

Sham Sharma conducts extensive tour of flood-hit wards of Jammu North, directs swift relief & rehabilitation

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In the aftermath of the unprecedented rainfall and devastating floods that struck Jammu North, MLA Sham Lal Sharma today carried out an extensive tour of the flood-hit areas of his constituency. The heavy downpour caused severe damage to public infrastructure, homes, and essential services, leaving residents in deep distress. The calamity resulted in waterlogging, road collapses, and damage to household property, with electricity and water supply disrupted in many localities.

The areas most affected included Kalika Nagar (Ward 61), Laxmi Vihar Tomal (Ward 61), Kullian Mohalla Nai Basti Lower Muthi (Ward 67), Sharika Vihar Lower Roop Nagar (Ward 66), Lower Shivalikapuram Janipur Colony (Ward 37), Daily Excelsior Lane Old Janipur (Ward 36), Upper Roop Nagar - Chandi Basti near JDA Club (Ward 62), and Dream City (Ward 65).

During his visit, Sham Lal



MLA Jammu North, Sham Lal Sharma visiting rain-hit area on Sunday.

Sharma personally inspected each ward, interacted with local residents, and listened to their concerns regarding the devastation caused by the floods. He expressed relief that no loss of human life was reported, but acknowledged the grave hardship faced by people due to the collapse of basic amenities and infrastructure.

Issuing firm directions on the spot, Sharma instructed the administration and concerned officers to immediately restore water and electricity

supply, clear blocked drains and debris, and begin repair of damaged roads and houses without delay. He further called for a realistic and transparent assessment of damages so that relief and compensation could reach the affected families at the earliest. He stressed that the response of the administration must be swift, efficient, and people-centric, with a focus on providing urgent relief and restoring normalcy.

Looking beyond immediate relief, the MLA underscored

the importance of long-term preparedness to prevent such disasters in the future. He urged the authorities to implement regular desilting of drains, strict removal of encroachments, strengthening of flood channels, and improved drainage systems to protect the people of Jammu North from recurring floods during monsoon seasons. He emphasized that proactive planning, combined with community cooperation, is the only way to safeguard lives and property from future calamities.

ties. Reassuring the public of his unwavering support, Sham Lal Sharma pledged to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with every affected family in this difficult time. He assured that the rehabilitation and rescue process would be launched on a priority basis, and personally committed himself to monitoring the pace of relief operations to ensure accountability. He called upon both the government machinery and the local population to work in close coordination so that the constituency can recover quickly and emerge stronger from this challenge.

Gulam Ali expresses concern over J&K rains, seeks swift relief and restoration

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Rajya Sabha MP and senior BJP leader Gulam Ali Khatana on Sunday expressed deep concern over the havoc caused by incessant rains in Jammu and Kashmir, which have damaged vital infrastructure, flooded residential areas, and disrupted daily life across several districts.

Referring to the collapse of a key bridge on the Jammu-Pathankot national highway in Kathua, Khatana said the incident highlights the scale of the crisis. "The destruction of bridges, flooding of homes, and landslides cutting off key roads are extremely worrying developments. Urgent measures are needed to restore connectivity and protect vulnerable families," he said.

The downpour has been historic - Jammu recorded 190.4 mm of rainfall in 24 hours, the second-highest August rainfall in nearly a century. Low-lying areas in Janipur, Roop Nagar, Talab Tilloo, Jewel Chowk and Sanjay Nagar were inundated, with boundary walls collapsing and vehicles swept away. Udhampur (144.2 mm), Katra (115 mm), Samba (109 mm) and Kathua (90.2 mm) also reported heavy rainfall.

Khatana urged the administration to intensify relief operations and ensure that people living near the Ujh, Ravi, Chenab and Tawi rivers are given timely assistance. "Authorities must stay on high-alert, and citizens must strictly follow safety advisories. This is not the time for risk-taking; lives must be prioritised," he stressed. With the weather office warning of more rain until August 27, the MP also called for long-term resilience planning, including stronger flood-control systems and durable infrastructure in the Himalayan region.



