes.

LS adjourned amid protests; Oppn walks out of RS
Rajya Sabha Chairman C P Radhakrishnan rejected the point of order and proceeded with the listed Zero Hour mentions, during which members raise issues of public importance.

As the Chair called members to speak, opposition MPs continued shouting slogans, including "Home Minister Sadan Mein Aao" and "Home Minister Chuppi Todo."

The Chairman said it was not correct for opposition members to disrupt others.

The sloganeering continued for nearly half an hour before Tiwari again said the Prime Minister and ministers were answerable and accountable to Parliament.

"We are calling (Home Minister) to this House not to our homes," he said. "When batons are being charged, and bullets being fired, the Home Minister should respond."

The opposition parties then staged a walkout after their demand was not met.

Following the walkout, Leader of the House and Union Minister J P Nadda said the opposition's conduct since the start of the Monsoon Session on July 20 had been negative.

"They have been disrupting the House and not allowing it to function," he said. "Opposition is issue-less and they keep changing the goal posts."

He said the government was ready for discussion on all issues and noted that a bill to prevent paper leaks was listed for discussion.

"They keep changing the goal posts," he said. Nadda condemned the opposition's conduct as irresponsible.

The House continued with the listed business after the opposition walkout.

Single protest won't yield results: Omar

ing to reporters at Ganderbal in the velley. Omar said they took the protest to Delhi knowing that they would not get anything from the first one. "A promise made to Jammu and Kashmir regarding statehood remains unfulfilled," he added.

He said the NC did not wait for August 5 to raise the issue and the party went to Delhi to press for their demand. "The J&K Assembly had passed a resolution regarding the erstwhile state's special status and constitutional guarantees, which was forwarded to the Centre. Whatever steps were required on August 5 would be taken, but the party was not waiting for the date to act," he said.

On the PoJK situation, Omar expressed concern over reports of force being used and innocent people being targeted. "We are all concerned. We can only hope that peace prevails there as well," he said.

Par clears Bill criminalising insults to Vande Mataram

ment of a minimum of one year. The Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Bill, 2026, extends these provisions to the national song (Vande Mataram).

The bill was passed by voice vote after the two members spoke. The amendments moved by the Opposition were rejected by the House. A Raja of DMK later tore some document and threw it towards the Well.

Earlier, DMK member K Kanimozhi opposed the bill, saying it is a "Hindutva agenda" brought masquerading as nationalism.

"It is against federalism. You cannot impose nationalism by bringing a law, the song goes against the secularism of the country. The founding fathers had the wisdom to stop only with 2 stanzas, but today you are trying to polarise the country by making it compulsory and making it a criminal offence if we do not sing all the 6 stanzas," she said.

Sambit Patra of the BJP said the Congress in its 76 years of rule did not give Vande Mataram the respect it deserved as a national song.

Amid sloganeering after the passage of the bill, Lok Sabha was adjourned for the day.

This bill was the first legislation to be passed by both houses of Parliament in the ongoing monsoon session which has seen frequent disruptions by the opposition, mainly over NEET paper leak issue.

Rajya Sabha had on Wednesday passed the bill. **J&K got Rs 10,528 cr for NHs, Ladakh Rs 658 cr: Govt**

maintenance of State roads, including inter-State bridges and roads of economic importance, under the Central Road and Infrastructure Fund (CRIF) Scheme.

Under the CRIF scheme, J&K had an accrual of Rs 128.67 crore and received Rs 206.67 crore in 2023-24; in 2024-25, both accrual and release stood at Rs 128.67 crore. In 2025-26, the accrual and release were Rs 141.54 crore each, while for 2026-27 the accrual stood at Rs 148.51 crore and Rs 125.73 crore had been released up to June 30. Ladakh had an accrual of Rs 326.41 crore in 2023-24 against a release of Rs 68.10 crore, while in 2025-26 it recorded an accrual of Rs 359.05 crore against a release of Rs 210.84 crore.

India-China border trade through Shipki La resumes

Government committed towards welfare of teaching fraternity: Sakeena Itoo

SRINAGAR, JULY 30: Minister for School Education, Higher Education and Social Welfare, Sakeena Masood Itoo, today reaffirmed the, assuring that all genuine issues and long-pending concerns of teachers would be examined sympathetically and addressed on priority. The Minister made these remarks while addressing a one-day Teachers' Convention organised by the Jammu & Kashmir Teachers Joint Action Committee (JKTJAC) at Teachers' Bhawan Bemina here today.

Addressing the gathering, Sakeena Itoo paid rich tributes to the invaluable contribution of teachers towards nation-building and societal progress. She said that teachers play a pivotal role in shaping the future of society by nurturing generations of students and instilling values, knowledge and character among them.

"The future of our nation rests in the hands of teachers, whose dedication and commitment have enabled countless students to excel in differ-

ent fields and contribute meaningfully to society," the Minister said. Sakeena Itoo further highlighted that the School Education department has undertaken series of administrative reforms to strengthen human resource management, improve field administration and address long-pending service matters in a time-bound manner. She added that department has initiated the placement of eligible PG Masters/PG Teachers as In-charge Lecturers to address faculty shortages in Higher Secondary Schools.

