

6th Wettest August Since 1901

Over 100 Killed In 30 Extreme Weather Events



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir has endured the deadliest month, August, as the back-to-back natural calamities have led to the loss of over 100 lives across the region, experiencing over 30 extreme weather events during the last 31 days. According to the details, the region has experienced its sixth wettest August since 1901, with the region recording 319.3 mm of rainfall against the normal of

184.9 mm, marking an excess of 73% precipitation. The month of August witnessed an alarming surge in extreme weather events across Jammu and Kashmir, resulting in over 100 deaths and damage to several properties. Director Meteorological department (meT), Dr Mukhtar Ahmad, confirmed that more than 30 incidents of flash floods, cloudbursts, landslides, gusty winds, heavy rains and thunderstorms | [More on P6](#)

Fresh MeT Warning Adds To Weather Woes In J&K

Observer News Service

Jammu and Kashmir is bracing for more extreme weather as the Meteorological Department (MeT) on Monday issued a fresh advisory warning of heavy to very heavy rainfall across several districts until September 3. The warning raises the risk of flash floods, cloudbursts, and landslides in vulnerable areas. According to the advisory, | [More on P6](#)

ANANTNAG (35%), PULWAMA (18%), KULGAM (13%), AND SRINAGAR (15%) RECORDED ABOVE-NORMAL RAINFALL, while other districts like Kupwara (-23%), Bandipora (-20%), Budgam (-1%), Baramulla (-2%), Ganderbal (-17%), and Shopian (-69% - data probably incorrect) experienced deficits."

Warwan Cloudburst: 190 Houses Damaged, 45 Cattle Killed

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Around 190 houses were damaged and 45 cattle killed following a cloudburst that hit the Warwan Valley of Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district last Tuesday, and multiple agencies are engaged in massive relief and rehabilitation operations. Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma, who reached the far-flung Marwah-Warwan valley, announced a month's ration for the affected families. The ration as well as relief material from the Red Cross was distributed among the people on the spot. The cloudburst hit the Margi hamlet in the Warwan Valley on August 26, causing large-scale destruction, but fortunately, no casualties.

"Out of 224 houses, around 50 were fully damaged, 130-140 severely damaged, while the rest were partially affected. The revenue department, SDRF, and other teams should speed up operations to clear the debris on priority," Sharma said. Flanked by Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kishtwar Naresh Singh, the deputy commissioner said that 45 cattle were buried under the debris. Relief and rehabilitation operations are underway, Sharma said. He further said six to seven locations in Marwah and Warwan were hit by cloudbursts, damaging roads and bridges. On his directions, the department concerned restored road and bridge connectivity in the affected areas. Authorities have been tasked with assessing | [More on P6](#)

AI, Data Analytics Key To Studying Cloudbursts: Shah

Chairs High Level Meet; Reviews Flood Damage in J&K

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday highlighted the need for studying cloudburst causes by using data analytics and artificial intelligence and conducting a critical review of the early warning system for floods due to glacial lake outbursts, as he condoled the loss of lives in the recent calamities. Chairing a high-level meeting at the Raj Bhavan here after a whirlwind tour of the areas worst-hit by the series of disasters since August 14, he assured the people that the centre stood firmly with them, providing prompt relief



and financial assistance.

At the meeting to review the latest situation, Shah appreciated the efforts of all agencies and said the Jammu

and Kashmir government carried out rescue operations quickly and efficiently. More than 80 per cent of the electricity | [More on P6](#)

'Committed Toward Rehab Of Flood-hit People'

The Narendra Modi government is committed to ensuring the rehabilitation of those affected by recent floods in Jammu and Kashmir, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Monday, as he undertook a whirlwind tour of a worst-hit area here. Union Home Minister toured the flood-hit Jammu and assured some of the victims he met of relief and rehabilitation. Shah was accompanied by Lt Governor | [More on P6](#)

Reviews Security, Calls For Zero-Tolerance On Terror

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday reviewed the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir and reiterated Centre's zero-tolerance policy against terrorism. He instructed all security agencies to remain alert and operate in a coordinated manner to

eliminate terrorism in the Union territory. The home minister was chairing a meeting at Raj Bhavan here, which was attended by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Union Home Secretary, Director IB, Chief Secretary and DGP of Jammu and | [More on P6](#)

Afghan Earthquake Claims 800 Lives

Agencies

Kabul: Desperate Afghans clawed through rubble in the dead of the night in search of missing loved ones after a strong earthquake killed some 800 people and injured more than 2,500 in eastern Afghanistan, according to figures provided Monday by the Taliban government. The 6.0 magnitude quake late Sunday hit towns in the province of Kunar, near the city of Jalalabad in the neighbouring Nangahar province, causing extensive damage. The quake at 11:47 pm was centred 27 kilometres east-northeast of the city of Jalalabad in Nangarhar province, the US Geological Survey said. It was just 8 kilometres deep. Shallower quakes tend to cause more damage. Several aftershocks followed. Footage showed rescuers taking injured people on stretchers from collapsed buildings and into helicopters as people frantically dug through rubble | [More on P6](#)

SCO Condemns Pahalgam Attack Concurs With India That Double Standards To Fight Terrorism Unacceptable

KO Web Desk

Tianjin: The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on Monday strongly condemned the Pahalgam terror attack and concurred with India's position that "double standards" in the fight against terrorism are unacceptable. The influential grouping listed its strong resolve to combat terrorism in a declaration that was unveiled at the end of its two-day annual summit at the Chinese port city that was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Russia's Vladimir Putin and many other global leaders.



The SCO member states also condemned the military strikes by Israel in Gaza as it has led to numerous casualties among the civilian population and a catastrophic humanitarian situation in the Strip. The declaration mentioned

ways to enhance regional security and identified combating terrorism as a major challenge. "The member states strongly condemned the terrorist attack in Pahalgam on April 22," it said. | [More on P6](#)

PM: 'Nations Must Reject Double Standards'

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday once again condemned the Pahalgam terror attack that left 26 people, mostly tourists, dead, saying every country should adopt a clear and collective position against terrorism.

The Prime Minister said nations must reject double standards on terrorism and speak with one voice against it. He added that terrorism, in every form, must be opposed, calling it a responsibility towards humanity. Addressing | [More on P6](#)

HC Bars Fresh Academic Arrangements In Degree Colleges

Says Govt Has 'Compromised' Both Quality Of Faculty, Standard Of Education

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Observing that the government has "compromised" both the quality of faculty and the standard of education imparted in the Government Degree Colleges, the High Court of



J&K and Ladakh has directed that no fresh academic arrangements shall be made by the authorities against clear vacancies of Assistant Professors, Librarians, and Physical Training Instructors

(PTIs) borne on the Jammu and Kashmir Education Gazetted Colleges Service Recruitment Rules 2008. Disposing of a batch of connected pleas, a Division Bench of Justice Sanjeev Kumar and Justice Sanjay Parihar ordered the government to form a high-level committee within a month as well as also directed it to immediately refer all such vacant posts to the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission for selection. "The Committee | [More on P6](#)

What Kashmir Can Learn from Vietnam's Green Warriors

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: In Vietnam's capital Hanoi, nearly 10,000 women collect and sort plastic waste every day, forming what experts call an "invisible army" of informal workers who prevent tonnes of plastic from choking landfills, rivers and oceans. Their stories, featured in the World Economic Forum documentary Invisible Warriors: The Force Behind Vietnam's Plastic Action, showcase how grassroots efforts can transform a national fight against pollution. "These women are among Vietnam's unsung environmental stewards," says a piece published on the World Economic



Forum website. "Behind nearly 90% of all plastic recycled in Vietnam is someone like Ms Nguyen Thi Kenh or Ms Nguyen Thi Lanh, pushing a heavy cart

through narrow alleyways, picking through household waste, often without gloves or other protective gear." The Vietnamese model offers

valuable lessons for regions like Jammu and Kashmir, where plastic pollution has become an urgent environmental crisis. As per estimates, Jammu & Kashmir generates more than 51,000 tonnes of plastic waste annually. With no proper segregation at source and inadequate collection systems, discarded plastic ends up in landfills, rivers, streams, and even forests, polluting fragile ecosystems from Dal Lake to remote mountain valleys. Plastic has crept into nearly every aspect of daily life in Kashmir, from packaging at retail outlets to bottled water reliance, disposable cutlery at food stalls, microplastics from synthetic clothing, and PVC debris

at construction sites. The consequences are devastating: clogged waterways, flooding, soil and crop contamination, livestock deaths, and scenic degradation threatening tourism revenues. "Plastic waste contaminates soil, water bodies, and air, adversely affecting ecosystems and biodiversity," experts warn. "Persistent plastic pollution leads to long-term environmental degradation... threatening the well-being and prosperity of future generations." Viet Nam has shown that small, community-driven steps can scale into national reform. Organizations like VietCycle have given protective gear, health insurance | [More on P6](#)

Northern States Flooded

MHA Sets Up Inter-Ministerial Teams To Assess Damage



Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Ministry of Home Affairs has formed Inter-Ministerial Central Teams (IMCTs) to assess the damage caused by heavy rainfall, flash floods, landslides, and cloudbursts in Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Punjab. Each team will be led by a Joint Secretary-level officer from the Ministry of Home Affairs or the National Disaster Management Authority, and include members from the departments of Expenditure, Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare,

Jal Shakti, Power, Road Transport and Highways, and Rural Development. The teams will conduct field visits to affected districts and review relief measures already in place by state and Union Territory administrations. Their findings will form the basis for further financial support from the Centre. This mechanism, introduced by Home Minister Amit Shah in 2019, mandates the constitution of multi-ministerial teams immediately after a major disaster, rather than waiting for detailed memorandums from states. | [More on P6](#)

