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Shah slams Cong over 2 stanza Vande Mataram decision

Mataram, the Modi government corrected this historic mistake and gave the full song legal form. Now, the country should come together against this decision of the Congress party and say that their politics of appeasement will not work anymore. BJP condemns this decision of the Congress party," the home minister remarked.

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

In response, the Congress alleged that the BJP was trying to divert attention from a range of issues."

"They want to divert attention from the genuine issues of paper leaks, theft of donations and Chinese incursion in Arunachal Pradesh. We have been reciting Vande Mataram since 1937, more than 90 years. What is new for us? BJP was not a part of the freedom struggle. Vande Mataram was a part of the freedom struggle; it is emotional for us, but political for them," Congress national general secretary (organisation) KC Venugopal said.

Shah's attack on the principal opposition party comes days after Vande Mataram was played for the first time at the Independence Day celebrations. All six stanzas of the national song were played before and after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address to the nation from the iconic Red Fort in Delhi.

At a meeting of the Congress Working Committee (CWC), the party's highest decision-making body, on Wednesday, the Congress resolved to continue singing only the first two stanzas, in line with the 1937 resolution and the position adopted by the Constituent Assembly.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge elaborated on the issue by reading out the 1937 CWC resolution, arguing that Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel and Subhas Chandra Bose had approved singing only the first two stanzas of Vande Mataram on the advice of Rabindranath Tagore.

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 also slammed the Congress, alleging that the opposition party had become the "new Muslim League" for votes.

Youth dreaming big, Women SHGs empowering local economies: LG

nance. "However, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, border villages have been brought into the mainstream of development," he said.

"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.

Highlighting progress since 2019, the LG said that all 216 border villages of Kathua district were now connected by road, with full electrification achieved. "Telecommunication and television access, once limited, now reach every household," he added.

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

The LG shared data highlighting that poverty levels had declined sharply, migration to cities halved, and rural incomes risen by 30 pc. "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," he said.

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

The LG also commended the role of Nari Shakti in transforming border economies. "Under the National Rural Livelihood Mission, over 1,300 SHGs 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 said.

He also urged the young generation of border villages to dream as big as those in metro cities. He noted that government schools now had improved facilities, digital classrooms, vocational training and full academic sessions.

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

He 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 co-operatives. 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 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," he said.

Sinha 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," he said.

"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," he added.

He also assured the Kathua residents that prompt action would be taken to resolve their issues.

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

Among those present on the occasion included Hiranagar MLA Vijay Kumar, additional chief secretary (Jal Shakti Department) Shaleen Kabra, additional chief secretary Ashwani Kumar (PDD), IGP Bhim Sen Tuti, BSF IG Asif Jalal, GAD secretary M Raju, I&C secretary Vikramjit Singh, SWD secretary Sarmad Hafeez, secretary (planning & information) Ralice Vaz, divisional commissioner Ramesh Kumar, secretary (rural development & panchayati raj) Mohammad Aijaz, J&K Bank's MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee, Kathua DC Rajesh Sharma, senior officials and people from different walks of life.

Searches launched in Billawar woods

Next morning, the family found the leftover food in the kitchen missing, creating suspicion that the food had been taken away by the 'men' who had last night knocked at the door, reports said.

After the family brought the matter to their notice, security forces reached the village and launched a massive combing operation in the village woods. The operation was underway but forces were yet to find any trace of the 'suspects'.

On August 17 night, two suspected terrorists had gone to the house of one Prakash Chand in Talkot village of Udhampur. They too had knocked at the entry door but finding no response from the family, they had moved towards Khuban.

Search operations were also underway in Sadini forests of Reasi and in several villages near the International Border in Hiranagar sub-sector of Kathua. These operations were launched after inputs suggested the movement of suspects in these areas, officials said.

Land subsidence threatening local infra

appearing in houses. As more rains were expected to lash the region, the affected residents had been shifted to tents as a precautionary measure, reports said.

Quoting locals, reports said around a dozen houses had been affected due to the land subsidence.

Reports said the administration had already taken cognisance of the situation and advised residents to move to safer locations.

27 new wetlands identified: JKPCC to NGT

lakes) have disappeared.

In an order, a bench of NGT Chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava and expert member Afroz Ahmad said, "The Jammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Committee (JKPCC) has filed the status report, stating that 27 new wetlands which are of an area more than one hectare have been identified."

The bench, however, noted that the document was flawed.

It said, "We find that in this tabulated information, the column of GIS (Geographic Information System) area is highlighted in black; therefore, it is difficult to read the disclosure made in that column."

The bench directed the JKPCC to furnish "complete information" regarding the newly identified wetlands, including their area and encroachments.

It said, "The JKPCC is also required to place on record the water quality analysis of the samples taken from these 27 water bodies and sources of pollution, if any, affecting their water quality."

The tribunal scheduled the next hearing for November 6.

Saxena calls on Modi

in a post on X.

"It was, indeed, an honour to call on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and brief him on the progress of key developmental initiatives, infrastructure projects and the implementation of central welfare schemes in UT of Ladakh," Saxena said.

Ladakh using glacier water for agri security

ter a visionary initiative of Ladakh LG Vinai Kumar Saxena.

This landmark initiative uses simple earthwork to channelise and utilise the glacial runoff, without incurring any capital expenditure. This comes as a historic step towards transforming the region's agricultural productivity and realising the vision of a Green, Water-Secure, and Self-Sustaining Ladakh.

While Ladakh is endowed with abundant glacier and snowmelt resources, vast stretches of its cultivable land have historically faced acute irrigation shortages. The imbalance between the large volumes of untapped, draining water and the parched agricultural lands has, for ages, constrained rural livelihoods.

Recognising this critical gap, during his visits to various villages, Saxena ideated and spearheaded a comprehensive, systematic campaign by identifying such places where large quantities of glacier water are flowing down the Indus river.

To ensure that every drop of glacier and snowmelt is harnessed for productive use rather than going to waste, he first identified Stok village Nallah as one such place for diverting the glacier water into the existing canal. The Stok Nallah is fed by the Stok Kangri Glacier near Leh.

On his direction on August 14, the Irrigation and Flood Control Department successfully diverted excess glacier water from the main water channel of nallah to the Igoo-Phey canal by creating two trenches using a JCB.

The discharge from Stok Nalla, flowing downstream and ultimately into the River Indus, was assessed at approximately 36.60 Cusecs (1 cusec is equivalent to 28.32 litres of water per second, ie approximately 90 million litres of water in 24 hours). However, two diversions have been created to channelise an additional 26 cusecs of water - 19 cusecs towards Igoo village (upstream) and 7 cusecs towards Phey village (downstream) - from the Stok Nalla into the Igoo-Phey Canal. Planning is underway to utilise the remaining 10 cusecs of water.

Notably, construction of the 43-kilometre-long Igoo-Phey Canal began in 1979 and was completed in 2005. During that period, about 200 meters of the Canal was constructed underground to allow Stok Nallah water to pass over it without disturbing the Canal's flow. This indicates that water was readily available when the project was conceived 47 years ago.

The success at Stok Nallah serves as a blueprint for a Union Territory-wide water management revolution. The administration has already identified several other streams in the vicinity of the Igoo-Phey Canal system for similar interventions, including: Matho Nallah, Tuchik Chenmo Nallah, Tuchik Chon Nallah and Stakna Nallah.

All projects will strictly adhere to the principles of cost-effective, gravity-based engineering, minimal wastage, and environmental sustainability.

By integrating scattered glacier flows into a robust irrigation infrastructure, this decentralised water-resource model would guarantee agricultural prosperity through reliable irrigation supplies, expansion of command areas, and improved crop intensity. This would eventually spur economic growth in terms of higher crop yields, leading to increased farm incomes, greater employment opportunities, and a revitalised rural economy.

Borders neglected in past, top priority now: Rijiju

Modi govt is committed to border development. I went to Maza, Galemro, Taksing areas in Arunachal Pradesh to speed up infrastructure works. Borders were neglected in the past but it's top priority now," the union minister said in a post on X.

In a separate post, he targeted the Congress over its record on border infrastructure.

"Amongst the Congress leaders, A K Anthony is very honest. As a Defence Minister, he admitted the Congress government's policy of not making border infrastructure on the floor of the Parliament," he said.

Rijiju was referring to Antony's remarks in the Lok Sabha on September 6, 2013, when the then defence minister acknowledged that China had built significantly better infrastructure along the border and attributed India's lag to a policy followed for decades after Independence.

Explaining the historical thinking behind the policy,

Antony had said, "Independent India had a policy for many years that the best defence is not to develop the border. Underdeveloped borders are safer than developed borders. So, for many years, there was no construction of roads or air fields on the border areas."

"By that time, China continued to develop their infrastructure in the border areas. So, as a result, they have now gone ahead of us. Compared to us, infrastructure-wise, capability-wise in the border areas, they are ahead. I admit that. It is a part of history," he had said.

But Antony had gone on to say that the approach was no longer India's policy and that the change had begun well before the UPA assumed office in 2004.

"But, of late, in the last 20-25 years, the Indian Governments also realised the mistake and changed its policy. Now, we are also strengthening our capabilities in the border areas," he had said.

"I can tell you, without any exaggeration, that only during the last nine years, as the UPA Government, we have done the maximum to strengthen the capabilities in the border areas. In times of UPA-I & UPA-II, it is being done. And may be the future governments also will continue the same thing, whoever comes, they will continue the same thing," Antony had said.

The latest controversy in Arunachal Pradesh has centred on the Taksing sector.

On Wednesday, Rijiju had rejected claims that Chinese troops had penetrated as much as 60 km inside Arunachal Pradesh, but acknowledged concerns among local residents.

"India-China Border issue is a serious subject. Do not make false claim on such sensitive matter. We don't want to repeat the past mistakes. Govt will address the concern of the local people and protect Indian Territory," Rijiju wrote on X.

India and China share a more than 3,400-km-long disputed boundary whose alignment is not mutually agreed upon at several places. After reports of tension along the border surfaced recently, the Ministry of External Affairs said peace and tranquillity along the LAC was critical to the overall relationship with China.

"In matters relating to the border areas between India and China, we have always emphasised in discussions with the Chinese side that we consider these issues as most serious," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal had said on August 11.

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

Kavinder calls upon people to actively participate in Census

said.

He appealed to the people of the state to make the most of the official self-enumeration portal until August 31 and enter accurate and complete information about themselves and their families.

He also urged that when enumerators visit door-to-door between September 1 and September 30, 2026, all citizens should welcome them warmly and, by providing correct information, extend their full cooperation as responsible citizens to make this national mega-campaign of Census 2027 a success.

On the occasion, Deep Shikha Sharma, Director of Census Directorate, Himachal Pradesh, along with other senior officials of the directorate, were present.

During the event, Deep Shikha briefed Gupta in detail about all the 40 questions related to the population count and its broad socio-economic significance.

Centre gives nod to set up J&K HC bench in Ladakh

third and fourth lines on the 72-km Cuttack-Paradeep (Badabandha) section.

The four railway projects have a combined outlay of Rs 9,450 crore.

The Kharagpur-Bhadrak fourth line, covering 173 km, has been approved at a cost of Rs 3,352 crore. The 75-km Bhadrak-Haridaspur fourth line will cost Rs 1,583 crore, while the 90-km Gummidipundi-Gudur third and fourth lines have an outlay of Rs 2,229 crore.

The Cuttack-Paradeep project has been approved at a cost of Rs 2,286 crore.

Separately, the Cabinet approved a Rs 3,591-crore project to develop an 83-km four-lane brownfield highway corridor from Muzaffarpur through Sitamarhi to Sonbarsa, up to the Nepal border, under the hybrid annuity model.

"The first four projects are railway projects, while the fifth is a highway project," Vaishnaw said.

Omar on Pak-US row over Gor's J&K remarks

countries.

"This is a matter between Pakistan and America. Neither you nor I can do anything about it. The American Ambassador said what he said. Now, it is between the two countries," he told reporters in Srinagar.

Gor, who is also the US President Donald Trump's special envoy for South and Central Asian affairs, during his first visit to Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday, said that J&K "is an important part of India."

Pakistan subsequently summoned the US Charge d'Affaires in Islamabad and lodged a "strong demarche" over what it described as the ambassador's "factually incorrect remarks" regarding the status of Jammu and Kashmir.

"This (J&K) is an important part of India. I am here, visiting for the first time. It is an incredibly beautiful place. I am thrilled to be here, thrilled to see this place. We just had a very good meeting. We have some follow-ups, so we hope to take back to Washington, back to Delhi. But (it was) a very warm, a very cordial (meeting) and we look forward to building this relationship forward," Gor told reporters after meeting Omar on Wednesday.

Asked about Congress questioning why India needed to hear from the US that Jammu and Kashmir was an important part of the country and that third-party intervention was unnecessary, Omar said Congress was entitled to its view.

"I am not getting into this. Congress has a point of view. They are a political party. They are the largest opposition party. They have a point of view. They are entitled to it," he said. "I am not going to get into a war of words over this. What can I say?" Omar added.

SED notifies new Transfer Policy for teachers, masters, others

transparent implementation of the policy.

The policy also provides for general, mutual, administrative, compassionate/priority and special rotation transfers.

Under the compassionate and priority category, deserving cases involving serious medical conditions, benchmark disabilities, single parents, widows, security concerns and other exceptional humanitarian circumstances may be considered, subject to documentary evidence, verification and approval by the competent authority.

The policy contains special provisions for employees with particular family or personal circumstances. Where both spouses are government employees, efforts may be made to post them suitably or within reasonable proximity, subject to the availability of posts.

Employees due to retire within one year may preferably be posted near their residence. Employees aged 58 years and above will ordinarily not be posted to Zone-IV or Zone-V, except where required due to compelling administrative considerations.

Due consideration has also been provided to single parents, widows, divorcees, female employees and employees having children with benchmark disabilities. Employees with benchmark disabilities may also be considered for convenient postings, subject to administrative feasibility and availability of vacancies.

The policy allows the administrative department to consider inter-cadre or mid-term transfers on exceptional medical or security-related grounds involving an employee, spouse or dependent children.

For medical cases, eligibility includes a life-threatening or chronic debilitating illness or disability of not less than 40 per cent affecting the employee, spouse or dependent child. Such cases are required to be supported by a medical certificate issued by the Standing Medical Board.

Security-related cases require recommendations from the special director general of CID Wing.

The policy lays down an indicative annual transfer schedule. Publication of anticipated vacancies and transfer-related notifications is scheduled for April/October, followed by submission of applications and posting preferences in May/November.

Provisional eligibility and merit lists are to be published in June/December, while examination and disposal of representations will follow in June/January. Transfer and posting orders are scheduled for June-July/January-February.

The administrative department, however, may revise these timelines for academic requirements, administrative considerations, judicial directions or other circumstances warranting modification.

A key feature of the new policy is an online, point-based Transfer Assessment Matrix intended to ensure fair and transparent determination of transfer priorities.

Employees serving in Zone-V will receive five points for completing the prescribed tenure, followed by additional points for service beyond the mandatory tenure. Employees completing service in Zone-IV will also receive points based on their tenure.

Employees aggrieved by any decision or action under the policy may submit representations before the appropriate forum. Grievances are to ordinarily be examined at the lowest competent level before escalation to the next level.

The policy states that representations should, as far as practicable, be disposed of within 15 days of receipt, with decisions communicated to the concerned employee through the prescribed mode. The decision of the Union Territory-level Transfer Review Committee will ordinarily be final, subject to statutory remedies available under law.

The government has stated that the overall objective of the policy is to ensure balanced deployment of human resources, equitable distribution of staff, efficient administration and uninterrupted academic functioning, particularly in remote and underserved areas.

UNSC membership must not be used to 'legitimise' terrorists: India

rorists by attempting to de-list them or to list other entities as terrorist organisations based solely on political considerations, without any objective criteria or supporting documentation," Patel said.

India has consistently called out the opaque manner in which decisions are made under the UNSC sanctions committees on proposals to designate terrorists and terror organisations.

New Delhi has also called for greater transparency in the working of the Council's subsidiary bodies, pointing out that while decisions on listings are made public, details relating to the rejection of proposals or their placement under technical hold remain the "exclusive preserve" of a select few.

India has in the past described such practices as a "disguised veto" and raised concerns over the functioning of the 1267 Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee in particular.

New Delhi has said evidence-based proposals to designate internationally sanctioned terrorists should not be blocked without adequate explanation, arguing that such practices undermine the Council's stated commitment to combating terrorism.

India has previously faced such hurdles in its attempts to designate Pakistan-based terrorists, with China, a permanent member of the Security Council, having placed holds or blocked some of the proposals.

India also voiced concern over the delay in finalising chairs of the Security Council's subsidiary bodies, including the 1267 Al-Qaida and Taliban sanctions committees.

Eight months into 2026, the Council is yet to finalise the chairs and vice-chairs of its subsidiary bodies, prompting India to call for urgent action.

"Subsidiary bodies serve important functions and enable better implementation of Security Council mandates. However, these bodies have not been able to deliver optimally in the recent past, primarily due to the delay in finalising the chairs," Patel said.

"UN membership has grown four-fold since then. The outcome of one conflict 80 years ago cannot determine the composition, dynamics, approaches and working methods for perpetuity. This needs to change and must happen at the earliest," she said.

Jammu-Sgr to get 3rd Vande Bharat train via Udhampur

numbers 26401/26402 and 26404/26403.

According to the railways, both Vande Bharat trains had been running with full occupancy since their launch. Keeping the high demand in mind, the railways increased the number of coaches in each train from 16 to 20.

Union Minister Jitendra Singh shared a post on X with a letter from Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw.

In the letter, Vaishnaw said approval had been given for a third Vande Bharat Express between Jammu Tawi and Srinagar via Martyr Capt Tushar Mahajan railway station at Udhampur.

The new service will operate as Train number 26407/26408 Jammu Tawi-Srinagar-Jammu Tawi Vande Bharat Express.

The Vande Bharat Express operating between Jammu Tawi and Srinagar currently has four en-route stoppages. These stations are: Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan railway station, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra, Reasi and Banihal.

It takes the train 4.45 hours to cover a distance of 269 km.

Police can't probe offences under PCPNDT Act: SC

which may require medical knowledge and sensitivity.

"Police are not meant to be the investigators for the purposes of this Act," the bench said, adding that police can only play a supplementary role according to the provisions.

"The restriction applies only to offences under this Act and does not restrict the police's power to investigate and to prosecute independent offences disclosed in the substantive criminal law," the bench said.

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.