The Minister also said that in a major administrative achievement, updated final seniority lists for 31 out of 36 disciplines, covering 20,281 PG Masters/PG Teachers, have been issued after several years and the final seniority list of 3,509 Headmasters has also been notified.

"Department has further strengthened educational administration by placing 136 Senior Lecturers as In-charge Principals, 22 Principals as In-

Himachal Pradesh revenue, tribal development and horticulture minister Jagat Singh Negi was scheduled to inaugurate the Chhuppan Trade Mart at Shipki La to facilitate customs clearance, trader registration, and the import-export process.

In the first batch, 15 Indian traders would cross into the Tibet Autonomous Region of China to begin trading activities.

Authorities had received 88 applications from traders, of which 53 were approved by the state home department after verification of their antecedents. Officials said the traders would transport their goods by vehicles up to the India-China border.

Fresh batch of 1,795 pilgrims leaves for holy cave shrine

Manoj Sinha on July 2 morning from Bhagwati Nagar base camp here simultaneously for the traditional 48-km Nunwan-Pahalgam route in Anantnag district and the shorter but steeper 14-km Baltal route in Ganderbal district. The yatra will conclude on August 28.

Authorities have put in place multi-layered security arrangements along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway and at all transit camps to ensure the safe and smooth movement of the yatra convoys. A multi-tier security setup has been activated in and around the Bhagwati Nagar base camp.

The commencement of the yatra had marked the beginning of the country's one of the most revered spiritual pilgrimages and reflects the coordinated efforts of the administration and all stakeholder departments to facilitate a secure, seamless and memorable pilgrimage experience for every devotee.

Traffic restrictions will remain in force on various stretches of the highway till August 28, with daily advisories and sector-wise cut-off timings to regulate traffic, officials said.

11 officers killed in militant attack on Pak police post

The ambush in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province comes a few days after a suicide bombing killed 15, including 12 Pakistani army soldiers, in the nearby district of Tank. The suicide attack was carried out by Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, or Pakistan Taliban.

Pakistan has witnessed a surge in militant violence in recent years, much of it blamed on the TTP, a separate group but a close ally of the Afghan Taliban, who returned to power in neighboring Afghanistan in 2021.

Islamabad has repeatedly accused Afghanistan's Taliban government of providing sanctuary to TTP militants, an allegation Kabul denies.

Rot in education system deep: Cong

long journey to restoring its integrity," Ramesh said on X. He said that for the last three years, there has been a divergence between the results of the Maharashtra Common Entrance Test (MH-CET) for engineering and the class 12 board marks.

The toppers in the MH-CET are unable to perform well in their Board exams, Ramesh said.

"Is this due to foul-play? Is this due to the growing prevalence of coaching over school-based education? We need to introspect deeply," the Congress leader said.

Ramesh said that simply passing a law to create fast-track courts for paper leaks is not a solution, and the move "insults" the sentiments and righteous frustration of the lakhs of youth who have taken to the streets over the last couple of months.

IAF Chief stresses critical need for self-reliance in def sector

gence (AI) algorithms. Urging industry giants to nurture the defence startup ecosystem, the Air Chief Marshal appealed to major corporations to financially back and mentor smaller innovators.

"R&D is very important; it's my appeal to big players to support smaller players, adopt some startups, you become the man who puts money in them, don't think about money back," he added.

Earlier, Union Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth on Thursday reaffirmed the government's commitment to building a self-reliant defence ecosystem, saying the resolve is to make India a developed nation by 2047 and transform the Indian Air Force into the world's most powerful air force through indigenous capabilities and innovation.

Addressing reporters at a defence sector gathering, Seth said India has always believed in peace and the principle of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, but remains prepared to give a strong response to any challenge to its sovereignty and security.

"India's culture teaches us peace and the welfare of humanity. But when anyone tries to threaten us through terrorism or casts an evil eye on the nation, we also know how to respond with the spirit of Lord Shiva's Tandav," Seth said.

Highlighting the importance of Atmanirbhar Bharat in the defence sector, the Minister said the country's resolve is to make the Indian Air Force one of the most powerful air forces in the world through indigenous capabilities. "The world is looking towards India today. This is not just a dream, but a resolve and determination that will never remain incomplete," he said.

charge Chief Education Officers and 1,083 Masters as In-charge Headmasters", she said. "To fill vacant teaching positions, 594 Lecturer posts in 27 subjects were referred to the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission, which has recommended 537 candidates in 26 subjects".

Expressing concern over issues confronting the teaching fraternity, the Minister observed that teachers who have devoted decades of their lives to imparting quality education deserve due recognition and fair consideration of their genuine concerns. She said the Government is fully aware of the challenges being faced by teachers and is committed to resolving them in a transparent and time-bound manner.

Referring to concerns raised regarding various service-related matters, Sakeena Itoo said that all genuine demands placed before the Government would be examined with empathy and seriousness.