NH Closure Sparks Crisis In Kashmir Fruit Trade

Observer News Service

Srinagar: With the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway blocked for nearly a week, Kashmir's fruit industry is staring at massive financial losses, with growers warning that hundreds of crores could be wiped out as truckloads of Bagogosha pears and Gala apples rot on the roadside. Although the highway partially reopened on Monday to clear stranded vehicles, the damage to perishable consignments is already extensive, leaving growers and traders deeply concerned. Asia's second-largest fruit mandi at Sopore wore a gloomy look, with trade at a virtual standstill. Only a few six-tyre trucks were loaded compared to the usual 100-plus vehicles. "The industry may face losses of around Rs 200 crore if truck movement does not normalize," said Sopore Mandi president Fayaz Ahmed Malik, adding that the situation mirrors the 2022 highway disruption crisis. Growers also reported a steep fall in rates. The American apple variety, previously sold at Rs 600 per box, is now fetching only Rs 400-450. "A truck worth Rs 15 lakh reaching the market would barely recover a lakh or two due to damage," growers said. Authorities allowed phased clearance of stranded vehicles from Qazigund to Jammu, but the losses were already significant, confirmed Bashir Ahmad Basheer, chairman of the Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers and Dealers Union. "Bagogosha and Gala apples have suffered extensive | [More on P6](#)

Traffic Partially Restored On NH

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Traffic was partially restored on the Jammu-Srinagar national highway on Monday, providing relief to hundreds of commuters stranded on the arterial road over the past six days. The 250-km highway, the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country was blocked by multiple landslides coupled with sinking of road at different places, especially at Tharad Bridge and Balli Nallah in Udhampur district and Maroog in Ramban district on August 27. "Jammu-Srinagar | [More on P6](#)

Artists Remember Veteran Actor Ashok Jailkhani At Condolence Meet

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A condolence meeting was held at the iconic Tagore Hall to pay tribute to the late Ashok Jailkhani, the renowned actor, director, and former Assistant Director General (ADG) of Doordarshan.

The gathering brought together a galaxy of eminent personalities from theatre, radio, television, and the wider art and culture fraternity. Among those present were Mushtaaque Ali Ahmad Khan, Aiyash Aarif, Shabbeer Mujahid,

to the world of performing arts. They shared anecdotes and personal experiences, describing him as a multifaceted personality whose passion, dedication, and creative brilliance left a lasting impact on generations of artists.

His body of work, both on and off screen, was celebrated for its depth and emotional resonance. Colleagues recalled his mentorship, guidance, and generosity of spirit, which inspired many to pursue careers in theatre, television, and cinema.

Remembering him as warm, humble, and commit-



G. M. Wani, Mushtaq Bala, Shahzad Rasool, Shafqat Habeeb, Zahoor Zahid, Nazir Josh, Shaikh Haneef, Hussein Khan, Bilal Jan, Roma Wani, besides many others.

Speakers fondly remembered Jailkhani's illustrious career and his pioneering contributions

ted to his craft, the participants said his legacy would remain a beacon for future generations. The meeting concluded with heartfelt tributes, marking the occasion as a fitting homage to a cultural icon who left an indelible imprint on the artistic landscape.

Five Land Brokers Convicted After 15-year Legal Battle

Agencies

Srinagar: The Court of City Judge Srinagar, Abdul Bari, has convicted five land brokers on charges of fraud, cheating and criminal conspiracy after a prolonged 15-year legal battle. The accused were sentenced to two years of simple imprisonment along with fines.

The convicted brokers have been identified as Ghulam Qadir Dar and Abdul Rehman Dar, Ghulam Mohammad Malik and Ghulam Mustafa Bhat, all residents of Mirgund Pattan; and Abdul Rehman Thokar of Khusipora HMT.

The case originated from a complaint filed in October 2009 at Police Station Batmaloo. The complainant, chairman of the International Building House Co-operative Society, alleged that he had entered into an agreement in March 2008 to purchase 109 kanals of land at Sharifabad through broker Ghulam Qadir Dar and his associates. The deal was valued at Rs 4.5 crore, and the complainant paid Rs 2.61 crore through cheques in instalments.

According to the complaint, despite receiving the money, the accused neither handed over ownership documents nor posses-

sion of the land, thereby defrauding the complainant. Following the complaint, an FIR under number 262/2009 was registered for offences under section 420 RPC. After investigation, police submitted a charge sheet in 2013.

The court, as per the news agency Kashmir News Trust, after hearing multiple witnesses and final arguments, passed a detailed 34-page order holding the accused guilty. Judge Abdul Bari observed that the prosecution had succeeded in proving its case beyond reasonable doubt.

Accused Ghulam Qadir Dar and Abdul Rehman Dar were convicted under sections 420 and 506 RPC, while the remaining three accused were convicted under section 506 RPC. All five have been sentenced to two years of simple imprisonment and fined Rs 5,000 each. In case of default in payment of fine, they will undergo an additional six months of imprisonment.

The court ruled that all sentences shall run concurrently. While awarding the punishment, the judge noted that the accused had already faced the ordeal of trial for 15 years, and therefore a lenient view was taken on the quantum of punishment. [KNT]

Prominent Kashmiris Join Rotary Club of Kashmir

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A group of well-known professionals from Kashmir have joined Rotary International through the Rotary Club of Kashmir, marking a new chapter in civic leadership and community service in the region.

Among those inducted were pulmonologist Dr. Naveed Nazir, academician Dr. Ruheela Hassan, civil services officer Anisa Nabi, journalist-artist Nazir Ganaie, and healthcare professional Dr. Ibrar Bashir Sheerazi.

They were joined by other professionals from diverse fields, including

Irfan Jeelani Rather, Gurrpriya Kour, Dr. Javaid Ahmad Bhat, Jatinder Singh Kamboj, Mursheed Ahmad Khan, and Dr. Asifa Baba.

Rotary International, with 1.4 million members in over 200 countries, works globally on issues like polio eradication, healthcare, education, and community empowerment. The new members bring expertise from healthcare, education, business, and the arts, promising to strengthen the Club's outreach in Kashmir.

The Rotary Club of Kashmir said the induction reflects Rotary's principle of "Service Above Self" and will help translate local experience into meaningful action.



Div Com Reviews Status Of Smart City projects

Calls For Completion Of Projects Within Timelines, Resolution Of Interdepartmental Issues

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Anshul Garg reviewed the physical & financial status of Srinagar Smart City projects in a meeting held on Monday.

Besides, Commissioner SMC Fazlul Haseeb, the meeting was attended by Chief Engineers of I&FC, KPDCL, PWD R&B, SSCL, Joint Commissioner SMC, General Manager Finance, SSCL, General Manager P&UD, SSCL, Superintending Engineers, Executive Engineer Srinagar Smart City Limited and other officers.

At the outset, Commissioner SMC gave a detailed powerpoint presentation of the developmental and beautification projects executed by SSCL across City including Jhelum Waterfront Development & Water Transport, Urban Rejuvenation & Lakefront Development, Heritage Conser-

“**Out of 161 sanctioned projects, 153 projects have been completed while the work on the remaining 8 projects is currently in progress.”**

vation & Downtown Renewal, Central Business District Upgradation, Urban Mobility, Street & Intersection Development, Information Technology, City Beautification & Urban Art, Green & Resilient Srinagar.

It was stated that out of 161 sanctioned projects, 153 projects have been completed while the work on the remaining 8 projects

is currently in progress.

Addressing the officers, Div Com stated that the aim of Smart City Projects is to improve the public services and emphasized to ensure that all the planned services are delivered on time.

He highlighted that as the time is progressing gradually the deadline for the Smart City projects is also approaching and stressed on the executing agencies to expedite the works to meet stipulated timelines.

To achieve the established targets on time, Div Com urged officers to project impeding issues of inter-agencies for early resolution and smooth execution of projects.

Regarding development of bus stops for e-buses, Anshul Garg directed SSCL to consider winter weather conditions for development of closed bus stops.

He also directed for full operationalisation of ITMS cameras and IT related services of ICCC.



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PDD: 0194-2450213

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,2452222,2452155

CAPD: 18001807011

SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081

Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

RAILWAYS

SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259

ANANTNAG: 01932-228243

BARAMULLA: 0194-102029

BIJBHARA: 01932-228243

PAMPORE: 01933-294132

PATTAN: 01954-293507

QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS

Sgr-Jammu highway - (Open)

Mughal Road - (Open)

Srinagar- Leh- (Open)



