

## !! Continuations from Page 1 !! 11 dead in...

Bhaderwah town in Doda district recorded the highest 51.6 mm of rainfall till 8.30 am, followed by Katra 42 mm, Kathua 32 mm and Batote-Ramban 16.8 mm.

It has forecast moderate to heavy rain with brief intense showers at many places over Jammu, Kathua, Rajouri, Reasi, Doda, Samba and Udhampur till 9 pm on Saturday and warned of likely flash floods or landslides at a few vulnerable places.

### LG takes stock...

timely evacuation of residents from risk-prone zones, and provide immediate relief and all possible assistance to the affected families," the chief minister's office said in a post on X.

Abdullah has further instructed the concerned departments to remain vigilant, coordinate closely, and take every precautionary measure to safeguard lives in the inclement weather.

On the Ramban incident, the chief minister has directed the administration to carry out immediate rescue and relief operations. He appealed to people to remain alert, avoid vulnerable areas, and strictly adhere to safety advisories.

Abdullah has instructed the departments concerned to remain vigilant, coordinate closely with each other, and take every precautionary measure to safeguard lives during the ongoing inclement weather.

Meanwhile, Union minister Jitendra Singh, former Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad, ministers of the Union Territory and others have expressed grief over the incidents and assured all possible assistance to the affected families.

Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the tragic loss of lives, saying that it is heart wrenching that several precious lives have been lost in cloudburst and landslide incidents. She added that these tragedies have caused unbearable sufferings to the affected families and my heartfelt condolences go out to the bereaved families and their relatives.

Minister Sakeena further appealed the general public that in view of inclement weather advisories people should remain cautious and alert, avoid landslide prone areas and strictly adhere to safety advisories for their well being.

Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology, Transport, Youth Services and Sports, Satish Sharma, has expressed deep grief and anguish over the tragic loss of lives, saying these incidents have caused irreparable loss and immense suffering to the affected families. "It is deeply painful that many precious lives have been lost in these unfortunate incidents. I extend my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and pray for strength and courage to bear this irreparable loss," he said.

Sharma further said that the district administrations along with disaster management and health authorities have been directed to ensure all possible assistance, relief and rehabilitation measures for the affected families on priority.

Minister for Rural Development Department, Javid Ahmad Dar has expressed deep grief over the loss of lives and extended heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved families

The Minister assured that the Omar Abdullah government stands firmly with the residents of Jammu and Kashmir, providing every possible assistance to those affected.

Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana has expressed profound grief and sorrow over the tragic loss of lives. He said natural calamities have claimed many lives, leaving families devastated and communities reeling under shock.

In his heartfelt message, the Minister said, "Deeply saddened by the tragic loss of lives in Reasi and Ramban following the devastating cloudbursts and landslides. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families in this hour of profound grief."

### Azad expresses grief...

He further said that as rainfall has been predicted in the coming days, people living in vulnerable areas should remain alert and cautious. Azad urged the government to make adequate arrangements for the victims and provide immediate relief and assistance to the flood-affected families of Jammu and Chenab Valley.

Azad also appreciated the timely efforts of the Indian Army, Jammu and Kashmir Police, and SDRF, who played a crucial role in rescuing people and even constructed a bridge to restore connectivity in Jammu during the crisis. He said that the service and sacrifices of these institutions in such testing times are commendable.

### Omar reviews restoration...

situation in areas such as Kishtwar and Udhampur, which are facing outages of power, drinking water, road connectivity and mobile networks.

He further underlined the need for temporary restoration of highways such as Dhar-Mahanpur, Ramban-Gool, and Reasi-Mahore to reconnect affected districts.

The Chief Minister enquired about the stock position of ration, fuel and medicines in cut-off places like Bani, Kishtwar, Reasi and Udhampur. He directed officers to replenish supplies through alternate routes - including via Anantnag for Kishtwar and through Bhaderwah for Bani - until full restoration of roads is achieved.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu informed the meeting about the ongoing restoration works on NH-44, resumption of supplies into the Valley, and special trains being run to facilitate passengers and tourists. He assured that there is no shortage of ration, fuel or other essentials in Jammu and efforts are being made to keep cut-off areas adequately stocked.

Similarly, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir informed that the Valley has sufficient supplies of fuel and ration.

The Chief Minister also directed that all roads under BRO, NHAI, NHIDCL and other agencies that remain disconnected be monitored closely, with status reports shared with his office twice daily - morning and evening.

### Army's swift action...

and its unmatched ability to rise to every challenge.

"The manner in which the Tiger Division of the Indian Army rushed to action and reopened the bridge within hours shows why every Indian has unshakable faith in our soldiers," Chugh said, adding that at a time when natural calamities have caused so much suffering, the Army has once again emerged as the strongest pillar of support for the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Chugh stressed that the Army's feat must be seen as part of a larger commitment of Prime Minister Modi's government to strengthen infrastructure, disaster preparedness, and the resilience of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"This government has ensured that the spirit of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' reaches even the remotest village. The Army's swift restoration of the Tawi Bridge is a symbol of that spirit—timely, effective, and people-centric", he said.

### Modi lands in...

severe strain following the eastern Ladakh border row.

The prime minister arrived in this Chinese city from Japan in the second and final leg of his two-nation trip.

Modi is also expected to hold bilateral talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin and a number of other leaders on the margins of the summit.

Ahead of his trip to Tianjin, Modi said it is important for India and China to work together to bring stability to the world economic order.

In an interview with Japan's The Yomiuri Shimbun, Modi said stable, predictable, and amicable bilateral relations between India and China can have a positive impact on regional and global peace and prosperity.

"Given the current volatility in the world economy, it is also important for India and China, as two major economies, to work together to bring stability to the world economic order," Modi said in the interview published on Friday.

Modi's trip to China comes less than a fortnight after Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi visited India.

Following Wang's wide-ranging talks with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, the two sides unveiled a series of measures for a "stable, cooperative and forward-looking" relationship between the two sides.

The measures included joint maintenance of peace along the contested frontier, reopening border trade and resuming direct flight services at the earliest.

In the last few months, both sides have initiated a series of measures to reset their ties that came under severe strain following the deadly clashes between Indian and Chinese troops in Galwan Valley in June 2020.

The prime minister last visited China in June, 2018, to attend the SCO summit. Chinese President Xi visited India in October 2019 for the second "informal summit".

The eastern Ladakh face-off effectively ended following completion of the disengagement process from the last two friction points of Demchok and Depsang under an agreement finalised on October 21 last year.

### MBBS Admission Scam...

allegations of fraud, the spokesperson said, adding that accordingly, a case pertaining to cheating and criminal conspiracy, punishable under Sections 420 and 120-B of the Indian Penal Code, was registered.

The accused have been identified as Peerzada Aabid from Bijbehara and Syed Wasim from Pulwama's Kareemabad, both currently living at Azad Basti in Natipora; Syed Suhail Ajiaz, a resident of Takiya Magam in Kokernag, currently living in Muslimabad opposite NR Colony in Bemina, and Zaigam Khan, a resident of Bemina.

Aabid was the proprietor of an educational consultancy named Europe Consultancy Centre, while the others were owners of Overseas Consultancy, the spokesperson added.

# J&K will get back its statehood soon: Athawale

#### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Union Minister of State (MoS) Ramdas Athawale on Saturday said Jammu and Kashmir will get back its statehood soon.

Although the Union minister did not give a time-frame, he said, "I believe it will happen soon."

Talking to reporters, Athawale said, "I think J-K should get back its statehood as soon as possible, and there is a demand for that also."

He said that when the Assembly elections took place in J-K last year, more than 60 per cent voting was recorded - which was more than many other states in the country.

"I thank the people of J-K for that, for not succumbing to fear. When (Union Home Minister) Amit Shah abrogated Article 370, he stated that J-K will soon get its statehood back and I think the Government of India can take that decision soon in the future," he said.

When asked how much more time it can take for that, the Union minister said, "I cannot tell you when, but I believe it will happen



soon."

Responding to a question about the recent floods in the Jammu region, Athawale said the Centre would do everything possible to help and support J-K.

"There have been huge losses in Jammu due to heavy rains and flood. The state government will do an assessment first and the central government will do everything possible to help and support J-K," Athawale said.

On a question regarding Shah's visit to Jammu in the wake of the floods, Athawale said that whenever there has been a need, Shah has reached J-K as he is focussed

on its overall development.

"Shah has come here many times and whenever there is a need, he visits. He always focuses on J-K so that there is overall development. When the Pahalgam attack took place, he reached here within hours. There was an attempt to derail the economy here, but now tourists are coming," he said, referring to the April 22 terror attack that left 26 people, mostly tourists, dead.

The Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment said India taught Pakistan a lesson through Operation Sindoor after it tried its best to derail the economy in Jammu and

Kashmir by Pahalgam attack. "The way tourism was booming here after the abrogation of Article 370, Pakistan tried its best to derail the economy here by attacking our people and 26 persons were killed. But we have taught Pakistan a lesson through Operation Sindoor and all the terrorists were neutralised.

