

People protest across PoK seeking rights

MUZAFFARABAD, Aug 14 (ANI)

PROTESTS were reported across several parts of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), with demonstrators raising slogans, demanding fundamental rights and calling for accountability over reported killings and alleged restrictions on civil liberties.

In Sudhanoti, a sit-in protest was held on August 13, with protesters raising slogans and demanding their rights.

The demonstration reflected growing public anger and concern over the situation in the region.

Meanwhile, in Mirpur Mandhol, students took to the streets to protest for what they described as their basic rights. Thousands of students and residents reportedly gathered during the demonstration, sending a message to the authorities that their rights could not be taken away.

The protesters also demand-

ed accountability for those killed during previous protests and said the sacrifices of those who lost their lives must not be forgotten. They further called for the immediate withdrawal of Pakistani forces from PoJK.

A separate demonstration was held outside the Pakistani Embassy in Brussels, where United Kashmir People's National Party (UKPNP) leader Sajid Hussain spoke about what he described as the deteriorat-

ing human rights situation in PoJK.

Addressing supporters, Hussain said the objective of the demonstration was to draw the attention of European institutions to alleged human rights violations in the region.

Hussain referred to an alleged attack on JKJAAC leader Sardar Umar Nazir on June 5, claiming that Nazir was injured in an assassination attempt while his friend was shot dead.

Centre notifies 40 questions for Census '27

Caste, SC, ST status included for the first time

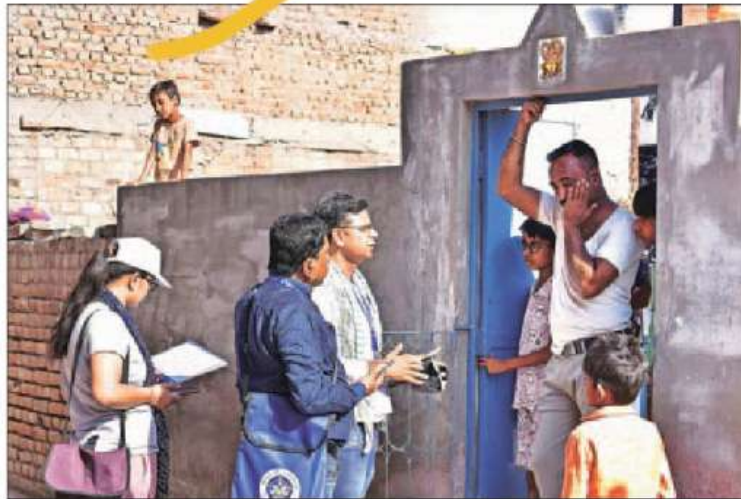
NEW DELHI, Aug 14 (PTI)

THE Centre on Friday notified 40 questions, including for the first time queries on caste, to be asked of respondents during the population enumeration phase of the Census, set to begin from September 1 in snow-bound areas, a Government order said.

The order from Registrar General of India Mrityunjay Kumar Narayan notifies questions such as whether the person belongs to a Scheduled Caste or a Scheduled Tribe and their caste. The population enumeration in Ladakh and snow-bound non-synchronous areas of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, will take place from September 1 to 30, according to a gazette notification issued earlier this month.

"For the conduct of the above Census, there shall be an option for self-enumeration from August 17 to 31 just before the start of house-to-house population enumeration," it said.

In the rest of the country, the population enumeration (PE) will begin next year.



Govt employees carry out the ongoing Census 2027 door-to-door survey by visiting households, in Bikaner. (ANI/File photo)

This will be the first time when caste details will be collected as part of the Census.

The questionnaire is unlikely to carry a list of castes, and the responses will be recorded as shared by respondents, sources said. The decision to include caste enumeration was taken by the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on April 30 last

year. "In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (1) of section 8 of the Census Act, 1948 (Act 37 of 1948), the Central Government hereby instructs and directs that the census officers may, within the limits of the local area for which they have been respectively appointed, ask all such questions of all persons residing within such limits, subject to the items enumerated below, for

collecting information through the Household Schedule in connection with the Census of India 2027," a notification from Registrar General of India said.

The respondents will be asked for personal details, such as marital status, age at marriage, spouse name, nationality, religion, Scheduled Caste (SC)/Scheduled Tribe (ST), caste, particulars of parents, disability, mother tongue, and other languages known, literacy, and digital literacy status, among others.

The biggest headcount of the world will be a totally digital enterprise. Respondents will also be asked for attendance in an educational institution, highest educational level, stream, discipline, if they worked at any time during the last year, category of economic activity, occupation, nature of industry, trade or service, class of worker and if engaged in non-economic activity (for marginal, semi-marginal and non-worker).

Whether they are available for work (for marginal, semi-marginal and non-worker) and if they travel to their place of work will also be part of the questionnaire.

WPI inflation eases to 9.78 pc in July on softening in fuel prices

NEW DELHI, Aug 14 (PTI)

WHOLESALE price inflation softened month-on-month for the first time in nine months to 9.78 per cent in July on easing in fuel and food prices.

