



Govt forms Highway Safety Task Forces

The government has constituted Highway Safety Task Forces in all districts of the Union Territory to strengthen road safety and comply with the Supreme Court's directions in the Phalodi accident case.

"In compliance with the Supreme Court order, sanction is hereby accorded to the constitution of District Highway Safety Task Forces, in the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir," a GAD order said.

The district magistrate

PMGSY AE suspended

The government has placed under suspension Liyaqat Javid Sheikh Gojar, Assistant Engineer, PMGSY Division, Thathri, following his arrest by the CBI's Anti-Corruption Bureau, Jammu, in a graft case.

As per a government order, the suspension would be effective from the date of his arrest on July 16, 2026.

During his suspension, Gojar would remain attached to the office of

CB files chargesheet in visa fraud case

The crime branch of police has filed a chargesheet against an accused for allegedly duping several people on the pretext of arranging foreign employment visas for them.

The chargesheet was filed against Kartik Choudhary, a resident of Purana Pind, RS Pura, before a competent court, along with a list of witnesses and relied-upon documents, officials said.

Officials said the case originated from a complaint, alleging cheating in

Digital FASTag local pass facility extended to 121 toll plazas

NEW DELHI, AUG 18: National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has extended the facility of online FASTag 'Local Passes' to 121 toll plazas across the country, an official statement said on Tuesday.

Eligible commuters can subscribe the monthly local pass online through the Rajmargyatra Mobile App, eliminating the need for physical visits to toll plazas and manual submission of supporting documents, the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways said.

The first Digital Local Pass facility was launched in July 2026 at the Mundka-Bakkarwala toll plaza on

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Paper leak cases SC directive on plea to confiscate properties of offenders

NEW DELHI, AUG 18: The Supreme Court today sought responses from the Centre and the state governments on a PIL seeking directions to confiscate movable and immovable properties of offenders and their family members involved in exam question paper leak cases.

A bench comprising Justices PS Narasimha and Alok Aradhe issued notice to the Union of India and states on the plea filed by advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay.

During the hearing, Upadhyay submitted that he was not pressing his

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Modi Govt Launching Brazen Attack On Democratic Right Of Indians To Question, Dissent: Kharge

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Ravneet Rabab's Kashmir connection finds a voice in 'Sajjna Ve'

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Trump praises India's poll system

MEA responds, says credibility well-established globally

NEW DELHI, AUG 18: *After US President Donald Trump cited India's electoral system while pushing for mandatory photo identification for voters in the United States, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) today said the credibility and robustness of India's election machinery are "well-established facts globally".*

MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal made the remarks when asked about Trump's comments during the ministry's weekly media briefing.

"I have no specific comment to make on the remarks. I can say, however, that the credibility and robustness of India's election machinery are well-established facts globally," he said.

Trump on Tuesday invoked Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar while renewing his demand for mandatory voter identification in the US and urging Congress to pass the SAVE America Act.

"Earlier this month, India's Chief Election Commissioner, Gyanesh Kumar, asked our administration, how can you have elections in the US without a valid Photo ID?" Trump said in a post on Truth Social.

Trump pointed out that 646 million voters participated in India's last election, with less than one per cent voting by mail, and said every voter was required to have a valid photo identity document.

His remarks came a week after CEC Kumar met US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor. During the meeting, the two agreed to work

closely to deepen cooperation in election management and the training of election staff.

Gor on Tuesday endorsed Trump's remarks, posting on X, "President Donald J Trump is absolutely correct! 646 MILLION voters, every single one required an ID in India's last election. Congress should pass THE SAVE AMERICA ACT!"

According to the White House, the SAVE America Act seeks to ensure that only US citizens participate in federal elections. The proposed legislation would require voters to provide valid identification and proof of citizenship before registering to vote.

It also proposes restrictions on voting by mail, limiting it to cases involving illness, disability, military service or travel. The legislation would further direct

states to remove non-citizens from voter rolls.

"American citizens -- and only American citizens -- should decide American elections," the White House said, describing the proposed legislation as a "common sense, bipartisan bill".

Trump's remarks also drew a response from senior Congress leader and Lok Sabha MP Pawan Khera, who dismissed the US President's praise for India's election system, saying, "Please take Gyanesh Kumar to America and keep him there."

Khera added that in response to the "insults and bullying" India had received from Trump, "this is the least we can do for you".

Earlier, making a strong case for stricter electoral laws in the US, Trump praised the Indian election

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Search operations launched in 3 distts

Himalayan Mail News
JAMMU, AUG 18

Following reports about the movement of suspected terrorists, security forces have launched search operations at multiple locations in Udhampur, Kathua and Reasi districts of Jammu.

According to officials, two suspected terrorists went to the house of one Prakash Chand in Takot village of Udhampur late last night. Finding the entry door locked from inside, they knocked on it, officials said.