LoP Sunil Sharma briefs Rajnath on ground realities in Chashoti cloudburst damages

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: As due to bad weather the Defence Minister Rajnath Singh could not reach Paddar to visit cloudburst hit Chashoti, he was given a detailed briefing on the situation in Chashoti, loss of precious human lives, and extent of damage to property by LoP Sunil Sharma through video conferencing.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh got connected from Raj Bhawan, Jammu, along with MoS PMO Dr. Jitendra Singh and LG Manoj Sinha to Paddar through video link, where Sunil Sharma, along with the senior functionaries of the administration, gave ground report.

Sunil Sharma, through this video conferencing, also apprised the Defence Minister of the role of voluntary organizations like RSS, Sewa Bharti, and local NGOs who have been working tirelessly alongside the administration.

Sunil Sharma, who has been continuously present at the site for over a week and directly supervising the relief efforts, gave a detailed briefing to the Defence Minister regarding the ground realities. He highlighted the scale of damage to life, property, agriculture, horticulture, and livestock, and apprised him of the role of voluntary organizations like RSS, Sewa Bharti, and local NGOs who have been working tirelessly alongside the administration.

He underlined the religious and cultural significance of the holy Machail Yatra, pointing out that the current PMGSY road is not sufficient to bear the expected five lakh pilgrims this year. He demanded widening of the road, installation



LoP Sunil Sharma briefing Defence Minister Rajnath Singh through video conferencing.

lation of crash barriers, and its takeover by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) in view of its strategic and cultural importance.

He also stressed upon: Immediate construction of a motorable Bailey Bridge at Chashoti to restore vital connectivity, establishment of an Army Goodwill School at Padder to provide quality education to children in this remote and underserved region, sanctioning of a petrol pump at Padder, as the absence of refueling facilities created major hurdles during rescue operations where heavy machinery had to be kept running continuously, installation of mobile towers in no-network zones to ensure communication during emergencies, to expedite release of financial support from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF) and sanctioning of a comprehensive rehabilitation package to cover the heavy losses suffered by agriculture, horticulture, livestock, and local businesses.

After listening patiently to all the concerns and demands, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh approved on the spot the construction of

the motorable Bailey Bridge at Chashoti, directed immediate steps for improving mobile connectivity, sanctioned the establishment of an Army Goodwill School, and gave directions for a petrol pump at Padder to meet the long-standing demand of the local people.

The Defence Minister issued clear and firm directions that there should be no compromise in relief measures and that every affected family must feel the support of the Government in this difficult time. He also assured that the Government of India will stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the people of Padder not only in providing immediate relief but also in ensuring long-term infrastructural development and disaster preparedness.

The Leader of Opposition expressed deep gratitude to the Defence Minister for his intervention, immediate approvals, and compassionate approach. He stated that strengthening the Machail Yatra infrastructure and overall development of Padder will provide security, livelihood, and dignity to the people of this region.

Walking and Heart Health-Small Steps, Big Benefits: Dr Sushil



HoD Cardiology GMCH Jammu, Dr Sushil Sharma with his team examining patients at a camp.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In his endeavor of spreading cardiac health awareness to each nook and corner Head Department of cardiology GMCH Jammu Dr Sushil Sharma held a day long Cardiac awareness cum health Check up at Hari Mandir, Rehari Colony Jammu so as to make people aware about cardiac friendly practices for healthy heart.

While interacting with the people Dr Sushil stated that in today's fast-paced world, where stress, sedentary lifestyles, and unhealthy dietary patterns dominate, cardiovascular diseases remain one of the leading causes of illness and death. Heart attacks, strokes, and heart failure are increasingly affecting younger populations, often linked with uncontrolled high blood pressure. Amidst advanced medicines and procedures, a simple yet powerful preventive strategy stands out-walking. Walking further and faster has now been scientifically proven to reduce the risk of heart attacks, heart failure, and stroke, especially in individuals with high blood pressure.

He elaborated that Walking is one of the most natural, accessible, and cost-free forms of physical activity. Unlike strenuous workouts, it requires no equipment, training, or financial burden. Recent research highlights that walking even fewer than the commonly recommended 10,000 steps a day can substantially reduce cardiovascular risk. For people with high blood pressure,

every additional step counts. Regular walking improves blood circulation, enhances oxygen supply to vital organs, and lowers strain on the heart. Importantly, walking faster is associated with even greater benefits, as it increases cardiovascular efficiency and metabolic activity.

