

!! Continuations from Page 1 !! CM visits Ramban...

and Thard in Udhampur district. He inspected the ongoing restoration works and instructed executing agencies to deploy additional men and machinery for speedy clearance of debris and repair of the highway.

Stressing that restoration of road connectivity is the Government's top priority, Omar Abdullah asked the district administration to ensure that all possible measures are adopted to reopen the road at the earliest.

The Chief Minister, accompanied by MLA Chenani Balwant Singh Mankotia, Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Saloni Rai, and senior officers of the district administration, reviewed in detail the clearance operations being carried out round the clock.

He emphasized that at least one tube of the highway must be opened urgently to facilitate the transportation of essential supplies to Kashmir and ease the hardships of the people.

During his interaction with the local residents at Bali Nallah and Thard, Omar Abdullah listened to their grievances and assured them of full government support. He directed the administration to immediately provide ration, clean drinking water, restore power supply, set-up temporary shelters and provide other assistance to families whose houses have been damaged. He stressed that the first priority is the safe relocation of affected families from vulnerable areas, followed by a comprehensive rehabilitation programme once connectivity is restored.

Highlighting the critical importance of the highway, the Chief Minister noted that NH-44 has suffered unprecedented damage in both Ramban and Udhampur districts, causing severe disruption to traffic and supplies.

He assured that every possible effort is being made to expedite restoration works and minimize public hardship.

Schools to remain...

incessant rain and landslides in the hilly areas, and to ensure the safety of students and staff, it is hereby ordered that all government and private schools across Jammu division shall continue to remain closed on 01-09-2025 (Monday)," Naseem Javaid Chowdhary, Director School Education, Jammu, said in the official order.

More than 130 persons, mostly pilgrims, have been killed, over 120 injured, while 33 remained untraced following cloudbursts, landslides and flash floods in Kishtwar, Kathua, Reasi and Ramban districts since August 14.

The record rainfall on August 26-27 triggered flash floods in the low-lying areas of the region, causing widespread damage to public and private properties.

Eight men saved...

police station, the officials said. They said the men were reportedly collecting floating timber using a makeshift wooden raft but got trapped. The situation was aggravated due to dense fog over Chenab, which reduced visibility, the officials said, adding that after a three-hour operation, all eight trapped people were safely rescued.

The officials asked people to follow the weather advisories and stay away from the swollen water bodies, especially the mighty Chenab river.

"The public is requested not to indulge in such risky acts, as venturing into Chenab using unsafe rafts or makeshift means can prove fatal and life-threatening. Anyone found indulging in such unlawful and dangerous activities shall face strict legal action," a police official said.

Amit Shah reaches...

More than 130 people have been killed, over 120 injured and 33 are untraceable following cloudbursts, landslides and flash floods in Kishtwar, Kathua, Reasi and Ramban districts since August 14.

Record rainfall on August 26-27 also caused flash floods in low-lying areas in Jammu and other plains, causing widespread damage to public and private infrastructure.

HC issues notices...

Mughal emperor Jehangir. It seeks directions for the restoration of adjoining roads encroached upon by some private individuals.

The PIL also seeks directions for constituting a high-level committee comprising an officer of the anti-corruption bureau (ACB) and other investigation wings to investigate the gross mismanagement of the official respondents (authorities).

It seeks an investigation by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to inquire into the conduct of the officials in the matter.

PM Modi, Prez...

multilateral platforms, according to an Indian readout. "Our cooperation is linked to the interests of 2.8 billion people of our two countries. This will also pave the way for the welfare of all humanity," Modi said in Hindi in his televised opening remarks.

Modi and Xi recognised the role of the two economies to stabilise world trade and underlined the need to proceed from a political and strategic direction to expand bilateral trade and investment ties and reduce trade deficit, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in the readout.

"The prime minister noted that India and China both pursue strategic autonomy, and their relations should not be seen through a third country lens," it said. "The two leaders deemed it necessary to expand common ground on bilateral, regional, and global issues and challenges, like terrorism and fair trade in multilateral platforms," it added.

In a social media post, Modi described his talks with Xi as "fruitful".

"We reviewed the positive momentum in India-China relations since our last meeting in Kazan. We agreed on the importance of maintaining peace and tranquility in border areas and reaffirmed our commitment to cooperation based on mutual respect, mutual interest and mutual sensitivity," he said.

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.

Modi, who landed in China last evening after a gap of seven years, said in the meeting that an atmosphere of peace and stability has been prevailing along the border since he and Xi met in October last year in the Russian city of Kazan.

"Both leaders welcomed the positive momentum and steady progress in bilateral relations since their last meeting in Kazan in October. They reaffirmed that the two countries were development partners and not rivals, and that their differences should not turn into disputes," the MEA said.

"A stable relationship and cooperation between India and China and their 2.8 billion peoples on the basis of mutual respect, mutual interest and mutual sensitivity are necessary for the growth and development of the two countries, as well as for a multipolar world and a multi-polar Asia befitting the trends of the 21st century," it said.

It said the two leaders noted with satisfaction the successful disengagement of troops last year and the maintenance of peace and tranquility along the border areas since then.

"They expressed commitment to a fair, reasonable, and mutually acceptable resolution of the boundary question proceeding from the political perspective of their overall bilateral relations and the long-term interests of the two peoples," it said.

"They recognised the important decisions taken by the two Special Representatives in their talks earlier this month, and agreed to further support their efforts," it added.