"Our government gave them a befitting reply. Now, we want peace, we do not want violence. Pakistan should not send terrorists here and Kashmir as well as Jammu should remain peaceful," he said.

He said India halted Operation Sindoor as it achieved its objective of neutralising terrorists in Pakistan, and it was not stopped because of US President Donald Trump.

He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's mission was the destruction of terrorists and their infrastructure, which was achieved through Operation Sindoor.

"Our aim was not to target Pakistan, but we wanted to destroy terrorists and

we achieved our aim. It is not that the war was stopped because of Trump. We achieved our objective of destroying the terror network and it was not called off because Trump said so. PM Modi's mission was to destroy the terrorists," Athawale said.

After the abrogation of Article 370, development is taking place at a rapid pace, and Prime Minister Modi has promised to support J-K with more so that there is immense development, employment opportunities are created and industries are established here, he said.

The minister said the government has urged industrialists to set up industries in J-K, which will provide employment opportunities to the youth.

"This is our dream as J-K is our own. The Government of India is duty bound to provide justice to J-K. Modi is a very active PM and will surely provide social, and economic justice to J-K. I believe all the people of J-K will get justice," he added.

## India can't afford to rely on foreign supplies in defence sector: Rajnath

#### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: India's defence architecture should not be dependent on any uncertain "foreign interference", and it should be based on its own capabilities, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Saturday.

He said the government plans to provide complete aerial security to all important installations across the country under the proposed Sudarshan Chakra air defence system within the next 10 years.

In an address at the NDTV Defence Summit, Singh said the air defence shield will comprise both defensive and offensive elements to deal with any enemy threats.

"As we saw during Operation Sindoor, the importance of air defence capability in today's wars has increased to a great extent. In such a scenario, the Sudarshan Chakra mission will certainly prove to be a game changer," he said.

In his Independence Day speech, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced

the ambitious air defence project. The announcement came days after Pakistan Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir reportedly hinted at targeting Indian assets along the border in case of any future military confrontation between the two countries.

Singh said the shifting geopolitics has also made it clear that external dependency in the field of defence is no longer an option. "In the current situation, self-reliance is essential for both our economy and our security," he said.

"Today, the defence sector is not only the foundation of national security but has also become a pillar in strengthening our economy and securing its future," the defence minister said.

"It is not just about the safety of people, the protection of land, or the defence of borders, but it is also becoming a responsible sector for the protection and security of our entire economy," he said.

The defence minister, at the same time, said self-reliance and indigenisation should not be seen as "protectionism".

### Suspicious movement: Search operation launched in Poonch

#### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

MENDHAR/JAMMU: Security forces on Saturday launched a cordon and search operation (CASO) along the border belt across 11 localities in Poonch district following reports of suspicious movement, officials said.

The operations were carried out in the Behra Kund, Potha Jungle, Surankote, Peer Tanora, Sangla, Mohalla Lohar Chandimarh, Kandi, Kangra, Keri Galhuta, Mughal Marah Mohalla Muri and Poli Wala Dhok areas of Mendhar, Mankote and Surankote.

According to officials, the search operation was initiated after residents alerted security agencies about the suspected activity. Security measures have been heightened, and additional reinforcements have been deployed to the area.

### Heavy rains expected in Jammu region today; flash floods, landslides warned

#### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A fresh spell of moderate to heavy rain is expected on Sunday morning, which could trigger landslides and flash floods in the Jammu region, the Srinagar meteorology centre said. "A spell of moderate to heavy rain with brief intense showers is most likely at many places over Jammu, Kathua, Rajouri, Reasi, Doda, Ramban, Kishtwar, Samba and Udhampur towards early morning between 4 am and 11 am of August 31," the Met centre said on X.

It has warned of the possibility of cloudbursts, flash floods and landslides at a few vulnerable places.

The weather office asked people to stay away from rivers, nallas and loose structures while remaining updated and alert.

The Union territory has been reeling under a series of heavy rains, cloudbursts and landslides since August 14. So far, at least 130 people have lost their lives and 140 were injured in Jammu, while 32 pilgrims are still missing.

The pilgrimage to the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine atop Trikuta hills in Reasi district remained suspended for the fifth day on Saturday. As many as 34 pilgrims died when a landslide struck about halfway along the winding 12-km trek route from Katra to the shrine on Tuesday.

