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SOWING SKILLS
SHAPING INDIA

03 Space experiments by Subhanshu personify India as 'Vishwabandhu' Bharat: Dr Jitendra

09 Rain pounds Jammu region causing extensive damage; 2 persons washed away

11 Shubhanshu meets Modi, gifts Tricolour that travelled to space

Website : www.statetimes.in, Email: statetimes1@gmail.com

10 senior IAS, IPS officers deployed to oversee rescue work in cloudburst-hit Chashoti

STATE TIMES NEWS
JAMMU: The Lieutenant Governor administration on Monday deployed 10 senior IAS and IPS officers to supervise relief and rescue operations in the cloudburst-hit Chashoti village of Kishtwar district that left 62 people dead.

On August 14, flash floods triggered by the cloudburst in Chashoti - the last motorable village en route to the Machail Mata temple - also left at least 116 people injured.

Eighty-two people - 81 pilgrims and one CISF personnel - are reported missing.

"In order to supervise relief and rescue operations in response to the recent tragic cloudburst, the officers, as per the roster, are hereby deputed to Chashoti in district Kishtwar," read an order issued by Commissioner-Secretary to the Government M Raju. The officers will be deployed in the hamlet for the next eight days, with one IAS and one IPS officer overseeing operations for two

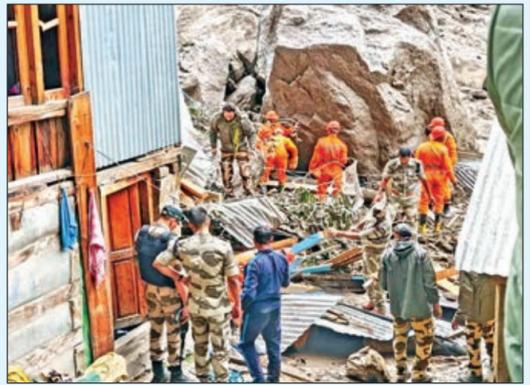
Two more bodies recovered, death toll rises to 63

CHASHOTI: Two more bodies were recovered from the debris in this cloudburst-hit village in Kishtwar district, taking the death toll in the natural calamity to 63, officials said, as a large-scale search continued for the fifth day on Monday despite intermittent rains.

Donning rain coats, the rescue teams were working at multiple locations, especially the major impact spot near a langar (community kitchen) site, sifting through the rubble using machinery, including earth movers, and sniffer dogs. Two bodies, one of them of a woman, were recovered this afternoon, the officials said.

The woman's body was found downstream in a gorge near Kukundra village, while the other body was found buried near a temple.

With the recovery of the two bodies, the death toll in the flash floods triggered by the cloudburst on August 14 in Chashoti, the last motorable village en route to the Machail Mata temple, has risen to 63. The dead included three CISF personnel and one Special Police Officer. A total of 167 persons were rescued, while the number of missing has dropped to 39 after a fresh revision of the list this morning, the officials said. Army's Jammu-based White Knight



days each. Principal Secretary Home, Chandraker Bharti, and

Inspector General of Police (Operations & Services) Uttam Chand will supervise

operations on August 19 and 20, followed by

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Schools in Jammu division to remain shut today

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: All education institutes in the Jammu division would remain closed on Tuesday in view of inclement weather, the local administration said on Monday.

This has been done in view of the weather department's warning of heavy rains in 10 districts of the region.

Heavy rains lashed several districts, triggering flash floods and landslides, causing damage to several houses and roads, although there were no casualties in the region on Monday. Schools remained shut due to the inclement weather.

As many as 68 people lost their lives and 122 suffered injuries in three cloudbursts in the Chashoti village of Kishtwar district, besides Jodh Ghati and Janglote areas of Kathua district in the past five days.

"In view of the inclement and bad weather conditions, it is hereby ordered that all government as well as private Schools of the Jammu division shall continue to remain closed till tomorrow," the Director of

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Putin dials Modi; briefs him on Alaska summit

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday conveyed to

President Vladimir Putin India's consistent position for a peaceful resolution of the Ukraine conflict when the Russian leader apprised him on the summit talks he held with US President Donald Trump.

Trump and Putin met in Alaska for nearly three hours on Friday but the much-anticipated summit ended without a ceasefire deal.

Following the phone conversation with Putin, Modi said India has consistently called for a peaceful resolution of the Ukraine conflict and supports all efforts in this regard. I look forward to our continued exchanges in the days to come," he said.

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said Putin shared his assessment of his meeting with President Trump.

"While thanking President Putin, the prime minister

ing with President Trump in Alaska," the prime minister said in a social media post.

"India has consistently



called for a peaceful resolution of the Ukraine conflict and supports all efforts in this regard. I look forward to our continued exchanges in the days to come," he said.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Saturday welcomed the summit and commended Putin and Trump for initiative to bring peace to Ukraine.

"India welcomes the Summit meeting in

underlined India's consistent position for a peaceful resolution of the conflict through diplomacy and dialogue. He reiterated that India supports all efforts in this regard," it said.