HIJRI

CALENDAR

08 Rabi-ul-Awwal

1447

PRAYERS

FAJR

4: 38

ZUHR

12:32

ASR

5: 07

Magrib

7:01

ISHA

8: 25

This Day In History

- 1649 - The Italian city of Castro is completely destroyed by the forces of Pope Innocent X, ending the Wars of Castro.
- 1686 - Habsburg armies take Buda from Turks
- 1752 - Last Julian calendar day in Great Britain and British colonies including America. To sync to the Gregorian calendar, 11 days are skipped and the next date is Sep 14.
- 1807- The Royal Navy bombards Copenhagen with fire bombs and phosphorus rockets to prevent Denmark from surrendering its fleet to Napoleon.
- 1870 - Napoleon III surrenders to Prussian armies at the Battle of Sedan
- 1898 - Machine gun 1st used in battle
- 1900 - A large demonstration by Nationalists in Dublin's Phoenix Park demand that Ireland be free of British rule
- 1900- Telegraph use between Germany & US begins
- 1919- Italy agrees to general voting rights and proportional representation
- 1926- Italy signs treaty with Yemen
- 1929 - Unilever forms by merger of Margarine Union & Lever Bros
- 1930- 1st non-stop airplane flight from Europe to US (37 hrs)
- 1944- US leaders meet in Belgium
- 1945- Ho Chi Minh declares Vietnam independent from France (National Day)
- 1945 V-J Day, formal surrender of Japan aboard USS Missouri marks the end of World War II (Japanese date, 1st September in US)
- 1945 - V-J Day, formal surrender of Japan signed aboard USS Missouri marks the end of World War II (US date, 3rd September in Japan)
- 1946- Jawaharlal Nehru forms government in India
- 1949- Fire in riverfront area kills 1,700 (Chungking China)
- 1951 - Australia, NZ & US sign ANZUS-pact
- 1956- Collapse of a rail bridge under a train kills 120 (India)
- 1957- US performs nuclear test at Nevada Test Site
- 1958- Great Britain performs atmospheric nuclear test at Christmas Island
- 1958 - Hendrik Verwoerd appointed Prime Minister of South Africa
- 1960 - The first election of the Parliament of the Central Tibetan Administration, in history of Tibet. The Tibetan community observes this date as the Democracy Day.
- 1964 - Indonesian paratroopers lands in Malaysia
- Yankees at \$65,000 a season, then the biggest salary in MLB
- 1969 - The first automatic teller machine in the United States is installed in Rockville Center, New York.
- 1971 - There are further Irish Republican Army bombs set off across the region, including one in Belfast which wrecked the headquarters of the Ulster Unionist Party
- 1972 - East German sprinter Renate Stecher sets world record 11.07 to beat Raelene Boyle of Australia for the women's 100m gold medal at the Munich Olympics
- 1974 US President Gerald Ford signs Employee Retirement Income Security Act.
- 1980 - Australian cricket batsman Kim Hughes becomes 3rd player to bat on all 5 days of a Test match as the rain affected Centenary Test peters out to a draw at Lord's; BBC's John Arlott calls his final match
- 1981 - USSR performs underground nuclear test
- 1987 - Trial begins in Moscow for West German pilot Mathias Rust, who flew a private plane from Finland to Moscow, USSR.
- 1991 - US officially recognizes independence of Estonia, Latvia & Lithuania.
- 1996 - Soyuz TM-24, lands
- 1996 - A peace agreement is signed between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Moro National Liberation Front in Malacañang Palace.
- 1998 - Swissair Flight 111 crashes near Peggys Cove, Nova Scotia. All 229 people on board are killed.
- 1998 - The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda finds Jean-Paul Akayesu, the former mayor of a small town in Rwanda, guilty of nine counts of genocide

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KO VIEW

Need to
Respect Nature?

Another week, another tragedy. Jammu and Kashmir has now witnessed its fifth cloudburst in just two weeks, with eleven more lives lost, seven of them from one family buried alive in Reasi district. In Ramban, four more perished, and one remains missing. The death toll from extreme rainfall in just a fortnight has crossed 130. Pilgrimages have been suspended, highways cut off, rail lines paralyzed. And yet, in our public conversations, we speak of “natural calamities” as though these disasters are acts of fate alone, as though we, with our unchecked encroachments, unplanned construction, and neglect of ecological safeguards, bear no responsibility.

Yes, the climate change is amplifying extreme weather. The ongoing frequency in cloudbursts is unusual. They were once rare and localized events. The weather experts say that this is because warmer air holds more moisture, releasing it suddenly as torrential rain. Similarly, the higher reaches in Jammu and Kashmir are fragile and naturally prone to landslides and floods. For example, Srinagar-Jammu highway has always been a witness to landslides, leading to its closure for days on end. Now, the situation seems to be getting worse, aggravated by human interference. Cutting of slopes, building in floodplains, and choking of rivers with encroachments has turned what should be manageable risks into lethal disasters.

Look around: Jhelum remains clogged despite hundreds of crores spent on “flood mitigation.” Wular Lake and the wetlands that once absorbed excess rain are shrinking under sedimentation and encroachment. Sand mining, often illegal or unregulated, has altered riverbeds. Deforestation has destabilized slopes that once held firm against heavy rain. And while these vulnerabilities accumulate, governance stays reactive rather than preventive, sending rescue teams only after homes are buried and lives are lost.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Union Minister Jitendra Singh have assured assistance and immediate relief. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has rightly ordered round-the-clock monitoring and timely evacuations from risk-prone zones. These steps are necessary, but they are not enough. Year after year, we mourn the dead, rebuild washed-away roads, and wait for the next cloudburst, as if it were a freak accident rather than part of a disturbing pattern.

What is required is a change in mindset. We cannot continue to tame rivers by throwing concrete at them or carve roads into every mountainside without regard for drainage, slope stability, or natural vegetation. We cannot divert funds meant for disaster management into vanity projects. And we cannot ignore the warning signs of a warming planet, pretending that these tragedies are random.

CASH COURSE

Read This Before You Buy Anything

The Clean Money Advantage

With tax-paid salaries and financial credibility, the govt employees are better placed than most to build long-term wealth.

Irshad Mushtaq

Saving often feels safer than investing in Kashmir. A fixed deposit in a bank carries more comfort than the thought of buying shares or mutual funds. Many government employees hesitate, worried about risk, taxmen, or simply “what will people say.”

Yet they miss a crucial advantage. A government salary is already taxed. Every rupee that lands in the account is clean, what advisors call “super white money.” It is money beyond suspicion, giving employees a head start that most business owners or traders do not enjoy.

This matters in a society where financial moves are closely watched. A shopkeeper buying land may face questions about his income. A government teacher or clerk, by contrast, has legitimacy built into his paycheck. The question is not where the money comes from, but how it is used.

Tax rules further reward patience. Selling shares within a year means short-term capital gains, taxed at 20 percent. Hold them longer, and the profit becomes long-term, with gains up to 1.25 lakh tax-free and the rest taxed at 12.5 percent. Systematic Investment Plans in mutual funds allow compounding to work over time.

Land has long been Kashmir’s favorite investment, but financial markets follow the same principle of patient holding. Over years, disciplined investing can rival or even surpass the returns on property.

For government employees, the barriers are less financial than cultural. Moving from a mindset of saving to one of strategic investing is the real leap.

A clerk in Pulwama or a lecturer in Baramulla may not see themselves as investors today. But with digital platforms now in every home, the opportunity is clear: their money can finally start working for them.

The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial advisor.

Kashmir’s Hospitality
on the Edge

Kashmir’s celebrated hospitality stands at a crossroads. What began as a crisis of rotten meat has revealed deeper fractures in the way we eat, work, and live.



Dr. Shahid Jibrán

“The storm over rotten meat must lead to reform. To survive, the industry needs stronger monitoring, ethical practices, and above all, trust between those who serve food and those who eat it.”

For years, Kashmiris lived with the idea that dining out was an occasional treat. Families saved such outings for weddings, festivals, or visits from relatives. Then came the change.

Cafes sprouted in Srinagar’s backlanes. Restaurants filled with chatter. Young people gathered over coffee, parents took their children out for biryani, and professionals ended long days with meals outside their homes.

Eating out became less a novelty and more a way of life.

This shift was more than cultural. The valley’s hospitality industry created jobs for chefs, waiters, suppliers, and delivery workers. Entrepreneurs poured their savings into new spaces. A generation of young men and women found dignity and wages in a sector that kept growing. The restaurant table, once a symbol of leisure, turned into a source of livelihood.

That is why the present crisis feels like a storm no one saw coming.

Over the past month, the discovery of rotten meat in circulation has shaken trust across the valley. Customers hesitate to order. Restaurants sit half-empty. Owners speak of laying off staff. Some have already closed their doors. What took years of hope and investment now stands at risk of collapse.

The question goes deeper than spoiled meat. It asks who is accountable for what we eat, and how systems fail when oversight is weak.

Restaurant owners owe their customers fresh, safe meals. Yet the chain of responsibility stretches beyond their kitchens. Authorities must monitor sup-

plies, inspect facilities, and stop tainted products before they reach dining tables. Dealers handling frozen products must think beyond short-term profit and place ethics before volume.

The structural gaps in Kashmir’s food economy lie at the heart of this mess.

We lack modern slaughterhouses and only have a handful of local processing units. The valley relies heavily on supplies trucked across the Jammu-Srinagar highway, a road that often

open new avenues for employment. Young people could find work close to home. Farmers could link their livestock more directly to local markets. Subsidies for sheep and dairy farming, already on paper, could turn into real opportunities if combined with vision and planning.

Kashmir has always been known for hospitality, for the way a cup of tea or a plate of rice can turn a stranger into a guest. That tradition must not collapse under the weight of rotten sup-

“Kashmir has always been known for hospitality, for the way a cup of tea or a plate of rice can turn a stranger into a guest. That tradition must not collapse under the weight of rotten supplies and broken systems.”

closes during winter storms or landslides.

This dependence creates vulnerability, both in quality and in access. With meat consumption already among the highest in the region, the lack of local infrastructure is glaring.

I recall a conversation with a young Kashmiri entrepreneur who runs her own frozen food brand. She had also been a finalist on MasterChef India. When I asked why her products were more expensive than other brands, she replied, “If I lower my price, I must lower my quality. I will never do that.”

Her words revealed the hard truth. Quality comes at a cost, and shortcuts may feed the present but poison the future.

The way forward demands investment in local slaughterhouses and processing plants. Such facilities would not only safeguard food quality but also

plies and broken systems.

If restaurants fade, it is not only jobs we lose. We lose a piece of who we are.

The storm over rotten meat must lead to reform. To survive, the industry needs stronger monitoring, ethical practices, and above all, trust between those who serve food and those who eat it.

A resilient food economy, rooted in local capacity and honest trade, can allow Kashmir’s restaurant culture to rise again.

The author is the Chief Executive Officer of AIC-IIIM Bioinnovation Foundation at CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine. His work focuses on entrepreneurship, innovation, and sustainable development in Jammu and Kashmir.

Letter to Editor

I Entered as a Topper. I Left Questioning the System in Kashmir.

When people imagine law schools, they picture discipline, fairness, and a culture of inquiry. I entered the Law Department at the University of Kashmir in August 2022 with the same expectations.

As the entrance topper of the LL.B program, I believed I was stepping into a place that valued rigour and mentorship. What I found instead was a system that drained both curiosity and confidence.

In the beginning, I thought my experience would be one of learning from seasoned professors, attending court visits, and preparing for moots that would sharpen my legal skills.

Within weeks, the reality settled in. Classes were irregular. Teachers often skipped lectures. Students prepared for exams without guidance, relying more on borrowed notes than

structured learning. The department offered little exposure to the real world of law.

For a professional course, the absence of professionalism was striking.

Discipline in any institution comes from fairness. What I witnessed instead was favouritism. Students who remained silent or engaged in flattery received better treatment, while those who asked questions or challenged gaps in teaching were sidelined.