He maintained that the study summarized in the European Society of Cardiology report reveals striking data that every 1,000 extra steps a day, up to 10,000, reduces overall cardiovascular risk by 17%. These additional steps correlate with a 22% reduction in heart failure, 9% reduction in heart attack risk, and a 24% reduction in stroke risk. Walking faster amplifies these benefits, showing that not just quantity but also pace matters. This evidence breaks the myth that only achieving the 10,000-step target matters. Even small increases in daily walking, below this number, can significantly improve cardiovascular health.

He added that Physical inactivity has been labeled the "new smoking" due to its severe health consequences. Sedentary lifestyles contribute to obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and early onset of cardiovascular diseases. Walking provides a simple yet effective way to counteract these risks. Importantly, it is sustainable and can be easily integrated into daily routines walking to work, taking stairs, or short evening walks.. Walking not only strengthens the

heart but also benefits the body and mind as a whole, Enhances insulin sensitivity and reduces risk of type 2 diabetes, Helps burn calories and prevents obesity, Reduces stress, anxiety, and symptoms of depression through the release of endorphins, People who walk regularly tend to live longer and healthier lives. In an era where heart disease is a leading global killer, walking represents a low-cost, universally accessible, and highly effective preventive tool. The message is clear: Move more, walk faster, and protect your heart one step at a time, He Said

Management Committee of the Mandir Ashwani Suri (President), Anu Bali (Former Corporator) , Kishore Sharma , Chandan Datta Rajinder Vaid , Vansh Bali , Sanjay Bali, Sandaghar Gupta , Anil Gupta, Anil Chadda, Vijay Suri and Hans Raj Gupta , appreciated the efforts of Dr Sushil and his team for Conducting cardiac awareness cum health Checkup in their area and shows their heartfelt gratitude .

Others who were part of this camp Include Dr Nipun Kalsotra , Dr Venkatesh Yellupuri , Dr Neeraj Mishra and Dr Bhola Kumar. Paramedics and Volunteers include Rajkumar, Ranjeet Singh , Rahul Vaid , Shubham Sharma , Rajat Verma , Sunny Singh , Maninder Singh , Amish Jamwal , Mukesh Kumar , Rohit Nayyar , Sandeep Kohli , Gourav Sharma , Rajinder Singh and Nirvair Singh Bali.

With elections in view or during campaigns offering (directly or indirectly) ‘cash’ benefits to voters from ‘state’ exchequer is an act of buying a ‘Vote’

■ DAYA SAGAR

India is a democratic republic where the parliamentary system of governance has been adopted. Normally elections to the legislature / parliament are held every 5 years and India is the first democratic republic in the world where a very detailed written constitution has been drafted and adopted which provided from the day one equal right to every adult citizen irrespective of the sex/ religion/faith/region/educational level/ economic or /and taxpaying capacity / language spoken/ and like. How hard & selflessly the Constituent Assembly had worked could be well sensed by going through Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's last speech in the constituent assembly (25 November,1949) where among other minors he had said<it will now be two years, eleven months and seventeen days since it first met on the 9th of December 1946. During this period the Constituent Assembly has altogether held eleven sessions and 65 days out of which the Assembly spent 114 days for the consideration of the Draft Constitution. The Draft Constitution as prepared by the Constitutional Adviser as a text for the Draft Committee to work upon consisted of 243 articles and 13 Schedules. The first Draft Constitution as presented by the Drafting Committee to the Constituent Assembly contained 315 articles and 8 Schedules. At the end of the consideration stage, the number of articles in the Draft Constitution increased to 386. In its final form, the Draft Constitution contains 395 articles and 8 Schedules. The total number of

amendments to the Draft Constitution tabled was approximately 7,635. Of them, the total number of amendments actually moved in the House was 2,473.>

Under the system adopted those who intended to enter the legislature through general elections for the 'service of those who would elect them) had to look for the highest vote share to qualify it was what natural that the vote seekers would try all possible means/ methods/ approach to woo the voters in one's favour; it could also be feared even unfair means could be used by some .