The PMO said the two leaders also touched upon a number of issues of bilateral cooperation with a view to further strengthen the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between India and Russia.

Friday's talks between Putin and Trump was the first US-Russia summit since Moscow launched its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Saturday welcomed the summit and commended Putin and Trump for initiative to bring peace to Ukraine.

"India welcomes the Summit meeting in

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CISF ADG visits Chashoti, lauds personnel for saving lives

STATE TIMES NEWS
CHASHOTI: Additional Director General of CISF Sudhir Kumar on Monday visited the cloudburst-hit village of Chashoti in Kishtwar district to oversee the ongoing rescue operation and lauded his personnel for saving lives.

He said three of the force personnel lost their lives and another is still missing in the natural calamity which struck the village on August 14. So far, the bodies of 61 people, including the three CISF personnel, have been recovered, while over 100 were rescued in an injured condition. More than 50 peo-

ple are still reported missing. "We had a deployment of 25 personnel in the village (to provide security to pilgrims visiting Machail Mata shrine) when the tragedy struck, also impacting one of our barracks. I was told by the jawans that the cloudburst only lasted 18 seconds but brought down the hill, burying everything which came in the way," the ADG of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) told reporters here.

In addition to the three personnel who lost their lives, another identified as Mura is still missing, he said.

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Essential that de-escalation process along LAC move forward: Jaishankar to Wang Yi

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: India and China should adopt a "candid and constructive" approach in moving ahead in the engagement after a difficult period and it must be based on mutual respect, mutual sensitivity and mutual interest, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar conveyed this to his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi on Monday.

In his televised opening remarks at a meeting with Wang, the external affairs minister also pitched for taking forward the de-escalation process in the border areas



along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh that witnessed over a four-year face-off between the militaries of the two nations.

Jaishankar held wide-ranging talks with the Chinese foreign minister shortly after he landed in Delhi on a two-day visit that came days ahead of Prime Minister

Narendra Modi's planned trip to China to attend the annual summit of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

In his comments, Jaishankar also mentioned fighting against terrorism as another "major priority" and brought up "particular concerns" he had flagged during his visit to Beijing last month.

Wang's visit is largely seen as part of ongoing efforts by the two neighbours to rebuild their relationship after it came under severe strain following the deadly

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VDG member thrashed by cops in Doda; Constable suspended, DySP under inquiry

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A Village Defence Group member was roughed up by police at an outpost in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district, prompting authorities to suspend a constable and order an inquiry into the conduct of a deputy superintendent of police on Monday.

The VDG member, Balbeer Singh, had fired two rounds in the air after detecting suspicious movement in his village Pernote in Premnagar area of the district, a day before Independence Day.

The next day, he was summoned to the police outpost in Premnagar and beaten up badly, especially by selection

grade constable Mohammad Zia.

Doda Senior Superintendent of Police Sandeep Mehta took note of the alleged misconduct and ordered immediate action.

"Zia has been placed under suspension with immediate effect and attached to District Police Lines, pending further proceedings," a police spokesperson said.

He said a departmental inquiry has been ordered, and a senior officer has been appointed as the inquiry officer to investigate the incident comprehensively. "The inquiry report is to

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Govt launches PM Viksit Bharat Rojgar Yojna portal for employers, first-time employees

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: The government has launched the Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rojgar Yojana (PMVBRY) portal on Monday, Union Minister Mansukh L Mandaviya said, urging employers and first-time employees to take benefit of the Rs 1-lakh crore central scheme.

The Union Cabinet approved the Employment Linked Incentive Scheme on July 1, 2025.

With an outlay of nearly Rs 1 lakh crore, the central sector scheme aims to incentivise the creation of more than 3.5 crore jobs in the country, over a period of 2 years starting August 1, 2025, to July 31, 2027, the Union Minister of Labour and Employment said in an interaction with the media.

All employers and first-time employees are

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Oppn should have risen above party politics on issue of nation pride: Rajnath

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday slammed the

Opposition for its protest during a discussion in Lok Sabha on astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla's journey to the International Space Station, which led to the House's adjournment, saying it should have risen above party politics on an issue linked to national pride and achievement.

The discussion remained inconclusive as the House

was adjourned due to vociferous protests by the opposition over the issue of Special Intensive Review of electoral

did not allow it to function," Singh said on X. The senior BJP leader said the discussion was on "India's first astronaut aboard the International Space Station -- Critical role of the space programme for Viksit Bharat by 2047", an issue which was linked to the country's pride and achievement and the scientific and national security possibilities of the future.

The Opposition's conduct has been deeply disappointing, Singh said,

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Five DySPs promoted

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The government on Monday promoted five Deputy Superintendents of Police (DySPs) as Superintendents of Police (SPs).

"Sanction is accorded to the promotion of five Deputy Superintendents of Police as Superintendent of Police [Level-11 (67700-208700) of the Pay Matrix], with immediate effect," reads an order issued by Chandraker Bharti, Principal Secretary, Home Department.

As per order, the promotees include Owaise Rashid, Sarfaraz Bashir Ganai, Gh. Mustafa Bhat, Shahzada Kabir Mattoo, and Ashish Gupta.

