

## !! Continuations from Page 1 !! Cloudburst hits Kishtwar's...

A 'langar' (community kitchen) set up for the devotees here bore the brunt of the cloud-



(L to R) Shah Nawaz, a SDRF jawan holding a child whose parents gone missing in cloudburst in Paddar area of Kishtwar District while rescue operation is on.

burst, which led to flash floods and washed away several structures including shops and a security outpost.

President Droupadi Murmu said the loss of lives due to a cloudburst is extremely tragic and prayed for the success of relief and rescue operations.

"The news of several deaths due to a cloudburst in Kishtwar, Jammu-Kashmir, is extremely tragic. I express my heartfelt condolences to the grieving families and pray for the success of relief and rescue operations," Murmu said in a post on X in Hindi.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said his thoughts and prayers are with all those affected by the cloudburst in Kishtwar district and asserted that every possible assistance will be provided to those in need.

In a post on X, Modi said, "My thoughts and prayers are with all those affected by the cloudburst and flooding in Kishtwar, Jammu and Kashmir. The situation is being monitored closely. Rescue and relief operations are underway."

"Every possible assistance will be provided to those in need," the prime minister said.

Lt Gov Manoj Sinha condoled the loss of lives in the incident.

"Anguished by cloudburst in Chositi Kishtwar. Condolences to bereaved families and prayers for quick recovery of the injured. Directed Civil, Police, Army, NDRF and SDRF officials to strengthen the rescue and relief operations and ensure all possible assistance is provided to the affected," he said on X.

The Lieutenant Governor said that rescue and relief operation is in full swing at the cloudburst-hit Chositi village and asserted that Home Minister Amit Shah has assured all possible assistance.

"Rescue & Relief Operations at Chashoti (Chositi) are in full swing. Men and machinery have been put at the site. Other teams have also been rushed," the L-G said in an X post.

The L-G said he briefed the home minister on rescue and relief operations by various agencies.

"He (home minister) has assured all possible assistance," Sinha said.

Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, has also expressed deep sorrow over the tragic loss of lives and conveyed heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and prayed for the speedy recovery of those injured. He also prayed to the Almighty for the safety and well-being of all residents in the affected areas.

"Words cannot lessen the grief of the families who have lost their loved ones in this calamity. My prayers and thoughts are with them in this hour of profound sorrow. I also commend the tireless efforts of the rescue and relief teams working in difficult conditions to save lives," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Immediately after the calamity struck Chositi on Thursday, Kishtwar Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma, along with the senior superintendent of police, mobilised rescue teams and headed towards the spot to personally supervise the operations.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration has set up a control room-cum-help desk to assist people and pilgrims following flash floods triggered by a cloudburst in a village in Kishtwar. Five officials have been put on duty for the control room. The numbers provided are: 9858223125, 6006701934, 9797504078, 8492886895, 8493801381, and 7006463710.

Besides these, the district control room numbers are 01995-259555 and 9484217492, and the police control room number of Kishtwar is 9906154100.

While a large-scale rescue operation was already launched by NDRF, SDRF, police, Army and local volunteers, the authorities have mobilised more rescuers, including two fresh teams of NDRF from Jammu to speed up the rescue efforts, officials said.

Army's White Knight Corps said efforts are on to safeguard lives and aid the survivors.

"In the aftermath of a cloudburst at Chisoti (Chositi) village, Kishtwar, troops of White Knight Corps swiftly mobilised for rescue and relief ops (operations). Efforts are centred on safeguarding lives and aiding survivors. Search for missing continues. Relief stores, medical teams and rescue gear rushed to site. We Serve, We Protect," the corps said in an X post.

Officials said the langar was packed with devotees when the calamity struck.

"A massive cloudburst in Chositi area, which could result in substantial casualty. Administration has immediately swung into action, rescue team has left for the site," Union Minister Jitendra Singh said in an X post. The minister said he also spoke to Kishtwar Deputy Commissioner on the matter.

The Army has joined the relief and rescue operation at the cloudburst-hit Chisoti village.

"In the aftermath of a cloudburst at the Chisoti village in Kishtwar, troops of the White Knight swiftly mobilised for relief and rescue operations," a Jammu-based PRO said.

The efforts are centred on safeguarding lives and aiding survivors, he said, adding that the search for the missing continues.