The family members didn't open the door despite repeated knocks, the suspects,

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Omar reviews Film Festival preparations



Himalayan Mail News
JAMMU, AUG 18

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today chaired a high-level meeting to review the final preparations for the inaugural International Film Festival of Jammu & Kashmir (IFFJK), scheduled to

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AI, cybersecurity rapidly transforming governance: Jitendra



NEW DELHI, AUG 18:

Union Minister Jitendra Singh today said that AI, Quantum, Cybersecurity and Digital tools were rapidly transforming governance and emphasised the need for continuous learning and adaptation among civil servants as governance processes and technology

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Rajya Sainik Board meeting

Every step will be taken to honour your sacrifices: LG tells veterans



Himalayan Mail News
JAMMU, AUG 18

LG Manoj Sinha, who today chaired the 81st meeting of Jammu & Kashmir Rajya Sainik Board at Lok Bhavan here, said that every step would be taken to honour the sacrifices of veterans.

In his address on the occasion, he discussed key issues concerning veterans, veer naris, widows and de-

pendents, covering, welfare delivery, grievance redressal, healthcare and institutional strengthening.

The LG reiterated his commitment to the welfare of veterans and their families, assuring that every step would be taken to honour their sacrifices and guarantee a life of dignity.

The board discussed empanelment of government hospitals including AIIMS Jammu, GMC Rajouri, GMC Doda and Govern-

ment Hospital, Kupwara, with ECHS for enhanced healthcare access.

The LG also chaired the State Management Committee (SMC) meeting on the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund.

The committee considered welfare-oriented proposals covering medical and health support, infrastructure, outreach, education and skill development.

The committee also pro

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Red Fort car bomb blast

High Court denies default bail to accused

NEW DELHI, AUG 18: Delhi High Court on Tuesday refused to grant default bail to Jasir Bilal Wani alias Danish, one of the accused in the 2025 Red Fort car bomb blast that killed 15 people and left many injured.

A bench of Justices Prathiba M Singh and Vikas Mahajan dismissed Wani's appeal challenging a March 30 trial court order rejecting his plea seeking default bail.

"As of now, even the chargesheet has been filed on May 14, 2026. Thus, at this stage, the appellant

cannot seek to challenge that he was entitled to default bail after the period of 90 days as in the opinion of this court, that ship has sailed. The appeal, therefore, is liable to be dismissed," the bench said.

An accused becomes entitled to default bail if the investigating agency fails to file a chargesheet within the stipulated time.

The NIA arrested Wani, a Kashmiri, accused of being an active co-conspirator, on November 17, 2025.

The agency has alleged that Wani provided technical support for carrying out

terror attacks by modifying drones and attempting to make rockets.

It has claimed that he worked closely with suicide bomber Umar un Nabi in planning the Red Fort blast.

A Hyundai i20 car exploded near the Red Fort at 6.52 pm on November 10, 2025, killing 15 people and injuring several others. Nabi was identified as the suicide bomber behind the fatal explosion.

Other than seeking default bail after expiry of 90 days from his arrest, Wani in his appeal also assailed

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Hormuz will stay closed until US lifts blockade: Iran

TEHRAN, AUG 18: Iran's top negotiator Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf said on Tuesday that the strategic Strait of Hormuz will not be opened until the United States meets Tehran's demands, including lifting a naval blockade.

"I want to state clearly that the Strait of Hormuz will not be opened until the American commitments stipulated in the memorandum of understanding... are implemented," he said in a speech broadcast on state television.

Ghalibaf listed the removal of the blockade, the lifting of oil sanctions and unfreezing of Iran's assets

abroad among the demands, which were included in an Iran-US truce in June that later collapsed.

War between Iran and the United States broke out on February 28 after US-Israeli attacks on the Islamic republic, triggering a conflict across the region.

Diplomatic efforts have since April 8 put an end to intense bombardments, but sporadic clashes have persisted, especially in and around the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran has kept control of the strait, a vital global energy conduit, since the war broke out, requiring vessels to seek permission and pay

transit service fees, a move opposed by Washington and several regional countries.

Iran and Oman, both coastal states on Hormuz, have for weeks been discussing the future of navigation through the strait, with Tehran saying the geographical coordinates of the route envisaged by both countries "have been agreed upon".

On Monday, Iran said that talks were "continuing in a serious manner" and views were being exchanged on the text of a "joint statement".

US President Donald

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Govt steps up efforts to reduce dependence on imports

NEW DELHI, AUG 18: The Defence Ministry has notified its sixth Positive Indigenisation List (PIL), covering 405 strategically important items with an estimated business potential of Rs 3,070 crore, as the government steps up efforts to reduce dependence on imports and expand domestic defence manufacturing.

The latest list, notified by the Department of Defence Production (DDP), includes 16 items related to the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and 389 items used by Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs).

The items range from line

replaceable units, sub-systems and sub-assemblies to spares, components and raw materials.

The items cover a broad range of platforms and systems, including the advanced light helicopter, light utility helicopter, Su-30MKI, light combat aircraft and AL-31FP engine.

The list also includes components for armoured platforms such as the T-72, T-90 and BMP-II, as well as equipment for warships and missile systems including Konkurs-M, Invar and MR-SAM.

Defence electronics, including radars, sonars, fire-

control systems and satellite communication systems, as well as high explosive anti-tank ammunition and other critical equipment, are also covered.

Each item has been assigned an indicative timeline for indigenisation. Once successfully developed in India, the items will be procured from domestic industry.

The DPSUs and the ICG will pursue indigenisation through different routes, including the government's 'Make' procedure and in-house development, with participation from Indian

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