Modi and Xi also noted the need to strengthen people-to-people ties through direct flights and visa facilitation, building on the resumption of the Kailash Manasarovar Yatra and tourist visa.

"On economic and trade relations, they recognised the role of their two economies to stabilise world trade. They underlined the need to proceed from a political and strategic direction to expand bilateral trade and investment ties and reduce trade deficit," the MEA said.

Modi also expressed support for China's presidency of the SCO and the summit in Tianjin.

He also invited President Xi to the BRICS summit that India will be hosting in 2026.

President Xi thanked Modi for the invitation and offered China's support to India's BRICS Presidency, according to the MEA.

Modi also had a meeting with Cai Qi, Member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo of the Communist Party of China.

The prime minister shared with Cai his vision for bilateral relations and sought his support to realise the vision of the two leaders, the MEA said.

"Cai reiterated the Chinese side's desire to expand bilateral exchanges and further improve relations in line with the consensus reached between the two leaders," it said.

3 special trains...

especially pilgrims, were stranded as heavy rains have been lashing 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 on August 27 recorded its heaviest rainfall at 380 mm since 1910.

Ex-SHO gets...

in a police vehicle (Tata 407) under the protection of the then SHO Gh. Rasool Wani and his Munshi, Abdul Ahad Rather.

The terrorist was introduced to other policemen as a member of the Special Operations Group (SOG), Lalpora, a ploy used by the SHO to conceal his true identity. Witnesses later testified that Wani was seen personally guiding the terrorist to disembark near the SBI branch, moments before the bloodbath unfolded.

In 2011, the Sessions Judge, Kupwara, acquitted both Wani and his Munshi, citing contradictions in witness testimonies regarding whether the terrorist wore police or army uniform. The trial court held that the prosecution failed to conclusively establish the conspiracy.

However, the State filed an acquittal appeal in 2011, arguing that the trial court had ignored clinching evidence. After a protracted hearing, the High Court reserved its judgment on July 30, 2025, and pronounced it on August 30, 2025.

The Division Bench meticulously analyzed the testimonies of prosecution witnesses Constable Ayaz Ahmad, Constable Riyaz Ahmad, and Ali Mohammad Mir (the official driver), all of whom consistently stated that Wani knowingly facilitated the terrorist's travel from Sogam to Kupwara.

The Bench also noted that uniform belonging to Constable Sumandar Khan, who was on leave at the time, had been stolen, and the same was later recovered from the slain terrorist. This, the Court said, corroborated the prosecution case that the terrorist was camouflaged in police attire with the help of the SHO.

Rejecting the trial court's reasoning, the judges ruled that minor contradictions about the type of uniform could not overshadow the overwhelming evidence of conspiracy.

"The respondent was duty-bound to protect lives and property of security personnel but instead became their tormentor by consciously allowing the terrorist to unleash mayhem," the Bench observed.

Holding Wani guilty of criminal conspiracy (Section 120-B RPC) and murder (Section 302 RPC), the Division Bench ruled that he was equally responsible for the killings carried out by the terrorist.

However, the Court found no direct evidence against co-accused Abdul Ahad Rather (Munshi) and upheld his acquittal.

Consequently, the High Court convicted Wani and sentenced him to imprisonment for life, directing him to surrender before the trial court to undergo the sentence.

Govt forms central...

from the affected states/UT, and has extended all necessary logistical assistance through the deployment of requisite number of teams from the NDRF, Army and Air Force, which are helping them in the relief and rescue operations, it said.

According to a decision taken by the Union home minister in August 2019, the MHA constitutes IMCTs immediately in the aftermath of a severe disaster for on-spot assessment of damage, without waiting for any memorandum. After the assessment is done, the Centre provides additional financial assistance to the affected states from the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) following the established procedures, the statement said.

During the 2025-26 financial year, the Centre has released Rs 10,498.80 crore to 24 states in State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF), so as to enable them to provide relief assistance to the affected people, it added.

The Central government also released Rs 1,988.91 crore from the NDRF to 12 states, Rs 3,274.90 crore from the State Disaster Mitigation Fund (SDMF) to 20 states, and Rs 372.09 crore from the National Disaster Mitigation Fund (NDMF) to nine states, the statement said.

BSF DG visits...

the International Border; it said.

He briefed the sector commanders and battalion commanders, and emphasised the need for effective area domination and operational preparedness to ensure border security, the BSF said in the post.

Woman, son drown in stream in Reasi

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A 45-year-old woman and her teenage son drowned in a stream in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday, police said.

Zulfan Begum and her son Basharat Hussain (15) were crossing Shadole Nallah on the way to their Kansoli village when they were swept away by the strong current near Gagnawali in the Mahore area, police said.

While Zulfan's body has been fished out of the stream, a search is underway for Basharat, they said.

KPs reopen Sharada Bhawani Temple in Budgam after over 3 decades

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: The Kashmiri Pandit community on Sunday reopened the Sharada Bhawani temple in Budgam district after over three decades with an overwhelming participation of the local Muslim community in the celebrations.

The ceremony in Ichkoot village of the central Kashmir district, marked by 'Mahurat' and 'Pran Pratishtha', also witnessed the return of a group of Kashmiri Pandit families to their ancestral place for the first time since the early 1990s when militancy erupted in the Kashmir valley.

"We can say this is a branch of the Sharda Mata temple in Pakistan. We have been wanting to reopen this temple for a long time now. The local Muslims also wanted it. They used to tell us regularly to come and re-establish the temple," the president of

Sharda Community, Budgam, