

FROM PAGE ONE

Ladakh gets High Court bench after Prez Murmu's approval

empowers the Chief Justice to direct that any case or class of cases arising in Ladakh may instead be heard in Jammu or Srinagar.

The President has exercised a specific constitutional power under Article 240, which authorises the President to make regulations for the peace, progress and good government of certain Union Territories. The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, read with Article 240, provides the constitutional and statutory basis for such regulations in relation to Ladakh.

Unlike a presidential ordinance under Article 123, the power under Article 240 is not conditioned on Parliament being in recess. Legal sources point out that there is, therefore, no requirement that Parliament must first be prorogued before the President can promulgate a regulation under Article 240.

The notification, however, provides that the regulation will come into force on a date to be specified by the Administrator of the Union Territory of Ladakh through a notification in the Official Gazette.

Meanwhile, LG Saxena welcomed the promulgation and said the notification within just seven days of the Union Cabinet's announcement reflects the Government of India's commitment to addressing the long-standing aspirations of the people of Ladakh.

The Union Cabinet decision, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, was taken on August 20 with the objective of significantly improving access to justice for citizens, particularly those living in the remote and far-flung areas of Ladakh.

Saxena expressed his gratitude to the prime minister and Union Home Minister Amit Shah for the historic decision.

"I express my heartfelt gratitude to PM Modi and HM Shah for this historic step towards bringing the high court closer to the people of Ladakh. For a geographically challenging region like Ladakh, access to justice cannot be separated from physical accessibility. This decision will substantially ease the difficulties faced by our people in accessing higher judicial remedies and will strengthen their faith in our justice delivery system. It is an important step towards ensuring that the people of Ladakh have easier, faster and more accessible access to justice," he said.

For the people of Ladakh, the provision is particularly significant, given the geographical challenges and the considerable distance involved in travelling outside the Union Territory for judicial proceedings. The availability of high court sittings in Ladakh will substantially reduce the time, travel and associated expenses involved in accessing higher judicial remedies. It will make the justice delivery system more accessible to ordinary citizens, litigants, advocates and other stakeholders, while strengthening their access to constitutional and legal remedies closer their homes.

Pilgrimage concludes with Chhari-Mubarak puja at cave shrine

spiritual pilgrimages and reflected the coordinated efforts of the administration and all stakeholder departments to facilitate a secure, seamless and memorable pilgrimage experience for every devotee.

Traffic restrictions remained in force on various stretches of the highway till the end of the yatra, with daily advisories and sector-wise cut-off timings to regulate traffic.

Due to heavy rains, that damaged the yatra tracks at multiple places, the pilgrimage was officially suspended on August 9 for the safety of pilgrims.

Sinha had performed a special puja at the high-security Bhagwati Nagar base camp before flagging off the convoy of pilgrims.

Spiritual leaders, heads of religious organisations, public representatives, senior officers of civil administration, police, security forces and Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board and devotees in a large number were present at the flag-off ceremony.

The Jammu region had been placed under an extensive security grid with multi-layered deployment and technology-based surveillance.

OGW held with 2 hand grenades

tion, where a case under relevant sections of law was registered against him, officials said.

Officials identified him as Shakir Nabi Lone, a resident of HarduAboora, Kunzer. His sustained questioning was in progress.

BJP leader booked in cheating case

Shri Amarnathji Yatra. The case was registered at Anantnagpolice station, following a written complaint against him by Waheed Ahmad Itoo, presently residing at GDC Boys Hostel, Khanabal.

As per the complaint, the accused had allegedly assured the complainant that he could get him engaged as SPO in police department and also manage a permission for him for the installation of tents at Pahalgam for Shri Amarnathji yatris.

For this purpose, the complainant had allegedly given him Rs 8,25,000, officials said.

Taking cognizance of the complaint, an FIR under sections 318(4) and 351(3) of BNS was registered at Anantnag police station and investigation set into motion, officials said.

JDY driving financial inclusion, people's empowerment: Modi

that there was a time when access to formal banking depended on where someone lives, financial standing or simply how far the person concerned was from a bank.

Today, India's banking landscape tells a different story, with crores of Jan Dhan accounts, wider rural access, greater participation by women and banking reaching the last mile, it said.

"A bank account is more than a number. It is a financial identity. From 14.7 crore Jan Dhan accounts in 2015 to 59 crin 2026, India has expanded formal banking access at an unprecedented scale, bringing millions into the financial system and enabling greater participation in the formal economy," MyGov India said.

Financial inclusion becomes meaningful when women are part of the journey. Today, nearly 33 crore women hold Jan Dhan accounts, representing 56 per cent of all Jan Dhan account holders. This wider access to formal banking is helping more women participate in the financial system, strengthening household and community-level financial inclusion.

With 46 crore Jan Dhan accounts held across rural and semi-urban India, financial inclusion is reaching communities beyond major cities. These represent 78 per cent of all Jan Dhan accounts, reflecting a banking network reaching deeper across India.

Weapons, narco-smuggling modules busted

high-end pistols," he said. Preliminary investigation revealed that the accused were involved in cross-border smuggling and were receiving consignments of weapons and narcotics through drones for further distribution among criminal elements in Punjab, he said.

Separate FIRs were registered at Police Station State Special Operation Cell in Amritsar. Further investigation is underway to establish the forward and backward linkages and identify all persons associated with the cross-border network, the DGP said.

He said the Punjab police remainsteadfast in maintaining strict vigil against cross-border smuggling and enforcing zero tolerance against narco-crime and illegal arms trafficking.

Saxena orders crackdown on food safety violations

ance" against food safety violations in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

Sending a stark warning to nearly 8800 Food Business Operators in Ladakh, the LG made it clear that any compromise on hygiene and statutory food standards will be met with heavy penalties - including fines of up to Rs10 lakh and imprisonment in serious cases.

A circular issued by the UT administrationmakes it mandatory for all Food Business Operators in Ladakh to strictly comply with the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006. They have been directed to ensure that "the food manufactured, processed, stored, transported, distributed or sold in Ladakh is safe, wholesome and conforms to the prescribed food safety standards." At present, there are 428 FSSAI Licence holders and 8,355 FSSAI Registration holders in the UT of Ladakh.

The Food Safety Department has been directed to ensure that all FBOs maintain continuous compliance with statutory food safety, hygiene, sanitary and FSSAI licensing requirements, and to take stringent action for any such violation, that include ranging from Rs 1lakh to Rs 10 lakh, while certain violations may also attract imprisonment.

All food business operators, including restaurants/hotels/ eateries, have been strictly prohibited from manufacturing, storing or selling any food that is "unsafe, sub-standard, misbranded, adulterated, contaminated, or beyond the shelf-life/expiry date."

Ruhullah to quit NC, resign as Sgr MP

November 3, the 26th death anniversary of his father, Aga Syed Mehdi, who was killed in an IED blast.

Ruhullah plans to release his resignation letter and explain his decision at a public rally at Budgam on the same day.

"Yes, I am resigning from the party and as Srinagar MP. I have a few commitments before I formally submit my resignation. I have to disburse funds under MPLADS (Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme). I have also invited some MPs for a conference in Srinagar as part of my efforts to fight for restoration of J&K's constitutional rights," he said.

He has accused the NC leadership of abandoning its election promise to fight for the restoration of Article 370 and special status. He said the commitment was included in the party's election manifesto but was dropped after the elections.

Death toll rises to 579 in Nepal floods

flash flood occurred on Wednesday, and there is a risk of more flooding in the area," the NDRRMA said.

The warning came after a massive flash flood swept through Rasuwa and other parts of central Nepal on Wednesday, killing hundreds and causing widespread damage to settlements, roads, bridges and hydropower infrastructure.

NDRRMA urged people involved in search and rescue operations, as well as those staying in the Bhotekoshi and Trishuli areas for various reasons, to remain highly alert and immediately move to safer places if they face any risk.

Nepal Police on Friday said 579 bodies were recovered from eight districts of the Himalayan nation, with thousands still missing.

According to the police, 233 dead bodies have been recovered from Chitwan district, 154 from Nawalparasi East, 46 from Gorkha and 40 from Dhading.

Similarly, 37 dead bodies were recovered from Nuwakot, 30 from Tanahu, 27 from Nawalparasi West, and 12 from Rasuwa.

Five people have been killed in Gyirong County in the Tibet Autonomous Region, according to Chinese authorities.

At least 1924 people, including 86 security personnel, 517 foreign tourists and 127 Nepali travellers, have been missing since Wednesday morning when the flash floods hit Rasuwa and adjoining districts of Nepal.

So far, 1,545 injured and stranded people have been rescued from various affected regions. Among them, 84 are currently undergoing treatment in various hospitals in Kathmandu, where families are desperately searching for their loved ones.

So far, 4451 people have been rescued from different affected areas. These include 129 foreign nationals, including 85 Indians, and 191 people trapped in tunnels of various hydropower projects. Altogether, 101 injured people are undergoing treatment in various hospitals in Kathmandu. History

Search and rescue operations continued for the third day of the tragic incident with the mobilisation of 7,451 security personnel, including 2,391 Nepal Army personnel, the police statement said.

Helicopters have been used to reach isolated areas and evacuate survivors, while ground teams continue searching riverbanks and downstream settlements, reports said.

Morgues in hospitals in Nepal in several areas are running out of space as more bodies swept away by the floods downstream are being recovered.

Bodies recovered from Rasuwa and Nuwakot have been found as far downstream as Chitwan, Tanahun, Nawalparasi, Gorkha and other districts, with morgues in several areas running out of space.

We have invited partner, outreach countries as well: MEA

Asia crisis.

Sources said the BRICS framework operates on consensus and that India is seeking greater engagement and dialogue among the 11 members while working towards common ground ahead of the summit.

"The BRICS framework is based on consensus. As chair, we want engagement and dialogue with members. As chair, we are transparent. It's a large grouping, 11 members. It brings diversity and experience. The group focuses on dialogue and diplomacy," the sources said.

Discussions on the summit's joint statement are currently underway through the Sherpa channel, according to the sources.

"Sherpa channel talks underway. Working on joint statement. On ministerial meetings, we have seen outcome documents. We have worked the whole year, and at summit level, leaders will take stock," the source said.

India has maintained that dialogue and diplomacy should remain central to addressing the West Asia crisis and is seeking language in the BRICS outcome document that reflects concerns including the protection of civilians and the unhindered movement of people and goods through waterways.

"India has stood for dialogue, diplomacy. Members have underlined early resolution of crisis, protection of civilians, free and unimpeded movement through waterways. Our endeavour is to have dialogue. We will continue to engage and to find landing zones," the source said.

With the summit scheduled to take place at Bharat Mandapam, security agencies in the national capital have intensified preparations for visiting leaders and their delegations.

The Multi-Agency Centre is expected to facilitate real-time intelligence sharing between central and state agencies, while the National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID) will support authorised access to information from multiple sectors to assist with verification and assessment of intelligence inputs.

Security agencies are maintaining heightened vigilance over any potential attempt to disrupt peace or cause disturbances in Delhi and adjoining areas ahead of the high-level gathering.

The summit will mark the culmination of India's year-long BRICS chairmanship, with leaders expected to take stock of ministerial-level outcomes and discussions and chart the way forward for cooperation within the expanded grouping.

23 JKAS officers inducted into IAS, named in promotion lists

The panels subsequently received approval on August 3, 2026, under Regulation 7(2) of the same regulations.

The selection process covers eligible State Civil Service officers for appointment to the AGMUT cadre against vacancies available under the promotion quota.

The notification contains a specific condition concerning Nisar Ahmad Wani.

His name in the 2019 Select List has been included on a provisional basis, subject to the State Government furnishing the required Integrity Certificate.

Wani's inclusion in the 2020 panel has likewise been kept provisional and remains dependent upon fulfilment of the same integrity-clearance requirement.

The Centre has also clarified that the 2020 Select List contains the name of one additional officer beyond the normal prescribed size of the panel.

The additional inclusion has been made by invoking the second proviso to Regulation 5(5) of the IAS (Appointment by Promotion) Regulations, 1955.

The notification marks a significant administrative development for Jammu and Kashmir, paving the way for eligible State Civil Service officers to enter the IAS through the promotion channel and serve in the AGMUT cadre, subject to applicable conditions and clearances.

India to buy US Javelin Anti-Tank missiles

and Acceptance (LOA) for the purchase of the Javelin anti-tank guided missile system through the US Foreign Military Sales process, an American readout said.

It said the "milestone" reflects the enduring partnership between the US and Indian armed forces and opens the door for future collaboration between the US and Indian defence industries.