Even students who stayed out of politics or group dynamics suffered because they feared their disagreement could affect their future. In a department meant to train advocates, people who must argue and question, the culture of silence was suffocating.

The incident that left me shaken happened near the end of my degree. I had submitted my internship file, a requirement for completion. Weeks

later, it was declared missing. My future hung on the carelessness of someone who had misplaced it.

For days, I struggled to prove I had done the work. The stress of watching years of effort nearly erased by negligence was unbearable. It revealed the bitter irony: a law department that cannot safeguard its own students’ records has little moral ground to teach responsibility.

Across Kashmir, thousands of young people invest years of their lives and their families’ savings in education. In a region with unemployment hovering around 20 percent, one of the highest in India, professional degrees are seen as a ticket to stability. Yet what happens when the very institutions entrusted with preparing us fail to uphold basic accountability?

The gap between promise and practice leaves students disillusioned,

and the larger society poorer for it.

I left the Law Department with mixed emotions. I learned less from lectures than from the failures around me. I discovered how favouritism corrodes trust, negligence breeds fear, and students lose faith in institutions meant to empower them.

What endures is the conviction that reform is not optional. The University of Kashmir owes its law students something better: regular teaching, transparent systems, and a culture that values inquiry over obedience.

Education should give us the courage to confront injustice. It should never make us afraid of asking a question.

Sincerely,

Aaqib Ashraf
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A Brown Man's Burden in an 'Open' World

From Kashmir to the West, a modern L'Etranger (Camusian outsider) confronts identity, hybridity, and the elusive promise of belonging.

Wajahat Qazi

The onset of the neo-liberal wave of globalization in the post-Cold war world of the 1990's led to huge people flows into the West. Broken down, these flows were mostly of brown peoples' heading westward, for work, education and to some extent refugee flows.

The former were correlated: the 'globalized' western university system opened itself to international students and capital. Once a given international student graduated from a university, say an Australian one, the path to permanent residency, and citizenship opened. (This had labour market implications too.)

People, consequently, criss-crossed the world (western). Mobility and the 'skill premium' became the new mantras and buzzwords. People who 'settled' in the western world returned home only as visitors, to see family. Some waxed nostalgic about 'roots' only to return to their western habitats and so on.

This was a very liberal world which paid homage to philosophers like Immanuel Kant, and theoreticians of nationalism that asserted 'communities were mere imagined constructs'. The world as it was, and as it is, could be imagined as one 'giant imagined community'.

On the face of it, there was(is) nothing to quibble with this 'brave new world'. But scratch the surface, deep problems - structural, conceptual and even emotional - emerge. In the main, the major ones pertain(ed) to identity. What and who was the 'new' man(woman) in this 'new world'?

The Americans, typically, had an



ingeniously innovative 'solution' for this 'new' man(woman). They created hyphenated identities that created a mishmash potpourri synthesis.

The 'new' man(woman) in America would be called an 'African-American', an 'Indian -American', a 'Pakistani-American', an 'Armenian-American', and so on. (What this hyphenated construct meant in real and practical terms was and remains unclear.)

Contrarily, the Europeans, like other things, could not entirely handle this influx and the 'new' identity matrices. While America

was relatively successful in socializing the new immigrants (somewhat partly the first generation ones) and more vigorously the second generation immigrants into its ideational and cultural terrains, the Europeans were not.

But undercurrents of reaction to the hyphenated self were brewing in the United States too, finally climaxing in the phenomenon of Trumpism.

In the other part of the Anglo-Saxon sphere, Australia, a somewhat similar dynamic like America emerged. While there were no hy-

phenated identities, there was diversity of a loose kind. But a thin, rather subtle and invisible, line divides the white native and the brown outsider (naturally, and understandably so).

But is this quasi-hybridized-self an unalloyed good? Does it constitute the ideational sphere that nations across the world must adopt? What does it connote for the individual and the brown self?

I have a personal note, and experience to interject here.

My foray and journey into the West, Australia, the 'Fatal Shore' began serendipitously. Owing to conditions in Kashmir then, my family conspired to make my exit from the valley a 'fait accompli'. But at that time, my self and self-concept were both frazzled and conflicted.

My 'stay' and life in Australia for most of the time was extremely difficult. While I was enrolled in some business program, I hardly knew what I was doing. My body was in Australia but my soul and emotional universe lay in Kashmir. Pared to

essence, I was wandering in Australia-like an unhinged zombie.

The ugly finale to my Australian sojourn came after September 2001, when the female school manager of the uni I was enrolled in, took a vicious and dastardly stance against me. Both the uni and the overall administrative structure of the country took the side of the woman over me.

But overall my Australian experience is the one that has shaped me. Redemption took the form of my great Australian mentor and a bold and beautiful person who took me under her proverbial wing after the sordid saga with the Australian uni.

In a circumambulatory and convoluted way, I landed back in my homeland. But, a lot of water had already passed under the bridge.

I had become as strange to my beloved Kashmir as it became to me. I took recourse to writing, as both a cathartic and coping mechanism. (No matter how much writing is glorified as a cathartic exercise, by itself it is never enough.)

I would assume that over time, I had become a 'hybrid man'. But the 'natural' concomitant of hybridity is a seamless movement between the 'east and the 'west'.

Pursuant to this, I made multiple journeys to the west, but closure and plenitude eluded me. Perhaps from a psychological perspective, I was seeking what I had lost in Australia.

It is pertinent to mention that, while aspects of my 'inner life' oscillated between reason and a certain 'quasi-westerness,' most of it remained true to who I believe I essentially am: a romantic.

Owing to my skin tone, light eyes and height, my acceptance into the western cultural firmament was somewhat easy, but at the end of the day I was and am a brown man in the eyes of western compatriots. I have no issue with this (none at all). But the implications for the thesis adumbrated in this essay are stark. These pertain to openness, identity and identity formation in a still open world.

From a quasi-theoretical perspective, identity formation, the

self, and self-concept, all interrelated, constitute what Pierre Bourdieu called 'habitus': roughly, the structuring environment - social, cultural, familial, and emotional - of an individual.



I made multiple journeys to the west, but closure and plenitude eluded me. Perhaps from a psychological perspective, I was seeking what I had lost in Australia.

This was and has been thrown into a tizzy by the wave of globalization that began in the early 1990's. Identity and a stable self concept has been up for grabs. This has resonance for all peoples: white, brown, black.

But is this necessarily a sanguine development?

While the answer, at this stage of world-historical development, remains unclear, from the vantage point of my personal experience, and my self-concept, it may well be horrifying: I have become a perpetual outsider to, with, and among my own, as well as the world at large. Alas!

— Wajahat Qazi, with a Distinction in International Relations from the University of Aberdeen, Scotland, has engaged global affairs both in scholarship and practice, including his tenure as Associate Editor at Kashmir Observer.



Owing to my skin tone, light eyes and height, my acceptance into the western cultural firmament was somewhat easy, but at the end of the day I was and am a brown man in the eyes of western compatriots.

A Wedding Without Water

Four days without water in Srinagar turned my celebration into crisis. Officials promise teams and tankers, my home needs a running tap, and dignity restored.

Sheikh Arsh

I wake before dawn and listen for the first hiss from the kitchen tap. Nothing comes.

The house is full of relatives, yet all I hear is the drag of buckets against the floor.

Four days have passed since water left our lane in Chanpora area of Srinagar. My wedding is days away, yet every plan is reduced to a desperate search for drops.

A bride's home in Kashmir is meant to overflow with abundance. Trays of sweets, steaming samovars of kahwa, copper pots of rice washed till it glistens. Every ritual, from ablu-tion before prayer to the henna on my hands, needs water.

Now, our rituals stand still.

My mother rations each bucket as if it were treasure: One for the kitchen, one for the bathroom, and one hidden away for my grandmother, who cannot do without her evening wash.

Relatives arrive, but instead of warmth we offer apologies. Clothes meant for ceremonies lie unwashed. Dishes pile up. Guests whisper about the discomfort. Instead of joy, I feel humiliation.

We complained to officials, as every Kashmiri family knows to do in a crisis. My father queued at the office, only to return with the same words we have heard for years: "We are looking into the matter, teams have been constituted, and water tankers will be arranged."

That is the standard response for every failure: roads, electricity, water. Promises arrive, delivery does not.

Neighbours are exhausted. One family pooled money to buy bottled water, another hired a private tanker at a cost that stung their savings.

Those who cannot afford it wait at street corners, hoping a government tanker appears. A neighbour told me, "It is as if our entire locality has disappeared from their map." He is right.

This is summer capital, not a forgotten village. Reports say the city has the capacity to produce over 90 million gallons a day, yet supply falters.



I am a bride in Srinagar. I want to remember this week for songs, my grandmother's blessing, and the first meal I share in my new home.

In July, major repair work on the Sindh canal cut supply to wide areas. In August, many localities, including Chanpora, received untreated water for more than two weeks. Citizens boiled pots until they scaled white, or spent from their pockets to stay safe.

Now, another crisis is here, landing on my doorstep in the middle of my wedding.

Water is not just utility in Kashmir. It is culture. It washes the essentials for wazwan, glints in teapots, and steams in a kangri bath for a newborn. My grandmother says the first cup of water offered to a guest carries your honour in it. What honour do we carry when taps are dry?

My cousins fetched water at midnight from a friend's borewell across town. They returned wet and

exhausted, and I wept outside the kitchen door. This is not how I imagined my wedding week.

The songs will be sung, the henna will still colour my hands, but I will remember the clatter of buckets more than the sound of festive tunes.

Authorities appeal for "judicious use of water" each summer. We are judicious already. We count mugs for brushing, reuse pans without rinsing, and store pots behind locked doors.

What dignity is left in stretching scarcity thinner and thinner?

Kashmir's weather makes things harder. Springs are drying up, glaciers are melting, and some months bring floods while others bring drought. This is all the more reason for proper planning.

Fix things before they break, keep the water clean, send tankers where pipes fail, and most importantly, speak to people with clear answers, not empty promises.