The Army said that relief stores, medical teams and rescue gear have been rushed to the site.

The annual yatra to the Machail Mata shrine was suspended following the tragedy as the authorities mobilised all resources for rescue operations at Chositi, officials said.

Two teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) have been rushed from Udhampur to Kishtwar.

"Massive rescue operations have been started in the area," said the deputy commissioner, who was on way to the spot.

Officials added that the flash floods hit several houses clustered together in the foothills.

Leader of Opposition Sunil Kumar Sharma said he had received information from his workers that a massive cloudburst has occurred. "At the moment, I don't think anyone has exact figures but I believe there could be significant damage in the area," he said, adding that there were a lot of people gathered for the yatra.

Former chief minister Ghulam Nabi Azad also expressed grief over the incident.

"Deeply saddened by the cloudburst in Chositi, Kishtwar. Heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and prayers for the speedy recovery of the injured. Urge the govt to immediately carry out rescue & relief operations and ensure all possible assistance and treatment for those affected," he said in a post on X.

BJP leader Jehanzaib Sirwal, while extending his deepest condolences to the affected people, said the heart-breaking incident underscores a broader concern that cannot be ignored - the unchecked proliferation of power projects in Kishtwar.

Former Minister and Senior Vice President Pradesh Congress Committee Jammu and Kashmir, Mula Ram has expressed deep sorrow and grief over the tragic cloudburst.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with the deceased, their families, and we pray for the speedy recovery of all those injured," said Mula Ram.

## Amit Shah speaks...

verified information from the area hit by the cloud burst is slow in arriving. All possible resources are being mobilised from within and beyond J&K to manage the rescue operations," the chief minister said in a post on X.

The chief minister also said he wouldn't be speaking to channels or news agencies. "The government will share information as & when possible," Abdullah said.

The Chief Minister has cancelled 'At Home' tea party and cultural events during Independence Day celebrations on Friday following the loss of lives in a cloudburst in Kishtwar district.

"In light of the tragedy caused by the cloudburst in Kishtwar, I have taken the decision to cancel the 'At Home' tea party tomorrow (Friday) evening.

"We have also decided not to go ahead with the cultural events during the morning Independence Day celebrations. The formal events - speech, march past etc will go ahead as planned," the chief minister said in a post on X.

Abdullah is scheduled to take salute at the march past at Bakshi Stadium in Srinagar, the venue of the main Independence Day function in Jammu and Kashmir.

## Op Sindoor example...

by destroying terrorist infrastructure across the border.

She described Operation Sindoor as a landmark event in the global fight against terrorism, noting that India's armed forces "destroyed terrorist hubs across the border" with "steely resolve".

"I believe Operation Sindoor will go down in history as an example in humanity's fight against terrorism," she said.

The President stressed that the nation's unity was the most "befitting response" to those who sought to divide it.

She pointed to the multi-party delegations of MPs that reached out to various nations to explain India's position on cross-border terrorism, a move that showcased the country's collective resolve.

"...the world has taken note of India's stance, that we will not be the aggressor, but we will

not hesitate to retaliate in defence of our citizens," she said.

The President also held up Operation Sindoor as a testament to the success of the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (self-reliant India) mission in the defence sector.

"The outcome has proved that we are on the right path. Our indigenous manufacturing has achieved the critical level that makes us self-sufficient in meeting many of our security requirements. These are landmark achievements in India's defence history since Independence," she said.

The President also spoke about the importance of sustained good governance and a "zero tolerance for corruption".

She invoked Mahatma Gandhi, quoting his statement "corruption and hypocrisy ought not to be inevitable products of democracy" and urged all citizens to "pledge to realise Gandhiji's ideal and weed out corruption" from the nation.

## 21st century is...

India. On this momentous occasion, let us solemnly remember all the martyrs. The remembrance of their martyrdom will forever live on in our hearts. Their sacrifices have left a lasting impression that transcends time and will always inspire us. I pay tribute to civilian martyrs, who were brutally killed by Pakistan-backed terrorists in Pahalgam on April 22."

"While the country is celebrating the festival of Independence, my heart also goes out to the families affected by cloudburst in Chashoti, Kishtwar. I am devastated by this natural calamity and express my condolences to the bereaved families. We are working with the Whole of Government Approach to bring the situation under control and provide all the necessary assistance to the affected families."

