

INBRIEF

India rejects
Pak's bid to
oppose Aug 5
move on J-K

NEW DELHI: India on Wednesday categorically rejected Pakistan's 'futile attempts' to observe August 5 as 'Youm-e-Istehsal' or 'Day of Exploitation' to oppose the scrapping of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir seven years ago.

External affairs ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said Pakistan's attempts to interfere in India's internal matters were intended "solely" to deflect attention from its own "dismal" human rights record and its status as the "global epicentre of terrorism".

The Indian government on August 5, 2019 had revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcated the state into two Union territories.

Since then Pakistan has been marking the day as the Youm-e-Istehsal. ▶ P11

Navigation satellite ‘NVS-03’
ready for launch: Dr Jitendra



NEW DELHI: Navigation satellite NVS-03 is ready for lift-off, and will be followed by the launch of NVS-04 and NVS-05, Union Minister Jitendra Singh said on Wednesday. In a written reply in the Lok Sabha, the minister also

Meta apologises for
removing PM’s post

NEW DELHI: Meta apologised for the temporary removal of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Facebook post as well as for failures ranging from child sexual abuse content to deepfakes and boosting certain content on being paid "a lot of money", government sources said on Wednesday after executives of the US tech giant met Union minister Ashwini Vaishnaw.

While Meta's global affairs head Joel Kaplan, who flew in from the US for meetings with Indian officials, in a written statement said he "apologised to the minister on behalf of Meta for the error restricting PM Modi's post", government

Rehabilitation is priority; special package
for rain-hit Poonch after assessment: CM

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Wednesday said the government's focus has shifted from rescue and recovery to rehabilitation and reconstruction in the cloudburst and flash flood-hit areas of Poonch and Rajouri, while indicating that a decision on a special relief package would be taken after a comprehensive assessment of the damage.

Abdullah arrived in Surankote area of Poonch this morning to assess the ground situation in the flash flood and landslide-affected areas following the rain fury, which



had claimed 16 lives and left six others missing in the border district of Poonch.

He commenced his tour with a visit to Murrah village

where he met a villager, who lost eight members of his family in cloudburst-triggered flash floods and landslides on July 19.

7th Anniversary
Article 370 abrogation brought wide
transformation to J-K, Ladakh: Modi



NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said since the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019, the lives of people in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh have witnessed wide-ranging transformation, with expansion of infrastructure and growth in opportunities in education, healthcare, entrepreneurship and sports sectors.

On the seventh anniversary of the abrogation of Article 370, Modi said the Cen-

tre remains committed to the development of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh and to ensuring that every citizen has the opportunity to "dream big, achieve and contribute" to the making of a Viksit Bharat.

He said infrastructure in the two Union Territories has expanded, while opportunities in areas such as education, healthcare, entrepreneurship and sports have grown.

Be it women or margin-

alised communities, those who were denied their basic constitutional rights for decades have been empowered thanks to the full application of the Constitution of India, Modi added.

In a post on X, the prime minister said, "Seven years ago, on this day, Articles 370 and 35(A) became history, marking a decisive new chapter in the journey of Jammu and Kashmir as well as Ladakh..."

On August 5, 2019, the BJP-led Centre abrogated Article 370, which gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir, and the erstwhile state was bifurcated into two union territories -- Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

"We reaffirm our commitment to the progress of Jammu and Kashmir as well as Ladakh and to ensure that every citizen has the opportunity to dream big, achieve and contribute to the making of a Viksit Bharat," he added.

PM Modi said "August 5 this year assumes ▶ P11

Terror hideout busted;
arms, ammo recovered

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: A terrorist hideout was unearthed in a remote village in Poonch district on Wednesday, leading to the recovery of some ammunition, officials said.

Security forces also conducted search operations in the Akhnoor sector of Jammu and the Hiranagar sector of Kathua district following reports of suspicious activity. However, no suspicious persons or material were found during the searches, the officials said.

They said the hideout set up in a cave was unearthed during a joint search operation by the police and the Rashtriya Rifles at Bhoriwala Dhok in Surankote tehsil Wednesday morning.

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday said his administration has resolved to dismantle the terror network and bring its perpetrators to justice to secure a life of peace, equality and hope for every citizen of the Union Territory.

He was addressing an event after handing over appointment letters to 37 Next of Kins (NoKs) of civilians killed by terrorists.

"We are absolutely resolved to dismantle the terror network to bring its perpetrators and enablers to justice and to secure for every citizen of UT a life of peace, equality and hope. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the shadows of discrimination lifted in 2019, ushering in a new era of social justice and inclusive development," the LG said here.

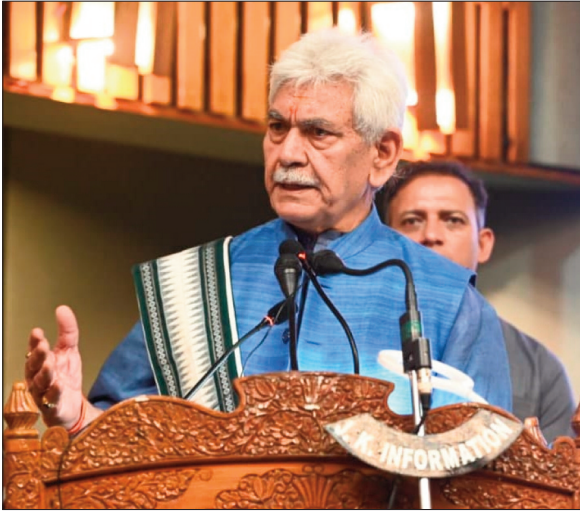
Sinha said that today, J-



Two magazines of an AK assault rifle along with 117 rounds of ammunition, and 17 rounds of 9-mm pistol ammunition were seized from the hideout, the officials said.