I am a bride in Srinagar. I want to remember this week for songs, my grandmother's blessing, and the first meal I share in my new home.

I do not want to remember it for empty taps. Give me water, and I will take care of the rest.

— The author is a former Special Correspondent at Kashmir Observer, where she reported on issues shaping daily life in Kashmir.

The Cost of a Signature

Guarantors often sign out of trust or duty. The law treats them as debtors, with consequences that can devastate families.

Syed Arsalan Abid

We live in a society where trust often takes the shape of a signature. A brother seeks help for his business, a cousin pleads for support in securing a loan, and a friend insists it is "just paperwork."

Many sign as guarantors without hesitation, believing it to be a gesture of goodwill. Yet, in law, that one stroke of the pen is no token of friendship. It is a binding promise, as serious as borrowing the money yourself, and one that has ruined countless families across India, including here in Kashmir.

At its core, a personal guarantee is simple: it is a promise that if the borrower fails, the guarantor will pay.

The Indian Contract Act of 1872 makes this explicit. The liability is "co-extensive," which means the bank may directly pursue the guarantor for the entire debt. In practice, the law erases the line between borrower and guarantor, making both equally exposed.

The courts have reinforced this position time and again. In 2009, the Supreme Court in Industrial Investment Bank of India v. Biswanath Jhunjhunwala ruled that a guarantor's liability begins the moment the borrower defaults.

In 2021, the Court in Lalit Kumar Jain v. Union of India upheld the government's decision to bring personal guarantors of corporate debt under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code. Even powerful promoters, shielded by companies and boards, were told that their personal signatures would follow them to the end.

The message is blunt: a guarantee is enforceable in full.

This reality has played out in painful ways in Kashmir. Cases of families losing orchards in Pulwama or ancestral homes in Srinagar because a relative defaulted are no longer rare.

A 2023 report by J&K Bank noted a surge in recovery proceedings that involved guarantors, with many tied to small business loans. Once a borrower fails, banks rarely waste time chasing an empty account. They go straight to the guarantor.



The fallout is severe. Properties are seized and auctioned, sometimes the very homes where children are raised. Salaries are attached, bank accounts frozen. A default record follows the guarantor, shutting doors on future credit. Under the bankruptcy law, even personal insolvency proceedings may begin, dragging an entire estate into scrutiny.

The guarantor often sees no benefit from the loan, yet ends up carrying its full weight.

The chain does not end with death.



The next time a guarantee form is slid across the table, pause. Think less about the borrower, more about yourself. In the eyes of the law, your signature places you shoulder to shoulder with the debtor. The bank will not see two people. It will see one.

Though heirs are not personally liable beyond what they inherit, the estate of the deceased guarantor remains open to recovery.

This has meant children in Kashmir seeing orchards and family land, often their most valued possession, lost to auction notices.

A signature, once given, casts a shadow long after the hand that made it is gone.

Why, then, do so many agree so quickly? Part of the answer is cultural. In a closely knit society like ours, saying no to a relative's request feels like betrayal.

Many borrowers trivialise the risk, calling it a formality. Banks, for their part, know guarantees give them the strongest weapon of recovery.

The imbalance is clear: creditors are fully aware of the law, guarantors rarely are.

Law does not bend to sentiment. It recognises documents, signatures, and obligations. A guarantee converts personal trust into a legal liability of the highest order. It can consume your home, savings, and the inheritance you leave behind.

The next time a guarantee form is slid across the table, pause. Think less about the borrower, more about yourself.

In the eyes of the law, your signature places you shoulder to shoulder with the debtor. The bank will not see two people. It will see one.

— The author is a Commercial Advocate & Corporate Advisor.

Over 100 Killed

were recorded in the month of August, with at least 14 events leading to fatalities.

Among the deadliest events were Kishtwar cloudburst, claiming 65 lives and several others are still missing and Reasi landslide along the Vaishno Devi route, claiming 35 lives. Both incidents have claimed 100 lives.

Several other people lost their lives in different events, including in Katra, Ramban and other places, taking the toll up to over 100 in August.

The first major incident occurred on August 14, when a cloudburst struck Chesoti village in Kishtwar district. The bodies of 65 victims were recovered, while several others are still missing.

On August 17, a cloudburst hit Jodh Ghati and Janglote villages in Kathua district, killing seven people and injuring many.

On August 26, a massive landslide at Adhkwari cave temple, on the route to the Vaishno Devi shrine, claimed 35 lives and over 20 were injured.

Seven members of a family were among 12 people killed in Ramban and Reasi districts during the early hours of last Saturday due to a landslide and cloudburst on August 30.

The spate of extreme weather events has raised serious concerns over disaster preparedness and the impact of changing weather patterns in the region.

Experts attribute the surge in flash floods, cloudbursts, and landslides to increasingly erratic rainfall patterns linked to climate change.

Furthermore, J&K has experienced its sixth wettest August since 1901, with the region recording 319.3 mm of rainfall against the normal of 184.9 mm, marking an excess of 73% precipitation.

The highest-ever August rainfall was recorded in 1996 at 481.3 mm, followed by 345.8 mm in 1908, 343.0 mm in 2013, 336.5 mm in 1994, and 331.0 mm in 1955, an Independent Weather Forecaster, Faizan Arif Keng said.

This year, several districts in the Jammu region witnessed extreme rainfall departures. Doda topped the chart with 290% excess rainfall, receiving 488.2 mm against the normal 125.1 mm. It was followed by Udhampur (159% surplus, 897.9 mm), Ramban (133% surplus, 286.2 mm), and Samba (126% surplus, 720.5 mm).

Other major gains, according to him, were reported in Reasi (64%), Jammu (53%), Kathua (45%), Rajouri (42%), Kishtwar (21%), and Poonch (17%).

In Kashmir, rainfall patterns remained mixed. "Anantnag (35%), Pulwama (18%), Kulgam (13%), and Srinagar (15%) recorded above-normal rainfall, while other districts like Kupwara (-23%), Bandipora (-20%), Budgam (-1%), Baramulla (-2%), Ganderbal (-17%), and Shopian (-69% - data probably incorrect) experienced deficits," he said.

Meanwhile, Ladakh recorded exceptional departures from normal. Kargil received 32.6 mm of rainfall against the normal 2 mm, a 1530% surplus, while Leh registered 54.7 mm against the normal 5.6 mm, an 877% surplus. Overall, Ladakh UT recorded 49.5 mm of rainfall compared to the normal 4.8 mm, a massive 930% departure.

Pertinently, the Meteorological department (MeT) has issued a fresh weather advisory for Jammu and Kashmir, warning of heavy to very heavy rainfall in several districts till September 03, raising the risk of flash floods, cloudbursts and landslides in vulnerable areas. (KNO)

Fresh MeT Warning

isolated showers are expected in parts of the region on Monday afternoon, followed by a fresh spell of intense rainfall over sections of Jammu division towards late night and early Tuesday morning. Officials said that from September 2to 3, generally cloudy conditions are expected with one or two spells of light to moderate rain or thundershowers across many areas. However, heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely over Kathua, Jammu, Udhampur and Reasi districts, while Doda, Samba, Rajouri, Poonch, Ramban, Kishtwar, Anantnag and Kulgam could experience moderate to heavy downpours.

parts of Kashmir experienced heavy rainfall on Monday evening, while a minor boy was injured and several livestock perished in a cloudburst incident in north Kashmir's Kupwara district.

The districts falling in central and northern Kashmir witnessed heavy rainfall this evening, inundating lanes and bi-lanes.

While parts of Kashmir recorded rainfall, a cloudburst incident in Jugamund area of Kupwara district left a 15-year-old boy, identified as Shahid Ahmad Raina from Banwali Jugamund, injured.

The injured boy was stable and undergoing treatment in the hospital.

The incident also claimed the lives of several livestock, including a horse, exacerbating the suffering of the affected families.

The department cautioned that the spell may trigger cloudbursts, flashfloods, mudslides and shooting stones, particularly along highways and hilly terrains. "There is also a likelihood of a rise in water levels of rivers and streams," officials said, urging the public to remain alert and avoid venturing near water bodies, river embankments and unstable slopes.

For the period between September 4 and 7, the advisory forecasts occasional rain or thunder at scattered places across Jammu and Kashmir, though the intensity is expected to be lower compared to the earlier spell.

Authorities have advised residents to take necessary precautions, particularly in landslide-prone and flood-vulnerable areas, as preparations are being made to respond to any emergencies arising out of the forecast.

In a separate advisory, the MeT late evening said that a system is approaching Srinagar, with heavy or intense showers, accompanied by thunderstorms, lightning, and gusty winds expected over many parts of Srinagar, Ganderbal, and Budgam.

People were advised to stay away from electric poles, cables, old trees, and loose structures. The MeT recommended suspending shikara riding and boating in all water bodies, including Dal Lake.

Moreover, the district administration issued

an advisory in light of the forecast of inclement weather, advising people to refrain from venturing into slopes and water bodies.

The advisory states that, due to heavy/intense showers and gusty winds forecasted over parts of Kashmir from August 31 to September 1, according to the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) Srinagar Station, residents of the district, especially those in Fakir Gujri, adjacent areas, and Khonmouh, should avoid slopes and water bodies until the weather improves.

Tourists and local shikara operators are advised to suspend activities at Dal and Nigeen lakes. Sand miners at the River Jhelum and other water bodies should verify conditions before crossing.

The general public can contact the District Emergency Operation Centre Srinagar, Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) Srinagar, and Police Control Room Srinagar for any information.

AI, Data Analytics

supply has been restored, and people have also started receiving pure drinking water, the Union home minister said.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, and senior officers of the Central and Jammu and Kashmir governments attended the meeting.

Shah expressed grief over the loss of lives in the recent incidents and said, "In this hour of crisis, from the very first day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has spoken to the L-G and the chief minister. The Government of India has put in all its strength in the rescue efforts."

"The Union Territory and all agencies together have significantly reduced potential damage, and through coordinated efforts, we have successfully saved many lives," he said.