The Lieutenant Governor said, "Today, on this auspicious day of Independence, I offer my heartfelt gratitude to our armed forces, the CAPFs and Jammu Kashmir Police whose eternal vigil and protection of every citizen under challenging circumstances have ushered in peace enabling all of us to work towards future progress, prosperity and inclusive development of this beautiful Union Territory. I also thank our armed forces, our brave soldiers, security, intelligence agencies and every personnel involved in 'Operation Sindoor' for their bravery and commitment to avenge the Pahalgam terror attack. It is also a day to salute our valiant soldiers of Army, CRPF and Jammu Kashmir Police for successful 'Operation Mahadev' and send them good wishes for their dedication in the service of the nation. India has drawn a new red line. Any act of terror will be considered as an act of war and we will give the enemy a fitting response. On this day, let us also take a pledge to foil the efforts of terrorists, dismantle the entire ecosystem of terrorism to make Jammu Kashmir terror-free.

"Today, I also extend my felicitations to farmers, workers, teachers, professionals, scientists, business communities, youth and Nari Shakti for their tremendous contributions towards socio-economic growth of Jammu Kashmir. I have full faith in their abilities in building Viksit Bharat. The 21st Century is a century of India and Jammu Kashmir is deeply connected to the aspirations of our great nation. Tiranga Yatra is now one of our biggest festivals and entire Jammu Kashmir participates in Har Ghar Tiranga Abhiyan. The patriotic fervor and involvement of men, women, youths and senior citizens holding the glorious Tricolour across the UT is an inspiration for the country.

## SC seeks Centre's response on plea for restoring J&K statehood

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Thursday sought a response from the Centre on a plea seeking the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, saying ground realities, including the recent Pahalgam incident cannot be ignored.

"You also have to take into consideration the ground realities... you cannot ignore what has happened in Pahalgam," CJI B R Gavai said when counsel including senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan sought an early hearing.

The bench also comprised Justice K Vinod Chandran.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, sought dismissal of the plea and said in the past too, the court had imposed costs on such pleas.

"Elections are held, my lords are aware of the peculiar position emerging from this part of the country and there are several considerations which go into decision-making," Mehta said.

The bench posted the plea, filed by academician Zahoor Ahmad Bhat and socio-political activist Ahmad Malik, for hearing after eight weeks.

Sankaranarayanan, appearing for Bhat, said it had been 21 months since that judgment was passed by the Constitution bench on issues including the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution.

"There has been no movement partly because, my lords fairly trusted the Union when they made this statement before the court that they will implement the statehood," Sankaranarayanan said.

Referring to the judgment, he said the bench did not address the issue in view of the assurance given by the solicitor general that the statehood to Jammu and Kashmir will be restored.

Sankaranarayanan said the bench had merely directed that restoration of statehood at the earliest and did not set any timeline.

## DB grants final 4 weeks in PIL on LG's MLA nomination powers, Centre slams 'political stunt'

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh has granted the petitioner in a high-profile Public Interest Litigation (PIL) four weeks' time to file a rejoinder in a case challenging the Lieutenant Governor's powers to nominate members to the Union Territory's Legislative Assembly.

A Division Bench comprising Justice Sanjeev Kumar and Justice Rajesh Sekhri noted that the reply on behalf of the Union of India has been filed. On the request of the petitioner's counsel, the court allowed four weeks to file a rejoinder affidavit, if any, and listed the case for September 26, 2025, cautioning that no further adjournments will be granted for pleadings.

The PIL, moved by Ravinder Kumar Sharma, Senior Vice President and Chief Spokesperson of the J&K Pradesh Congress Committee, challenges Sections 15, 15A, and 15B of the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019. These provisions empower the LG to nominate two women, two representatives from the Kashmiri Migrant community (including one woman), and one member from the displaced persons of Pakistan-occupied Jammu & Kashmir (PoJK). Sharma contends that the LG must seek the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers before making such nominations, terming the current process "ultra vires" to the Constitution's basic structure.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), in its affidavit, seeking dismissal of the petition as "politically motivated" and "devoid of any actual cause of action," arguing that the LG's nomination powers are a statutory function exercised independently, quoting Supreme Court rulings in K. Lakshminarayanan vs Union of India (2020) and NCT of Delhi vs LG (2024).