Wholesale price index (WPI)-based inflation was 9.87 per cent in June. This is the first time since October 2025 that WPI inflation has fallen month-on-month. The

softening in July numbers is mainly on account of lower inflation in fuel and power even as inflation in primary articles and manufactured products accelerated.

“Across groups, mineral oils (containing petroleum products), food articles, manufacture of basic metals, non-food articles, manufacture of food products, and manufacture of chem-

icals and chemical products have been major drivers of WPI inflation in July 2026,” the Commerce and Industry Ministry said while releasing the monthly Wholesale Price Index (WPI) data on Friday. Wholesale inflation in fuel and power dropped to 20.05 per cent in July, as against 27.41 per cent in June.

Inflation in food articles too eased marginally to 5.44 per cent

in July from 5.49 per cent in June.

However, manufactured products saw an uptick in inflation at 8.29 per cent in July, as against 7.48 per cent in June. As per the data, the output Producer Price Index (PPI) - which the Government has said will eventually replace the WPI in about 5 years -- remained unchanged at 9.6 per cent YoY in July vis-a-vis June.

Reliance, Rolls-Royce to partner to develop indigenous combat engine for AMCA

NEW DELHI, Aug 14 (PTI)

RELIANCE Industries and Rolls-Royce on Friday said they intend to jointly develop a sovereign combat engine for the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) programme, marking a bid by India's largest private-sector company and Britain's storied aero-engine maker to build indigenous fighter-jet propulsion capability in the country.

The two companies, in a joint



statement, said they would explore forming a dedicated Aerospace Gas Turbine Complex in India, envisioned as a centre of excellence for power and propulsion technology, covering design, development, manufac-

turing, testing, production and through-life support of combat engines. The proposed partnership would combine Britain's storied aero-engine maker's technology and expertise with Reliance's technology, manufacturing and execution capabilities to develop AMCA engine in India.

The announcement frames the tie-up as advancing Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's push for the country's defence sector to produce an indigenous engine.

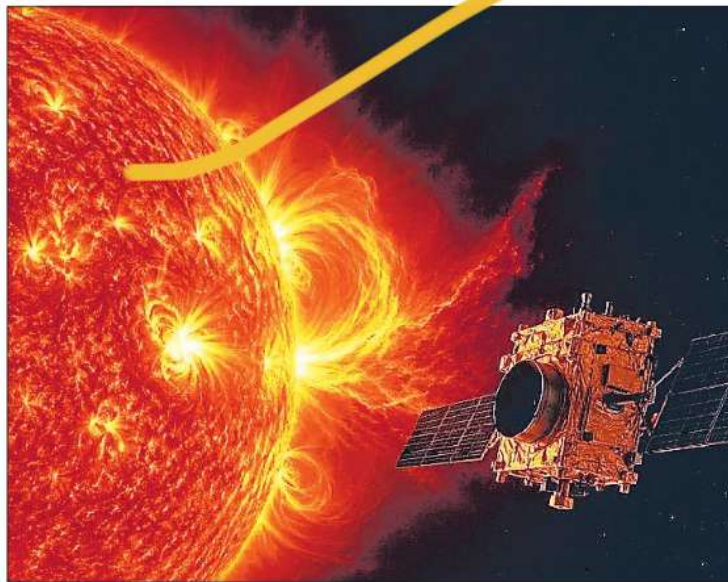
Aditya-L1 findings offer fresh clues

NEW DELHI, Aug 14 (IANS)

OBSERVATIONS from India's Aditya-L1 solar mission have provided crucial insights into one of solar physics' biggest mysteries: how the Sun's outer atmosphere remains millions of degrees hotter than its surface and retains that heat despite constantly losing vast amounts of energy through solar eruptions, according to Indian researchers.

Scientists studying data from Aditya-L1, India's first dedicated solar observation mission, have reported findings that could help explain the long-standing mystery of why the Sun's corona remains far hotter than its visible surface. The findings, published in the *Astrophysical Journal Letters*, were led by Professor R. Ramesh of the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA).

The study sheds new light on the processes that heat the Sun's outermost atmosphere and replenish energy lost during powerful solar eruptions.



The temperature structure of the Sun has puzzled astrophysicists for decades. While temperatures in the Sun's core reach nearly 15 million degrees Celsius, the visible surface, known as the photosphere, is significantly cooler at around 5,500 degrees Celsius. Surprisingly, the corona,

located much farther from the core, can reach temperatures of around 2 million degrees Celsius and occasionally soar to as high as 40 million degrees Celsius.

This apparent increase in temperature away from the heat source challenges conventional expectations and has remained

one of the most enduring unsolved questions in solar science. The corona is also the birthplace of extreme solar weather events, including solar flares and coronal mass ejections (CMEs).

During these eruptions, the Sun ejects enormous amounts of energy and charged particles into space. Such events can lead to spectacular auroras on Earth but can also disrupt power grids, communication networks, navigation systems and satellites through geomagnetic storms.

According to Prof. Ramesh, the Sun typically produces two to three CMEs each day during periods of low activity. During the peak phase of its 11-year solar cycle, that number can rise to ten or more daily eruptions.