He highlighted the need for a critical analysis of all Early Warning Apps (EWAs), their accuracy, and their reach to the grassroots level. Shah emphasised that improving the systems through critical analysis is the only way to move towards achieving zero casualties.

The Union home minister also highlighted the need for a critical review of the Glacial Lake Outburst Flood (GLOF) early warning system, and said the meteorological department and the National Disaster Management Authority should jointly study the relationship between the tendencies leading to cloudbursts and moisture content in clouds, identify causes, and establish an early warning system.

He said the Ministry of Home Affairs must take steps in this direction by leveraging data analytics and artificial intelligence.

Shah also mentioned that the Food Corporation of India should arrange for additional rations, and a decision on offline ration delivery could be made after assessing connectivity in 10 days.

Advanced survey teams from the Ministry of Home Affairs would assess the damage, and further assistance would be provided, he said.

"A meeting of relevant departments from the Central government and the Union Territory administration, along with the Union home secretary, would be held in one or two days," he said.

He stressed that teams from the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Union Territory government should prioritise damage assessment.

The health and water departments must proactively focus on water supply and health services, while the medical units from the Army, Central Armed Police Forces, and Air Force should also provide support, Shah said.

Shah underlined that Rs 209 crores for the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) has been allocated for Jammu and Kashmir as the Centre's share since the Union territory is prone to natural calamities.

"Timely warnings by the Central government and Union Territory Disaster Management Authority (UTDMA) helped in minimising the loss of lives. National Disaster Response Force, Army, Union Territory Disaster Response Force (UTDRF), and other response teams were on alert, and helicopters were also on standby," he said.

Shah said assistance under SDRF for damaged private houses is being assessed and will be disbursed in the shortest possible time. Multiple roads have been damaged, and repair and restoration work has started, he said.

Traffic movement has started on most of the roads, and relief has also started arriving, wherever needed, the Union minister said.

He said more than 5,000 people have been evacuated to safety as a precautionary measure. Seventeen teams of the NDRF, 23 Army columns, helicopters of the IAF, UTDRF, J-K Police and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) personnel are engaged in the entire operation, he added.

The Union home minister reiterated that under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, the Union Government stands firmly with the people of Jammu and Kashmir, providing prompt relief, financial assistance, and technical support to facilitate recovery and reconstruction.

Reviews Security,

Kashmir, heads of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and other senior officers, an official spokesman said.

While taking stock of the security situation, Shah appreciated the efforts of the UT administration and security agencies for the smooth conduct of the annual Shri Amarnath Yatra. More than 4,00,000 pilgrims offered prayers at the shrine in the south Kashmir Himalayas this year.

Shah also appreciated the role played by the security forces in relief and rescue work following the recent flash floods in the UT and assured full support of the CAPFs in managing natural calamities, the spokesman said.

‘Committed Toward

Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Leader of Opposition in the J&K Assembly Sunil Sharma, and was briefed by divisional commissioner, Jammu Ramesh Kumar and other senior officers, officials said.

The home minister had reached Jammu on Sunday night to assess the flood situation and the relief efforts.

After meeting visitors at Raj Bhavan, he left for Mangu Chak, one of the worst-hit villages near Jammu Airport, for a first-hand account of

the situation.

He interacted with the villagers and assured them proper relief and rehabilitation, officials said.

Shah also stopped on the Tawi bridge near Bikram Chowk and inspected the damage along the riverbanks.

"The home minister visited my home and assured relief...there is nothing left in my house after last week's deluge," Bhan Singh, a resident of Mangu Chak, told PTI.

A middle-aged Singh said he had never witnessed such a flood in his life. "It damaged all household goods like fridges, air conditioners and even clothes."

Another resident, Chain Dass, said he was lucky to survive the deluge, which submerged the entire village.

"We are happy the home minister visited us and took stock of the situation," he said, hoping the authorities will drain the water, and take steps such a flood never recurs.

He alleged that their village got flooded due to the construction of a circular road.

After conducting the tour, Shah returned to Raj Bhawan to chair a meeting attended by Sinha, Abdullah, Sharma, the DGP of police, and several officials of the Centre and the Union Territory administration.

Shah will also review the damage caused to the border security grid by the flash floods, officials said.

More than 130 people have been killed and 33 have gone missing in cloudbursts, landslides and flash floods in Kishtwar, Kathua, Reasi, and Ramban districts since August 14.

The dead include 34 pilgrims who were hit by a landslide en route to Mata Vaishno Devi shrine on August 26.

Record rainfall during August 26-27 caused flash floods in low-lying areas in Jammu and other plains, causing heavy damage to infrastructure.

Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed an unprecedented monsoon onslaught, with Jammu logging 380 mm of rainfall in 24 hours ending 8.30 am on Wednesday, the highest ever recorded in the city since 1910 when the observatory was set up.

Udhampur received the highest recorded rainfall of 630 mm for the same 24-hour period, surpassing the earlier highest of 342 mm on July 31, 2019, a spokesperson of the Meteorological department said.

This is the home minister's second visit to Jammu in three months.

Before this, he had visited the district on May 29, nearly three weeks after the Indian armed forces carried out missile strikes on terror infrastructure across the border in reprisal to the April 22 Pahalgam attack in which terrorists killed 26 people, mostly tourists.

On August 24, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh visited Jammu to take stock of the situation following flash floods triggered by a cloudburst in Chisoti village in Kishtwar district.

Singh's plan to visit the devastated village, on the way to Machail Mata shrine, was scuppered by inclement weather and the blocking of a road by a fresh landslide in Paddar Sub-division.

Sixty-five people, mostly pilgrims, were killed, over 100 others injured, and 32 went missing after flash floods in Chisoti on August 14.

NH Closure Sparks

losses," he said, without providing exact figures.

While the government allowed six-tyre fruit trucks via the Mughal Road, growers said this is insufficient. "The scale of transport needed cannot be met with limited movement. Priority must be given to all fruit trucks to minimize losses," they demanded.

The Sopore Mandi president advised growers not to rush harvesting and to store produce in Controlled Atmosphere (CA) stores until the highway fully reopens. "We are in continuous touch with authorities. Once the route reopens, markets will stabilize gradually," the association said.

Growers have urged urgent government intervention to protect Kashmir's vital fruit economy, warning that continued inaction could devastate thousands of families dependent on the sector.

Traffic Partially

national highway was partially opened for vehicular movement and stranded vehicles around the damaged stretch (in Udhampur) are being cleared in a regulated manner," an official of the traffic department said.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Sunday inspected the restoration work along the strategic highway and said efforts are underway to ensure early restoration.

Afghan Earthquake

with their hands.

A Taliban government spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, said at a press conference Monday that the death toll had risen to 800 with 2,500 injured. He said that most of the casualties were in Kunar province.

Buildings in Afghanistan tend to be low-rise constructions, mostly of concrete and brick, with homes in rural and outlying areas made from mud bricks and wood. Many are of poor construction.

One resident in Nurgal district, one of the worst-affected areas in Kunar, said nearly the entire village was destroyed.

"Children are under the rubble. The elderly are under the rubble. Young people are under the rubble," said the villager, who did not give his name.

"We need help here," he pleaded. "We need people to come here and join us. Let us pull out the people who are buried. There is no one who can come and remove dead bodies from under the rubble."

Homes collapsed and people screamed for help

Eastern Afghanistan is mountainous, with remote areas. The quake has worsened communications.

One survivor described seeing homes collapse before his eyes and people screaming for help.

Sadiquallah, who lives in the Maza Dara area of Nurgal, said he was woken by a deep boom

that sounded like a big storm approaching. Like many Afghans, he uses only one name.

He ran to where his children were sleeping and rescued three of them. He was about to return to grab the rest of his family when the room fell on top of him.

"I was half-buried and unable to get out," he told The Associated Press by phone from Nangarhar Hospital. "My wife and two sons are dead and my father is injured and in hospital with me. We were trapped for three to four hours until people from other areas arrived and pulled me out."

It felt like the whole mountain was shaking, he said.

Rescue operations were underway and medical teams from Kunar, Nangarhar and the capital Kabul have arrived in the area, said Sharafat Zaman, a health ministry spokesman.

Zaman said many areas had not been able to report casualty figures and that "the numbers were expected to change" as deaths and injuries are reported. The Taliban government's chief spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, said "all available resources will be utilized to save lives."

Nearby Jalalabad is a bustling trade city due to its proximity with neighboring Pakistan and a key border crossing between the countries. Although it has a population of about 300,000 according to the municipality, it's metropolitan area is thought to be far larger.

Jalalabad also has considerable agriculture and farming, including citrus fruit and rice, with the Kabul River flowing through the city.

A magnitude 6.3 earthquake struck Afghanistan on October 7, 2023, followed by strong aftershocks. The Taliban government estimated at least 4,000 people perished in that quake.

The UN gave a far lower death toll of about 1,500. It was the deadliest natural disaster to strike Afghanistan in recent memory. (AP)

SCO Condemns

The SCO member states also condemned the terror attacks in Khuzdar and on Jaffer Express, both in Pakistan's Balochistan province.

"They (member states) expressed their deepest sympathy and condolences to the families of the dead and the wounded. They further stated that perpetrators, organisers and sponsors of such attacks must be brought to justice," according to the declaration.

It said the SCO, while reaffirming its firm commitment to the fight against terrorism, separatism and extremism, stresses the inadmissibility of attempts to use terrorist, separatist and extremist groups for "mercenary purposes".

The SCO said it recognised the leading role of sovereign states and their competent authorities in countering terrorist and extremist threats.

"The member states strongly condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, stress that double standards in the fight against terrorism are unacceptable, and call on the international community to combat terrorism, including cross-border movement of terrorists," it said.

The SCO said the UN has the central role to fully implement the relevant UN Security Council resolution and the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in accordance with the UN Charter and the principles of international law, in order to jointly combat all terrorist groups. PTI

PM: ‘Nations Must

the 25th Heads of State Council meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). Modi said terrorism was not just a challenge for India but for all countries that value human life.

He said India had faced decades of terror violence, leaving deep social and human costs. "This attack was an open challenge to every country and every person who believes in humanity," Modi said, adding that support for terrorism in any form must not be tolerated.