Advocate murder case: Special NIA court frames charges against Ex-Bar President

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A special NIA court has framed charges under UAPA against former president of the Kashmir wing of the High Court Bar Association (HCBA), Mian Abdul Qayoom, in connection with the assassination of advocate Babar Qadri in September 2020.

Qayoom, 77, an executive member of separatist amalgam Hurriyat Conference, was arrested on June 25, 2024, as the principal conspirator behind Qadri's killing, allegedly by terrorists of the proscribed 'The Resistance Front' (TRF), a proxy of Pakistan-based

Lashkar-e-Taiba.

Earlier, Qayoom's habeas corpus petition and his challenge to the arrest and remand process in the case were dismissed by the Jammu and Kashmir High Court in February, reaffirming the legal propriety of the arrest and investigation.

He was taken into custody by the State Investigation Agency (SIA) of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, which took over the case in July 2023, after collecting evidence against him.

"In a significant development in the high-profile murder case of Qadri, the

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Govt introduces Jan Vishwas Bill 2.0 in LS, proposes to decriminalise 288 provisions

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The government on Monday introduced a new bill in the Lok Sabha to decriminalise as many as 288 provisions relating to minor offences under different laws with a view to promote ease of living and improve business climate.

This is the second Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill. Earlier in 2023, the government enacted a similar law decriminalising 183 provisions in 42 central Acts, administered by 19 ministries and departments.

Introducing the Jan Vishwas (Amendment

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WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)
Max: 32.0°C Min: 25.9°C

Humidity
Max: 89 Min: 80

Temperature (Srinagar)
Max: 23.2°C Min: 18.7°C

Humidity
Max: 81 Min: 57

Sunset : 19:13 Hours
Sunrise : 05:56 Hours

Jagti Water Supply Contract: Blue eyed firm gets endless favours?

ANCHOR
SPECIAL REPORT

JAMMU : Strange but true - since 2011, one particular firm has managed to monopolize the Operation and Maintenance (O&M) contract of the Water Supply Scheme (WSS) for Jagti Migrant Township, Nagrota, without interruption. Year after year, despite multiple bidders and changing officials, the same company walks away with the coveted contract, raising troubling questions about transparency and accountability of public spending.

Jagti Township, housing thousands of displaced Kashmiri Pandits uprooted during the onset of Pakistan-sponsored terrorism, depends on this scheme for its drinking water supply. The project is funded through the Centre's Security Related Expenditure (SRE), a special head meant to ensure uninterrupted civic amenities for vulnerable migrant populations. Ironically, the very residents who were supposed to be assured safe and regular drinking water have been protesting for years against erratic supply and poor upkeep.

Unlike every other water supply scheme across Jammu and Kashmir, which is directly maintained by the Public Health Engineering (now Jal Shakti) Department, Jagti WSS remains the only scheme outsourced to a private contractor. Initially, tenders were issued by the office of the Relief Commissioner

JAGTI'S WATER RIDDLE

- ▶▶ Same firm bags contract since 2011
- ▶▶ Outsourcing unique to this one scheme
- ▶▶ Annual cost soars to Rs 2.09 crore
- ▶▶ Residents protest erratic supply
- ▶▶ ACB probe stalled due to prosecution sanction

(Migrants), but after 2021, vide GAD Order No: 381-JK(GAD) of 2021 dated 28-04-2021, the scheme was handed over to the Jal Shakti Department. Yet, the outsourcing route continues unchanged.

Why? That remains a million-dollar question.

The pattern is unmistakable. Each year, despite multiple firms bidding, the same contractor

emerges as the "lowest bidder" - thus securing the deal. Allegations abound that eligibility criteria and tender conditions are custom-tailored to suit the favored firm, effectively shutting out fair competition. The blue eyed contractor seems to have virtually hijacked the tendering agency to further his vested interest.

If the numbers are any indica-

tion, the fiscal irregularities stand exposed.

November 2024 (e-NIT No 31 of 2024-25) for six-month O&M contract cost pegged at Rs 75 lakh, i.e., Rs 1.5 crore annually. Surprisingly, however, August 2025 (e-NIT No 17 of 2025) advertised cost for 12 months suddenly shot up to Rs 2.09 crore. This represents a 40 per cent escalation in less than a year, without any corresponding upgradation of services. On the ground, residents of Jagti continue to face intermittent, irregular water supply.

Not only have Jagti residents been demonstrations demanding regular water supply, but even aggrieved contractors have alleged irregularities in the tendering process. Complaints were lodged, and according to credible

sources, the Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) had indeed taken cognizance. Preliminary findings reportedly established a prima facie case of omissions and commissions in the bidding mechanism. Yet, with no sanction for prosecution forthcoming, the file has been left to gather dust in official corridors.

The persistence of one firm winning tenders for over a decade, the arbitrary cost escalations, and the lack of punitive clauses point to what experts call a classic case of "engineered tenders". The question also arises, why was Jagti singled out for outsourcing while every other WSS remains in departmental control? Why have successive governments and departments looked the other way, ignoring both public grievances and corruption red flags?