"The Javelin agreement demonstrates the depth of US support for the Indian Army and creates new opportunities for our defence industries to work together," Gor said.

"We see tremendous potential for future cooperation that strengthens the defence industrial bases of both countries," he said, according to the readout.

The Javelin system is an advanced, medium-range, fire-and-forget anti-tank guided missile. It is used by the US Army, US Marine Corps, and numerous international customers and is designed for use against a wide array of targets, including armoured vehicles and fortified positions.

The Javelin system is produced by the Javelin Joint Venture, a partnership between RTX and Lockheed Martin.

"The landmark signature further strengthens the US-India Major Defence Partnership by demonstrating the depth of ongoing US support to the Indian Army," the American readout said.

"It also opens discussions on mutually beneficial co-production and additional opportunities to strengthen the defence industrial bases of both countries," it said.

Courts must protect environment while weighing development: CJI

develop a separate jurisprudential vocabulary in every country where a climate question reaches the courts, CJI Kant said the courts should be open to borrowing ideas, approaches and solutions that have proved useful elsewhere in the Commonwealth, while adapting them carefully to their own constitutional, social and environmental circumstances.

In that process of mutual learning lies a particular strength of the Commonwealth, he underscored.

"Additionally, courts must be willing to search for solutions that protect the environment without losing sight of the legitimate needs of development, and to recognise that the two need not always be cast as choices in which one must defeat the other," he said.

CJI pointed out that the effects of climate change are often felt first and most acutely by those whose lives and livelihoods depend most directly on the natural environment.

"When a smallholder or a fisher-family loses land, water or a harvest to a crisis they did little to cause, the consequences extend far beyond environmental harm; they threaten the very foundations of livelihood, dignity and equality," he said.

CJI Kant pointed out that where courts are called upon to fill such gaps, new doctrine alone will not be enough and subject-matter experts working alongside us will be needed - not called in once as witnesses and then dismissed, but available throughout the life of a case.

"India's own experience offers one model of this. Nearly three decades ago, in a long-running forest conservation matter before our court, we constituted a standing body of forestry, wildlife and environmental experts, which has since become known as the Central Empowered Committee (CEC)," he said.

Talking about the CEC, he said it was empowered to inspect sites, investigate violations of environmental norms and report directly to the court on technical questions no bench of judges could reasonably resolve alone.

"It remains active today, and has shaped the outcome of hundreds of forestry and environmental matters since," he said, adding that committees such as this and bodies such as India's National Green Tribunal, which brings judges and technical experts together on the very same bench, point towards a wider principle that environmental adjudication cannot remain the sole province of judges and counsel.

Kavinder pays obeisance at Tirupati Balaji temple

tural landscape. "The temple provides devotees in Jammu and the neighbouring areas an opportunity to experience the sacred traditions associated with Almighty

Army Celebrates Raksha Bandhan with 300 Daughters of Ramban

RAMBAN, AUGUST

28: The Indian Army organised a special Raksha Bandhan celebration, "Threads of Valour – Daughters of Ramban," at Maitra Army Camp here on Thursday, bringing together nearly 300 girls and young women from across Ramban with soldiers of the Rashtriya Rifles.

The event was aimed at strengthening the bond between the Army and the local community and witnessed participation of students from various schools and colleges, besides girls' Kabaddi and Boxing teams and NCC cadets from Government Degree College Karol.

MLA Ramban Arjun Singh Raju, Deputy Commissioner Ramban Mohammad Alyas Khan, Commander 11 sector RR Brigadier Ajay Pal Singh and the Commanding Officer, Rashtriya Rifles, Nachlana, attended the programme.

As part of the celebrations, the daughters of Ramban tied Rakhis to Army personnel, symbolising mutual respect, grati-



tude, trust and a shared commitment to the nation.

The programme also featured a self-defence demonstration, cultural performances, a weapons display and a career-awareness session focusing on opportunities for women in the Indian Army, Indian Navy and Indian Air Force.

The participating girls were also introduced to the importance of physical fitness, confidence, discipline, teamwork and personal safety. NCC cadets highlighted the role of youth in developing leadership,

Venkateswara and strengthens the cultural connect between different parts of the country," he said.

The governor emphasised the immense potential of Jammu region and Himachal Pradesh to develop an integrated spiritual tourism circuit, given the rich legacy of temples, shrines and pilgrimage destinations across the two regions.