The joint declaration released after the meeting carried a condemnation of the Pahalgam attack, as well as two separate incidents in Pakistan. It reiterated the need to hold the perpetrators accountable and called for collective efforts to combat terrorism.

The PM said there should be no ambiguity in defining terrorism and no scope for double standards. "We must oppose terrorism in every form and manifestation. This is our responsibility towards humanity," he told world leaders.

He said India was grateful to friendly nations for their support, adding that the attack was not only directed at the country but also posed a challenge to shared human values.

Calling for a unified global stance, Modi questioned whether it was acceptable for some nations to openly back terrorism. He stressed that there should be no double standards and that the fight must be against terrorism in every form.

"Confronting terror was not only a matter of security but also a responsibility towards humanity," the Prime Minister said.

On regional priorities, PM Modi said India views connectivity as more than trade links, describing it as a means to build trust and foster development.

He said the country has faced the impact of terrorism for nearly forty years, with countless families losing loved ones and mothers bearing the pain of children lost to violence. (KNO)

HC Bars Fresh

shall also examine the desirability of creating additional posts of teaching faculty, Librarians, and PTIs in various degree colleges to meet the current and future demand of admissions and shall take requisite steps for creation of such additional posts, to be filled up only under the Jammu and Kashmir Education Gazetted Colleges Service Recruitment Rules 2008 Jammu and Kashmir Rules through a selection process conducted by the Public Service Commission."

The Court ordered that the High-Level Committee be headed by the Chief Secretary, with the Secretaries to Government, Department of Higher Education, General Administration Department, Finance Department and Law Department as its members.

"The Committee shall, within a period of two months, embark upon an exercise to identify those candidates who were appointed as

Assistant Professors/Librarians/PTIs prior to the commencement of (Jammu and Kashmir Civil Services (Special Provisions) Act, 2010), against clear vacant posts who were in position on the said date; and who have rendered continuous service for a period of seven years or more."

Such candidates who are found by the Committee to have been appointed against vacant posts prior to the commencement of the Act of 2010, and who satisfy the eligibility criteria, the court said, shall be considered for regularization under the Act of 2010 within one month thereafter.

The regularization of those found entitled under the Act shall be given retrospective effect from the date they are found eligible for such regularization i.e those who completed continuous service of seven years on or before the commencement of the Act of 2010 shall be regularized from the date of commencement of the Act, while those who completed seven years of service after the commencement of the Act shall be regularized from the date on which they actually completed seven years of continuous service, the court said.

"No fresh academic arrangements shall be made by the Government against clear vacancies of Assistant Professors, Librarians, and PTIs borne on the Jammu and Kashmir Education Gazetted Colleges Service Recruitment Rules 2008 and efforts shall be made to immediately refer all such vacant posts to the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission for selection," the court said, adding, "The Committee shall also examine the desirability of creating additional posts of teaching faculty, Librarians, and PTIs in various degree colleges to meet the current and future demand of admissions and shall take requisite steps for creation of such additional posts, to be filled up only under the Jammu and Kashmir Education Gazetted Colleges Service Recruitment Rules 2008 Jammu and Kashmir Rules through a selection process conducted by the Public Service Commission."

All academic arrangements made de hors the vacancies or outside the sanctioned strength of Assistant Professors, Librarians, and PTIs shall be dispensed with from the next academic session, unless such engagements are required to meet the exigency of the situation obtaining in the next academic year and thereafter, the court said.

"Any such engagements, if made, shall be treated as fresh engagements, purely contractual in nature, and shall not confer any right of regularization under any law in force or that may be framed by the Government in future," the court said, adding, "These directions shall not be applicable to Teaching Associates engaged on contractual basis and their engagements shall be governed by the terms and conditions of their appointments."

Earlier the court observed the authorities have "undoubtedly compromised both the quality of faculty and the standard of education imparted in the Government Degree Colleges of the State/UT of Jammu and Kashmir" by resorting to academic arrangements from time to time, and by picking up candidates solely on the basis of academic merit without subjecting them to the arduous selection process conducted by the J&K Public Service Commission.

The court was hearing appeal filed against judgment by Central Administrative Tribunal's verdict by petitioners, some of whom claimed that they were engaged on an academic arrangement basis and have been continuously working in the Higher Education Department as contractual lecturers in different disciplines since 2003 while others asserted to be working as such since 2006, against clear vacancies.

MHA Sets Up

An official release noted that the Centre has released Rs 10,498.80 crore under the State Disaster Response Fund to 24 states, Rs 1,988.91 crore from the National Disaster Response Fund for 12 states, Rs 3,274.90 crore under the State Disaster Mitigation Fund to 20 states, and Rs 372.09 crore from the National Disaster Mitigation Fund to nine states.

These allocations are aimed at strengthening state-level capacity for relief, rehabilitation, and mitigation during the monsoon season, when extreme weather often causes widespread damage.

In Jammu and Kashmir, over 150 people have died in rain-related incidents since early August, including a significant number of pilgrims. Search and rescue operations continue in several districts.

The IMCTs will visit Jammu and Kashmir and other affected states early next week to prepare detailed assessments, which will guide further central intervention and resource allocation for recovery efforts.

What Kashmir Can

and financial training to thousands of informal waste workers, while campaigns encourage households to pre-sort waste. "We've now redefined them with a new term: 'Green Warriors' – a title that reflects the essential work they do in waste collection across Viet Nam," says Hoang Duc Vuong, Chairman of VietCycle.

Kashmir could adopt a similar approach. Strict enforcement of bans on single-use plastics must be paired with public awareness drives.

As Vietnam's waste warriors show, the fight against plastic is not abstract.

"This is not just theory – it's practice. Behind every policy is a person," notes the World Economic Forum article. "Plastic pollution is a planetary crisis. But the solutions, as Vietnam's waste warriors show us, begin with human hands – sorting, lifting, and believing that change is possible."

Warwan Cloudburst

losses of crops and fruit trees so that compensation can be provided to farmers.

The deputy commissioner directed the public health engineering department to restore the damaged water pipelines on priority and ensure a safe drinking water supply to the affected families.

He assured people that a team will soon visit the area to plan long-term protective measures. The deputy commissioner and the SSP stayed in Warwan overnight and visited Nowapachi, where he held a public meeting.

Jhelum Flows Below Warning Point, Says I&FC

Agencies

SRINAGAR: While fresh rainfall was experienced in Kashmir parts, the Irrigation and Flood Control (I&FC) department on Monday said that the department has been put on high alert for the next 15 days.

At present the situation was under control as the water level in river Jhelum has remained low and 'fully normal'.

Chief Engineer, I&FC Kashmir, Er Showkat Hussain said that at Sangam, the water level is 5.29 ft and at Ram Munshi Bagh 8.84 ft, both far below warning and danger marks.

He said, "Our embankments are strong, and all 14 Flood Zonal Committees (FZCs) are closely monitoring the situation. The department will remain on alert for over fifteen days."

He added, "There is no need

for panic. Our teams are fully alert and ready to respond if required."

Meanwhile, Er Hussain shared that the department is maintaining strict vigilance to ensure public safety. The Meteorological Department has forecast spells of rain and thunder-showers across north, central, and south Kashmir, along with parts of Jammu, during the next few hours.

"People are advised to stay away from streams, nallas, and vulnerable spots prone to flash floods and landslides," officials said, adding that generally cloudy skies with intermittent rain and thundershowers are expected in several parts of J&K, with isolated moderate to heavy rain in Kupwara, Baramulla, Anantnag, Banihal-Ramban, Rajouri, Reasi, and Udhampur districts—(KNO)

Sakeena Reviews Functioning Of BGSBU



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Minister for Education, Sakeena Itoo on Monday conducted a comprehensive review of the academic and administrative functioning of Baba Gulam Shah Badshah University (BGSBU), Rajouri, in a high-level meeting held at Civil Secretariat here.

The meeting was attended by Vice Chancellor, BGSBU, Prof. Jawaid Iqbal; Additional Chief Secretary, Higher Education department (HED), Shantamanu; Deputy Commissioner Rajouri/Registrar BGSBU, Abhishek Sharma; Director RUSA, Special Secretaries of HED, Director Finance and Director Planning HED and other senior officers of University administration and HED, either in person or through video conferencing.

During the meeting, the Minister took detailed assessment of university's progress across multiple fronts, like teaching and research output, infrastructure development, student welfare measures, and other initiatives of the university.

During the meeting, Minister Sakeena underlined that BGSBU, being a key higher education hub in the Pir Panjal region, carries a special responsibility in shaping the future of youth through quality education, skill development, and character building. She called upon the university authorities to adopt student-centric initiatives, strengthen placement cells, and enhance digital learning infrastructure to keep pace with national and global standards.

While reviewing the progress of ongoing infrastructure projects in the University, the

Minister directed the administration to ensure timely completion of these projects. She further stressed on the officers to initiate only those new infrastructure projects in the University which deem necessary for its smooth functioning.

She also instructed the university administration to complete the renovation works on hostels in a time bound manner so that the students can stay there comfortably and with ease.

While reviewing the Human Resource position of the university, the Minister directed the officers to engage teaching staff on academic arrangement basis in courses having maximum roll of students till the vacant positions are filled on regular basis. She also called upon the University administration that students from remote and marginalized communities should be facilitated at the university and adequate support through scholarships, remedial coaching, and mentorship programs should be provided to them on regular basis.

The Minister also lauded the University administration for record number of admissions in the current session and assured them of government's full support in addressing its requirements. She reiterated the government's commitment to strengthening higher education in Jammu and Kashmir and lauded the efforts of BGSBU in fostering academic excellence across the region.

During the meeting, Deputy Commissioner Rajouri/Registrar BGSBU presented a detailed presentation on the functioning of the University.

Minister Sharma Visits Flood-Affected Areas Of Chowki Choura

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs and Transport, Satish Sharma on Monday visited the flood-affected areas of Block Chowki Choura, including Panchayat Rah (village Rah) and Hardu Mallara, to take stock of the situation caused by heavy rains and flash floods.