## SCW presents Challan in fake certificate fraudulent appointment case

#### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Special Crime Wing (SCW), Jammu of Crime Branch J&K, has produced a charge sheet before the Court against two accused persons in a high-profile case of fraudulent appointment in the School Education Department.

"The case FIR No. 06/2022 was registered following an anonymous complaint alleging that the accused Vijay Kumari Thapa, wife of Late Ashok Kumar Thapa, Resident of H. No. 143/A, Bhagwati Nagar, Jammu had managed her appointment as a Lab Bearer in 2002 on the strength of a fake Matriculation diploma purportedly issued by Punjab School Education Board. The verification with the concerned Board later confirmed that no such record existed, establishing that the certificate was forged," an official said.

Investigations revealed that the actual date of birth of the accused, as per her

8th class records, is August 19, 1959. At the time of her appointment in December 2002, she was around 43 years old, thereby ineligible for a Class-IV Government post.

By using the forged diploma showing a younger age, she fraudulently secured employment, later regularisation, and subsequent promotion. Records from various schools and the Chief Education Officer confirmed that the accused drew a total salary of more than Rs 29 lakh from 2002 to 2019, thereby causing wrongful loss to the State exchequer.

Despite being repeatedly summoned, the accused concealed facts regarding the preparation of the forged diploma. During a court-sanctioned house search, the original fake matric certificate could not be traced, leading to the invocation of Section 201 RPC (destruction of evidence).

The investigation also established dereliction of duty on the part of Sakeena Bano, the then Principal of Govt. Girls Hr. Sec. School Canal Road Jammu, who failed to verify the authenticity of documents at the time of the accused's joining, despite explicit directions from the senior formations. This deliberate omission attracted Section 166 RPC (disobedience of lawful directions by a public servant).

On the basis of evidence, the offences under Sections 420, 465, 467, 468, 471, 201 RPC were fully proved against accused Vijay Kumari Thapa, and Section 166 RPC was established against accused Sakeena Bano.

Accordingly, a final report (Challan) has been filed before the Court for judicial determination.

The case has been very professionally investigated, initially by Dy SP Anita Katil and upon her transfer, by Dy SP Javid Iqbal Tabassum under the close supervision of SSP Special Crime Wing, Jammu Sanjay Parihar.

## DGP, BSF ADG review security along Indo-Pak border post-Jammu floods

#### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir DGP Nalin Prabhat and BSF ADG, Western Command, S S Khandare separately reviewed the security along the India-Pakistan border post-flash floods in the Jammu region, officials said.

The visit of the two officers to the International Border (IB) in Kathua and Jammu districts comes a day before the likely visit of Union Home Minister Amit Shah to the region to take stock of the situation in the aftermath of record rainfall earlier this week, which triggered floods in low-lying areas and left behind a trail of death and destruction.

Official sources said the flooding has caused exten-



sive damage to the border grid, including fencing and the border outposts along the IB and the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu, Samba and Kathua districts.

The security forces are maintaining the highest vigil to foil any attempt by

terrorists to take advantage of the situation to sneak into Indian territory, they said.

Director General of Police (DGP) Prabhat, along with Deputy Inspector General of Police, Jammu-Samba-Kathua Range, Shiv Kumar Sharma, and Senior

## 2 special trains leave Jammu with over 1,200 stranded passengers, 51 trains cancelled on Sunday

#### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Northern Railways on Saturday operated two special trains from Jammu station, carrying over 1,200 stranded passengers to their destinations following unprecedented monsoon havoc in the Union Territory, which has stalled rail traffic in the region.

The Northern Railways announced the cancellation of 51 incoming and outgoing trains from Jammu and Katra stations for Sunday, while three others were short-terminated or short-originated at various stations in the division.

The first Jammu Tawi-Ambedkar Nagar reserved special train carrying around 674 passengers departed Jammu at 3 pm, while another Jammu Tawi-Chhapra reserved special left at 5 pm with over 560 passengers on board, officials said.

The Railway Police and civil administration

have established a dedicated help desk at the Jammu railway station to assist stranded passengers.

On Thursday, the Northern Railways operated two special unreserved trains from Jammu station, carrying around 3,000 stranded passengers to their destinations following the unprecedented monsoon havoc in the Union Territory.

Scores of people, especially pilgrims, were stranded as heavy rains lashed the Jammu region since August 26, severely disrupting rail and road traffic. A landslide that struck near the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Katra claimed 34 lives. The Jammu region recorded its heaviest rainfall since 1910, at 380 mm by Wednesday.

The list of 51 cancelled trains on Sunday, released by the PRO, Railways Jammu division, also includes three trains with short-origin and short-termination arrangements.