He said improved connectivity and coordinated promotion of these sacred destinations could provide devotees with a more enriching pilgrimage experience while highlighting the shared spiritual and cultural heritage of Jammu and Himachal Pradesh.

Such an integrated approach, he said, could give further impetus to pilgrimage and spiritual tourism, besides creating employment and economic opportunities for local communities.

He emphasised that the development of spiritual tourism should go hand in hand with preservation of the sanctity, heritage and cultural character of these revered places.

He also congratulated the J&K LG and administration, along with Army, police, CAPFs, civil administration, SASB, healthcare personnel, volunteers, service providers and all other stakeholders for the successful conduct of Shri Amarnathji Yatra.

He appreciated the dedication, coordination and preparedness demonstrated by all agencies involved in ensuring the safety, security and convenience of the pilgrims.

"The smooth conduct of the yatra reflects the collective commitment of administration, security forces, civil society and service organisations towards facilitating one of the country's most revered annual pilgrimages.

During the Abhishek ceremony, the governor expressed deep sorrow over the loss of lives in the devastating floods in Nepal. He conveyed his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and prayed to Almighty Venkateswara for peace and strength for those who have lost their loved ones, as well as for the recovery and well-being of all those affected by the tragedy.

He extended his warm greetings to people on Raksha Bandhan and Shraavan Purnima, wishing that these auspicious occasions bring peace, happiness, prosperity and harmony to every family and further strengthen the bonds of unity and brotherhood.

Among those present on the occasion included Temple Inspector Sai Krishna.

3rd Vande Bharat train soon: Jitendra

message.

The approval for Udhampur halt was particularly significant as it was earlier believed that a stop there would not be feasible, Dr Singh said and thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Ministry of Railways and the Railway Minister for the development.

Reflecting on the expansion of the railway network in Jammu and Kashmir, he said after Jammu railway station was established in 1972, it had taken nearly five decades for the railway network to advance further into the region.

He said the expansion gained momentum after Narendra Modi became Prime Minister, with railway connectivity extended to Kathua and subsequently to Udhampur and the Kashmir Valley.

He said railway connectivity to Kashmir was once considered difficult because of the mountainous terrain, but the project was completed despite several challenges.

He also highlighted the construction of the world's highest railway bridge over the Chenab River in Reasidistrict as a major engineering achievement. "The railway journey has also emerged as an attraction for tourists, with many visitors travelling by train from Jammu to Srinagar to experience the scenic beauty along the route," he said,

Returning to diplomacy 'not impossible' but depends on US: Araghchi

vere military and economic strain following recent confrontations, noting, "They're not paying their troops. They're in deep trouble."

Furthermore, he cautioned against interpreting the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz as a definitive end to potential US military engagement against the Middle Eastern nation, reiterating, "They are in deep trouble, they have very little capacity, the Strait of Hormuz is open, it doesn't mean we finished with the military."

The President offered no specific details regarding potential future operations, nor did he clarify the conditions that would necessitate further US military action. Additionally, Trump rejected the prospect of immediate talks with the Iranian leadership, stating, "There's not a lot to speak with Iran, we are not looking to meet or anything, the strait is open."

These remarks underscore that Washington is not pursuing negotiations at this time, notwithstanding the unblocking of the vital maritime route. The administration has consistently employed a strategy blending economic sanctions, military pressure, and threats of subsequent actions to manage Tehran, and these recent statements suggest Washington is maintaining all available options.

When questioned on whether he intended to penalise Russia should Moscow fail to scale back its ties with Iran, the President replied, "It depends, I think Russia has behaved

character and a spirit of national service.

A special "Messages to Soldiers Wall" was set up where participating girls wrote personal messages expressing their appreciation and gratitude towards the Defence Forces.

Addressing the gathering, the dignitaries and Army officers stressed the importance of education, confidence, discipline, physical fitness and equal opportunities for young women. The Army also reaffirmed its commitment to constructive youth engagement

and community partnership. Teachers accompanying the students were felicitated for their contribution to education and mentoring, while participating students were presented commemorative souvenirs.

The event brought together the Army, civil administration, educational institutions, teachers, sportspersons, NCC cadets and youth on a common platform, highlighting the role of sustained community engagement in promoting national integration and youth empowerment.