The Minister was accompanied by senior officers of district Administration, PHE, RDD, PWD, Irrigation and Flood control and other allied departments.

During his visit, the Minister interacted with the affected families and personally assessed the damages to prop-

erty, infrastructure, and agricultural fields. He was informed that several families have been shifted to safer places, including Government High School and Panchayat Ghar Rah Salyote, as a precautionary measure to ensure their safety.

Satish Sharma directed the district administration and concerned officials to provide immediate relief and rehabilitation support to all affected households. He stressed that essential supplies like ration, clean drinking water, LPG and medical aid must reach the displaced families without delay. The Minister also instructed officials to ensure the restoration of electricity, road connectivity, and water supply at the earliest.



HM Shah Praises Security Forces For Smooth Amarnath Yatra

Agencies

JAMMU: Praising security agencies for the smooth conduct of the annual Amarnath Yatra, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday called for eliminating terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir.

Chairing a high-level security review meeting at Raj Bhavan here, Shah appreciated the efforts of the UT administration and security agencies for the smooth conduct of the annual Amarnath Yatra. More than 4,00,000 pilgrims participated in the pilgrimage and paid obeisance at the holy cave shrine, nestled in Himalayas.

During the meeting the Home Minister reiterated Centre's zero-tolerance policy against terrorism.

"All security agencies should remain alert and operate in a coordinated manner to eliminate terrorism in the Union Territory," Shah said.

The meeting was attended by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Union Home Secretary, Director IB, Chief Secretary



FILEPIC

ALL SECURITY AGENCIES SHOULD REMAIN ALERT AND OPERATE in a coordinated manner to eliminate terrorism in the Union Territory,"

and DGP of Jammu and Kashmir, heads of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and other senior officers.

The Home Minister also appreciated the role played by the security forces in relief and rescue work following the recent flash floods in the UT and assured full support of the CAPFs in managing natural calamities.

Pertinently, Shah had reached Jammu on Sunday evening to assess the situation in the aftermath of the heavy rain and flash floods in Jammu and Kashmir.

Besides reviewing the damage caused by the floods in Jammu region, the Home Minister also chaired a security review meeting, an official said—(KNO)

J&K FLOODS 2025

LoP Sharma Meets HM, Seeks Rehab Package

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the J&K Legislative Assembly, Sunil Sharma, on Monday, briefed Union Home Minister Amit Shah at Raj Bhawan Jammu about the extensive damage and distress caused by recent cloudbursts, incessant rainfall and flash floods in various parts of the Jammu region.

On the second day of his visit to the Union Territory to personally assess the aftermath of the natural calamity, Home Minister Amit Shah was briefed in detail the loss of precious human lives, livestock, damage to movable and immovable properties, and the sufferings of the people.

As per a statement issued, Sharma strongly urged the Home Minister to constitute special central teams to assess the damage across the affected districts.

He emphasized the need for these teams to conduct a detailed and transparent survey so that required relief and rehabilitation measures can be planned.

He also demanded an im-



mediate relief package for the calamity-hit areas and affected population, highlighting the urgent need for financial support, temporary shelters, food supplies and restoration of basic services.

The scale of destruction is alarming. Roads have been washed away, power infrastructure is damaged, water supply systems are paralyzed, and several remote areas are cut off, he informed the HM.

Sharma further shared that the people of the affected areas are in distress and need the government's immediate intervention.

The LoP also called for a comprehensive relief and re-

habilitation package aimed at rebuilding damaged infrastructure and restoring normal activities. He particularly highlighted the sectors of roads, electricity, and water supply, which have suffered the most due to the floods.

Sharma reiterated the importance of long-term mitigation measures and better disaster preparedness mechanisms to safeguard lives and livelihoods in the future.

The Union Home Minister assured that the Centre stands with the people of Jammu and Kashmir in this hour of crisis and that all necessary steps will be taken for timely relief and restoration.

Few Hours Of Rain Choke Sgr Roads



Agencies

SRINAGAR: Heavy showers of rain on Monday evening, lasting only a few hours, left Srinagar's Residency Road, Dal Gate and other important stretches waterlogged, exposing poor drainage in the City's commercial hub despite ongoing Smart City projects.

The sudden downpour submerged large portions of the road, causing severe inconvenience to commuters and shopkeepers.

As per details available, videos and pictures from Dal Gate and other areas showed vehicles wading through knee-deep water with pedestrians forced to walk along inundated pavements.

The chaos sparked strong criticism from locals, who questioned the effectiveness of the Smart City drainage system.

"This is supposed to be the showcase of Srinagar Smart

City, yet every spell of rain turns it into a water city," said Imtiyaz Ahmad, a shopkeeper near Dal Gate, while pointing to the water outside his shop. "If this is a Smart City, where is the smart drainage?"

Another commuter expressed frustration while pushing his scooter through the flooded stretch. "We hear crores are being spent in the name of Smart City, but even a small shower exposes the reality. Instead of ease, it only creates trouble for us."

The waterlogging also triggered traffic jams, with many vehicles breaking down midway. Auto drivers and cab operators said they were the worst hit.

"It is not safe to drive in such water. Engines stop working and passengers refuse to board," said Mohammad Yaseen, an auto-rickshaw driver at Dal Gate.

Meanwhile, the Meteorological

(MeT) Centre Srinagar issued a fresh advisory, warning of more intense showers in the region. "A system is approaching Srinagar. Heavy and intense showers accompanied with thunderstorms, lightning and gusty winds are expected over many parts of Srinagar, Ganderbal and Budgam," the advisory read.

It also urged people to stay away from electric poles, old trees and loose structures, and advised suspension of shikara riding and boating activities in all water bodies, including Dal Lake.

Moreover, residents urged authorities to take immediate measures to clear the choked drains and prevent further waterlogging. "The rains are not in our control, but drainage surely is. If this is the condition after one evening's rain, what will happen if it rains for days?" asked another resident—(KNO)

Mutton Supply Hit As NH Closure Triggers 'Shortage Fears'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Kashmir Mutton Dealers Association on Monday expressed concern over the disrupted supply of mutton in the Valley following frequent closures of the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway, warning of a severe shortage in the coming days.

Mehraj-ud-din Ganaie, General Secretary of the Association, told KNO that the highway had remained shut for nearly a week and was only partially restored for traffic, badly affecting livestock movement.

"These months, late August, September and October, are the peak marriage season in Kashmir. Many vehicles failed to reach on time and the Valley may face an acute shortage of mutton if the situation continues," Mehraj said.

He said dealers have been managing supplies "partially" but the disruption means people could face sudden problems

at any time. "Authorities allow livestock vehicles for one hour, and then change it to two hours. There is total mismanagement and sometimes trucks are stopped at Poonch, Nowshera and other places," he alleged.

Mehraj also urged the government to allow unhindered passage of fruit-laden and livestock trucks, terming them essential supplies. "On normal days in September, nearly 50-70 livestock vehicles enter the Valley daily. With Eid-e-Milad (Mehraj-un-Nabi SAW) also approaching, authorities must consider using the Mughal Road as an alternative route," he added.

Meanwhile, the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway, the Valley's only road link, was partially reopened yesterday evening after remaining closed for six consecutive days. Authorities said stranded vehicles were being cleared in a phased manner—(KNO)



Indian Railways & State Bank Of India Sign MoU

Press Information Bureau

NEW DELHI: A landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on Monday between two of India's leading institutions – Indian Railways (IR), one the largest rail networks in the world, and the State Bank of India (SBI), the country's largest public sector bank. The ceremony was honoured by the August presence of the Hon'ble Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting, Electronics & Information Technology, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw; the Chairman, Railway Board, Shri Satish Kumar; and the Chairman, SBI, Shri C.S. Setty.

Under this MoU, insurance coverage for Railway employees maintaining salary accounts with SBI has been significantly enhanced. In case of accidental death, the insurance benefit has been increased to ₹1 crore, compared to the current coverage of ₹1.20 lakh, ₹60,000 and ₹30,000 for Group A, B, and C employees respectively covered under CGEGIS.

Additionally, all Railway em-

ployees holding only a salary account with SBI will now be eligible for natural death insurance coverage of ₹10 lakh—without the need for paying any premium or undergoing any medical examination.

With nearly 7 lakh Railway employees maintaining salary accounts with SBI, this agreement marks a major step towards employee welfare, reflecting a caring and constructive partnership between Indian Railways and SBI.

Some of the key complimentary insurance covers under this MoU include: Air Accident Insurance (Death) Cover of ₹1.60 crore plus an additional up to ₹1.00 crore on RuPay Debit Card; Personal Accident (Permanent Total Disablement) Cover of ₹1.00 crore; and Personal Accident (Permanent Partial Disability) Cover of up to ₹80 lakh.

This MoU between two leading entities is employee-centric, compassionate, and designed to bring exclusive benefits to the workforce—especially frontline railway personnel in Group C and others.

DC Bandipora Reviews Traffic Management

Observer News Service

BANDIPORA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib on Monday chaired a meeting of officers to review traffic management in Bandipora town.

On the occasion, DC directed strict enforcement of traffic rules, regulation of peak-hour movement, and coordinated efforts of police, transport, and municipal authorities to ease congestion.

She instructed that route permits be checked, vehicles

proper time and space to take effect. She emphasized that such a phased manner will suit long-term goals and help in removing public inconvenience.

In the first phase, the Nowpora-Gulshan Chowk road will be bifurcated, street vendors choking turning points will be relocated to alternative areas, and no hawkers will be allowed at Gulshan Chowk. DC added that once Phase 1 is implemented successfully, Phase 2 will be rolled out shortly with further interventions.

Among others, the meeting



must ply only on designated routes, and stock vehicles be allowed during early morning or late evening hours.

DC reiterated that due to innate challenges, traffic management in Bandipora town requires a phased approach, ensuring every initiative gets

was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Zaffar Husson Shawl; Assistant Regional Transport Officer Bandipora; District Information Officer; Chief Executive Officer Municipal Council Bandipora; SHO Bandipora; and representatives from Traffic Police Bandipora.



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