Rejecting the petitioner's fears, the Centre stressed that no manipulation occurred during the 2024 Assembly polls and that the 2023 amendments introducing these provisions aimed to give long-denied representation to displaced and underrepresented communities. The government also termed as "misconceived" the claim that such nominations breach the sanctioned strength of the Assembly, fixed at 119 members (114 elected, 5 nominated).

The case came before the High Court after the Supreme Court, on October 14, 2024, declined to entertain the petition and directed the petitioner to approach the High Court. The matter will now proceed after the rejoinder is filed, with the court making it clear that there will be no further extensions.

## Problem of stray dogs due to inaction of local authorities, says SC, reserves order

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Thursday said the "whole problem" of stray dogs in Delhi-NCR was a result of the "inaction" of local authorities which did "nothing" in implementing the Animal Birth Control Rules on sterilisation and immunisation of canines.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta and N V Anjaria, which was constituted to hear a suo motu case and some other pleas concerning stray dogs, reserved its verdict on the interim prayer for a stay on the directions issued by the apex court on August 11.

A two-judge bench on August 11, among other directions, ordered the Delhi-NCR authorities to permanently relocate strays from streets to dog shelters.

The bench had acted in the suo motu case initiated on July 28 over a media report on stray dog bites leading to rabies, particularly among children, in the national capital.

"The whole problem is because of inaction of the local authorities. You frame rules in Parliament. The government acts, rules are framed but no implementation is carried out creating problem which is standing today," the bench said on Thursday.

The top court added, "On the one hand, humans are suffering and on the other hand, the animal lovers want the animals also to be treated with dignity."

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Delhi government, referred to data and said in 2024, India reported around 37.15 lakh dog bites cases -- nearly 10,000 per day.

Mehta also referred to a media report and said the World Health Organisation, using government and other authentic sources, reported 305 dog-bite related deaths last year.

The bench observed the Animal Welfare Board of India, local authorities and the government had done nothing.

"NGOs make a lot of noise but they don't know what they should actually be doing. They should have been here earlier for implementation of those rules (Animal Birth Control Rules). Nothing is happening," it added.

Everyone, the court said, who came before the court and filed intervention would have to own responsibility. On August 11, a bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan asked authorities in Delhi-NCR to start relocating all stray dogs from streets to shelters and asked the authorities to initially start by creating a shelter to house 5,000 dogs.

It warned of strictest action against those who obstructed the exercise and directed immediate creation of dog shelters or pounds and report about it within eight weeks.

## LG's decision to ban certain books will shield youth from extremist propaganda: Dr. Parneesh

### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Senior BJP leader Dr. Parneesh Mahajan welcomed the Lieutenant Governor's administration's decision to ban certain books in UT, terming it a vital step to safeguard communal harmony, national security, and the mental well-being of youth. He said, "This literature would deeply impact the psyche of youth by promoting culture of grievance, victimhood and terrorist heroism," adding that these books have "contributed to the radicalisation of youth in J&K" through "distortion of historical facts, glorification of terrorists, vilification of security forces, religious radicalisation, promotion of alienation, pathway to violence and terrorism etc."

Jammu to Srinagar	
IndiGo	10:05 AM - 10:45 AM
SpiceJet	11:10 AM - 12:00 PM
Air India Express	12:50 PM - 1:40 PM
Air India Express	1:35 PM - 2:45 PM
IndiGo	1:55 PM - 2:35 PM
IndiGo	6:40 PM - 7:20 PM
Srinagar to Jammu	
IndiGo	11:45 AM - 12:35 PM
Air India Express	12:10 PM - 1:05 PM
SpiceJet	12:35 PM - 1:30 PM
Air India Express	2:20 PM - 3:35 PM
IndiGo	3:15 PM - 4:05 PM
IndiGo	5:20 PM - 6:10 PM