In the earlier years, after a decade or so start of general elections , for the reasons of vast Geo-socio diversities and vast economic inequalities among the Indian masses some candidates have been also unfairly using the east/ religion to win electoral votes as also using the muscle power during campaigns and at occasions there were accusations for some candidates using cash for buying votes through agents exploiting the low economic level of individuals as also distribution of liquor/ offering small material gifts. There used to be booth looting/ capturing also.

No doubt the political parties also with elections approaching / during campaigns used to make some promises for employments / development if voted to power.

With the times the type & style of "offerings" extended by individual candidates / political parties have been changing and over a last few decades a new style of voter wooing has over taken the reach of direct cash distribution

during election days to some voters by the politicians (particularly political parties) . Some political parties who may be in power or out of power, keeping eye on large mass of economically weaker segments, start making promises for regularisation of all



A Look through the Mist

It is time to carry the words of Ambedkar (25 November 1947) to coming generations where he said "By independence, we have lost the excuse of blaming the British for anything going wrong. If hereafter' things go wrong, we will have nobody to blame. Except ourselves. There is great danger of things going wrong. They are prepared to have Governments for the people and are indifferent whether it is Government of the people and by the people. If we wish to preserve the Constitution in which we have sought to enshrine the principle of Government of the people, for the people and by the people, let us resolve not to be tardy in the recognition of the evils that lie across our path and which induce people to prefer Government for the people to Government by the people, nor to be weak in our initiative to remove them. That is the only way to serve the country. I know of no better.

casual government employees/ making new appoints at lower level/increasing subsidies on daily use items of individuals/ providing some free or at concessional rates consumer items to some segments / providing monthly or quarterly financial support to economically poor families / and like (without any financial scrutiny) if voted to power and those in power start announcing development projects when election

benefits to the people during their 'present' regime and it appears that such questions have also now started catching the wits of the politicians for which Mr. Nitish Kumar Bihar Chief Minister taking the lead has announced some direct benefits even before the elections to increase the pension amount for elderly people, widows, and disabled persons from Rs 400 to Rs 1100 per month wef July 2025 and observers in

'announcements' are approaching. In recent times some analysts had started questioning those political parties ,that may be in power and offer some cash incentives to some sections if again voted to power, asking why do not they offer such economic

media have reported that even this small amount of pension even after increase, appears bringing joy on the faces of elderly, widows as well as those with disabilities even and decision will 'benefit' nearly 110 lakh people. Imagine how poor is the economic level of a large voter population. Not only that it was around 17 July that Natish Kumar tweeted <" We have decided that from 1 August 2025, that is, from the July bill onwards, all domestic consumers in the state will not have to pay any charges for up to 125 units of electricity, "This will benefit a total of 1 crore 67 lakh families in the state,">. It has also been on 30 July (PIB) Chief Minister Nitish Kumar announced that Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has announced an increase of 200% to 100% in the honorarium and incentives for ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activist) and Mamta workers (who work to raise awareness about safe childbirth and maternal and child health).ASHA workers in the state will now get Rs 3,000 per month as an incentive instead of Rs.1000 only & Mamta workers will receive an incentive of 600 rupees per delivery instead of 300 rupees, a substantial increase from the existing amount .

Question here is Political leadership of the day makes announcements for 'hefty' cumulative expenditures from state exchequers without any study of financial implications by the concerned administrative departments 'keeping' in view any there in view by promising to distribute cash directly to

prospective voter community where as in case post of a peon is required by a field department that remains hanging in the process of financial implications.

Should not the civil society take growth of such political culture amongst the political parties seriously and go far exerting positive pressures on the political leadership so as to put a ban on 'such' announcements by law like unless the proposals are examined by the bureaucracy for genuineness of the need , the cost benefits and the resource position & the implementation of that should also be made only when there is no any election due within next 9 months.

Not only that even no large value and long duration infrastructure project should be allowed for announcement in a state where normal elections are expected within next 9 months.

Ofcourse the political parties should also be restrained from including in their election manifesto any scheme or programme that would give cash / material benefit to individuals in case the party is voted to power. Such activities lure voters for voting for the party promising direct material benefit to Individuals ; and in case after coming to power the government does not fulfil the promise there is no provision to penalise the promising party (the manifestos of political parties during Delhi, J&K elections are the examples).

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