Scientists have long wondered how the corona manages to sustain its immense temperatures despite these frequent energy losses. If the lost energy were not replenished, the Sun would gradually cool, affecting the entire solar system.

President approves 78 Gallantry Awards

NEW DELHI, Aug 14 (PTI)

PRESIDENT Droupadi Murmu on Friday approved 78 Gallantry Awards, including 13 posthumously, to the personnel of the Defence Forces and Central Armed Police Forces on the eve of 80th Independence Day.

The awards included nine Kirti Chakras, 19 Shaurya Chakras, one Bar to Shaurya Chakra, five Bar to Sena Medals (Gallantry) and 36 Sena Medals (Gallantry), three Nao Sena Medals five Vayu Sena Medals (Gallantry).

Kirti Chakra is India's second-highest peacetime gallantry award after Ashoka Chakra. Shaurya Chakra is the third-highest peacetime gallantry award. The Kirti Chakra awardees are Lt Colonel Manoj Francis of 21 Para (Special Forces) and Major Jitendra Rathee of 2 Para (Special Forces). The seven other Kirti Chakras were conferred posthumously.

The Armed Forces personnel given the prestigious awards posthumously included Havildar Gajendra Singh of 2 Para (Special Forces), Jagbir Singh (head constable), Jaswant Singh (constable), Balvinder Singh (constable), Tariq Hussain (constable), Bashir Ahmad (head constable) and Sunil Kumar (inspector).

The Shaurya Chakra awardees are Major Paramveer from 36 Rashtriya Rifles, Major Tarun



A sand art by artist Sudarsan Pattnaik depicting the 80th Independence Day in Puri, Odisha on Friday. (PTI)

Vasudevan, from 57 Rashtriya Rifles, Major Keshav Kumar from 12 Dogra Regiment, Major Gaurav Singh Brijwal from 21 Grenadiers, Major Vipeen Kumar from 11 Rashtriya Rifles, Naib Subedar Shankar Ram from 3 Assam Rifles and Naib Subedar Dabhal Singh Bisht from 21 Para (Special Forces).

Other recipient of the award are Havildar Jagattar Singh from 4 Para (Special Forces), Lance Naik Narender Sindhu from 9

Rashtriya Rifles (posthumous), Lance Naik Kapil Dev from 11 Rashtriya Rifles, Sepoy Jaswinder Singh from 7 Sikh Light Infantry, Lieutenant Commander Shivam Kumar from the Indian Navy, Squadron Leader Sudhir Kumar, pilot from the Indian Air Force.

The remaining Shaurya Chakra awardees are: Dheeraj Singh Katoch, Deputy Superintendent, Ajay Singh Chib, Inspector, Sukhvir Singh, Deputy Superintendent, Niyaz Ahmad,

Assistant Sub-Inspector, Anjani Kumar, Deputy Commandant and Deepak Sah, constable.

Major Aditya Pratap Singh of 44 Assam Rifles has been conferred Bar to Shaurya Chakra.

The President, who is also the Supreme Commander of the defence forces, has also approved 89 Mention-in-Despatches that included 75 personnel of the Indian Army, four from the Indian Navy, and 10 from the IAF.

CRPF bags highest Gallantry, Service medals

THE Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) bagged the maximum Gallantry and Service medals -- 86 in total -- among the Central paramilitary forces on the occasion of the 80th Independence Day. The country's largest paramilitary force received 24 gallantry medals (GM), five President's Medals for Distinguished Service (PSM) and 57 Medals for Meritorious Service (MSM), according to a Ministry of Home Affairs notification on Friday. The gallantry medals were earned from two counter-terrorist operations in Jammu and Kashmir and one operation against insurgents in Manipur, both taking place in 2024, officials said.

21 CBI personnel to be honoured

Twenty-one CBI personnel have been awarded the coveted President's Medal for Distinguished Service and Medal for Meritorious Service on the occasion of Independence Day.

301 medals to Police, Fire Service

The Centre on Friday said it has awarded 301 Medals of Gallantry to Police and Fire Service personnel this Independence Day. Of this total, 197 were given to those who served in the Left-Wing-Extremism region, the Government said.

In all, 1057 personnel of Police, Fire, Home Guard & Civil Defence (HG&CD) and Correctional Services have been felicitated with Gallantry and Service Medals this Independence Day.

20 BSF personnel to be honoured for anti-Naxal operation

Twenty Border Security Force (BSF) personnel who were part of a major anti-Naxal operation in Chhattisgarh that killed 29 Maoists in 2024 have been named for the gallantry medal given on the occasion of the 80th Independence Day.

The April 15-16 incident in the Kanker district was billed as the "biggest-ever" operation against Left-Wing Extremists in the central Indian State then, as it recorded the highest fatalities suffered by Naxalites in a single encounter.

Twenty BSF personnel from the 94th battalion have been awarded the Medal for Gallantry in recognition of their conspicuous bravery during the meticulously planned anti-Naxal operation, a BSF statement said.