FIND TRAIN SCHEDULE	
<b>11078 Jhelum Express</b>	
Departure	: 23:35 from Jammu Tawi
Arrival	: 11:15 at New Delhi
<b>12426 Jammu Tawi - New Delhi Rajdhani Express</b>	
Departure	: 21:25 from Jammu Tawi
Arrival	: 05:55 at New Delhi
<b>12446 Uttar Sampark Kranti Express</b>	
Departure	: 21:50 from Jammu Tawi
Arrival	: 06:55 at New Delhi
<b>Train 26401 - Katra to Srinagar (Morning Service)</b>	
Departure	: 8:10 AM from Katra
Arrival	: 11:10 AM at Srinagar
Intermediate Stop	: Banihal at 9:58 AM
Fare:	
Chair Car (CC): 715	
Executive Chair Car (EC): 1,320	
Booking: Available on IRCTC	
<b>Train 26403 - Katra to Srinagar (Afternoon Service)</b>	
Departure	: 2:00 PM from Katra
Arrival	: 05:00 PM at Srinagar
Fare:	
Chair Car (CC): 660	
Executive Chair Car (EC): 1,270	
Booking: Available on IRCTC	

HELPLINE	
<b>TELEPHONES</b>	
Directory Enquiry	197
Fault Repair	198
Local Assistance	199
Trunk Booking	180
Trunk Assistance	181
International Trunk Booking	2447952, 2577951, 2573638
Billing Complaints	2543896, 2548415
Billing Complaints Computerize	1955
Change No. Announcement	1951
Gandhi Nagar Exchange	2451953, 2430953
<b>HOSPITALS</b>	
Government Medical College	2584290, 2484291
Psychiatry and Disease Hospital	2577444
Ambulance Rajouri	257147, 257084, 257357
Blood Bank/Eye Bank - SMGS Hospital	2547639, 2547637
Emergency	2549669
Blood Bank	2547637, 2547638
Chest Disease Hospital	2577064, 2548012
Dental Hospital	2544670
Govt Hospital Gandhi Nagar	2430041
Emergency	2431740
Child Hospital	2577023
Acharya Shri Chander College of Medical Sciences and Hospital	262270
<b>AMBULANCES</b>	
Indian Red Cross Society	2549413
Jammu University	2453165, 2543525, 2435248
<b>FIRE STATIONS</b>	
Gandhi Nagar	101, 2435283, 2457705
City	2544263
Canal	2554064
Roop Nagar	2597522
Gangyal	2480026
Bar Brahmana	220020
Akhnoor	252481
Kathua	234313
Samba	243280
Katra	232451
Udhampur	270897
Police Control Room	100, 2542001, 2545481-82
Police Exchange	2547621-22, 2547624
Civil Defence Control Room	2549100, 2548645, 2544920
Civil Defence	2548645, 2549100, 2544920
Hot Line	383
<b>TOURISM</b>	
Tourist Officer, Airport	2431917
Tourist Officer, Railway Station	2430078
Tourist Reception Centre	2579554
<b>BUS SERVICES</b>	
JKSRTC General Manager	2435262
JKSRTC Bus Stand	2577475
JKSRTC Jammu Srinagar, Service	2576562
Punjab Roadways	2542782
<b>WATER SUPPLY</b>	
Company Bagh	2542582
Parade	2544979
Bakshi Nagar	2543557
Panjthirthi	2547501
Narwal	2430031
<b>ELECTRIC SUPPLY COMPLAINTS</b>	
Canal	2554147, 2554199
Parade	2542289, 2543398
Nanakh Nagar	2430776
Gandhi Nagar	2430180
Shastri Nagar	2430781
Janipur	2543828, 2579258
Satwari	2452816
<b>FIRE SERVICE : (Control Room)</b>	
101	
<b>CIVIC SERVICES</b>	
Municipality	2547846, 2542192
Health Officer	2547440
Garbage / Carcass Removal	2547440

FIND CINEMA	
<b>WAR 2 HINDI</b>	
<b>WAVE ONE MOVIE JAMMU</b>	10:00 AM / 12:20 PM / 1:20 PM / 3:45 PM / 4:00 PM / 7:10 PM / 08:00 PM / 09:50 PM / 10:40 PM / 11:20 PM
<b>PVR KC JAMMU</b>	9:00 AM / 12:40 PM / 3:35 PM / 4:20 PM / 8:00 PM / 10:05 PM / 11:40 PM
<b>COOLIE THE POWERHOUSE HINDI</b>	
<b>WAVE ONE MOVIE JAMMU</b>	10:05 PM / 4:00 PM
<b>PVR KC JAMMU</b>	12:00 PM
<b>MAHAVATAR NARSIMHA HINDI</b>	
<b>PVR KC JAMMU</b>	7:15 PM