Security forces launched a massive search operation in over a dozen forested villages in Surankote on Tuesday following reports ▶ P11

LG hands over appointment letters to 37 NoKs
J&K administration resolved to
dismantle terror linkage: Sinha



K is advancing with renewed confidence and all-around development is driving peace and prosperity.

"By ending the system that bred discrimination and terrorism, PM Modi made it clear that in Jammu Kashmir, lamps of prosperity would not burn only in a select few palaces but also in the huts of

the poor," he said.

Referring to one of the victim families, Sinha said that after 33 years, a lamp has been lit in the home of martyr Wali Mohammad Wani of Shopian.

Wani was killed by terrorists on July 16, 1993.

"Today, not only his family but also the entire ▶ P11

August 5 ended
‘discriminatory
system’: Lt Guv

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir LG Manoj Sinha on Wednesday dismissed the protests held by NC and PDP for the restoration of special status to the Union territory, saying he "did not see" any demonstrations.

"I did not see any (protest). If I see, I will talk to you (about it)," the LG told a reporter when asked about protests by the National Conference (NC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP).

Sinha said August 5, 2019 -- the date marking the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A -- ended the "discriminatory ▶ P11

Wounds unhealed, Statehood
promise unfulfilled, says Omar

What is the right time: NC asks Centre

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU/ NEW DELHI: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Wednesday said the "wounds" of the people had not yet healed seven years after the abrogation of Article 370, asserting that the Centre's promise to restore statehood to the Union Territory remained unfulfilled.

Abdullah said the people had hoped that at least some of their grievances would be addressed through the restoration of statehood.

"Our wounds have not yet healed. We had hoped that some of the pain would

be addressed and that the promise of restoring statehood would be fulfilled. But today marks seven years since August 5, 2019, and that promise remains unfulfilled," the chief minister told reporters in Surankote tehsil of Poonch district.

The BJP-led central government abrogated Article 370 on August 5, 2019, revoking the special constitutional status of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcating it into the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

The chief minister said the commitment made by the Centre was yet to be hon-

oured and reiterated his government's stand on the issue.

"As we said while passing the resolution in the Assembly, we remain firm in our stand and will continue to seek justice for the injustices done to us," Abdullah said.

Earlier in a post on X handle, Abdullah reiterated his commitment to reversing the Centre's decisions, saying the ruling National Conference has not accepted the "current circumstances".

"Seven years, we haven't forgotten and we haven't reconciled far less accepted our current circumstances. My party and I remain committed to reversing all ▶ P11

Rs 15L reward
to apprehend
LeT terrorist

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Police has announced a reward of Rs 15 lakh for information leading to the arrest of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorist Mohammad Lateef Bhat, involved in an attack during which a policeman was martyred in Anantnag district last month.

The police have put up posters at prominent places in Kashmir, seeking reliable information about Bhat, a resident of Kulgam, who allegedly shot dead head constable Ashiq Husain at Lal Chowk in Anantnag on July 22. The law-enforcing agencies ▶ P11

Complaint filed against Mufti
for disrespect to national flag

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: A police complaint was filed in Jammu on Wednesday seeking legal action against PDP president Mehbooba Mufti for allegedly dishonouring the national flag during a protest in Srinagar a day earlier, an official said.

In the complaint filed at Pacca Augusta police station, senior cardiologist and social activist Neeraj Sharma has urged the police to initiate proceedings under the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, including the registration of an FIR, the official said.

Mehbooba, a former chief minister, was reportedly seen

holding an inverted national flag during a sit-in outside the PDP office in Srinagar on Tuesday night to protest against the Centre's removal of Jammu and Kashmir's special status through abrogation of Article 370 and Article 35A in August 2019.

In his complaint, Sharma alleged that videos and photographs of the incident show Mehbooba holding the national flag with the saffron band facing downward.

"This has not only caused disrespect to the national flag but also deep emotional insult to all the nationalist individuals in the country," the doctor said in his complaint.

The complaint ▶ P11

Shri Amarnath
Yatra halted
from Jammu

JAMMU: The annual Shri Amarnathji Yatra was suspended from the base camp here on Wednesday as authorities heightened security across Jammu and Kashmir on the seventh anniversary of the abrogation of Article 370.

Although the administration gave no specific reason for suspending the Shri Amarnathji Yatra from the Bhagwati Nagar base camp in Jammu for the day, official sources said the step was taken as a precautionary measure due to the prevailing situation.

No fresh batch of pilgrims was allowed to leave the Jammu base ▶ P11

J&K Bank partners with SBI Life
Tie-up to provide customers with a
wider choice of protection, savings

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Strengthening further its customer-centric approach to financial services portfolio, J&K Bank today announced a strategic corporate agency agreement with SBI Life Insurance - one of India's leading private life insurance companies - to offer a comprehensive range of life insurance solutions through the Bank's extensive branch network across the country.

The partnership will enable the Bank's customers to access SBI Life's suite of protection, savings, retirement, and child-focused insurance



plans, providing them with greater choice and convenience in selecting solutions aligned with their financial needs, life stages, and long-term aspirations.

The agreement was

signed by DGM Cross-selling, Masood Ahmad Lankar on behalf of the Bank and Regional Manager, Institutional Alliances, Budhaditya Banerjee representing SBI Life Insurance in presence ▶ P11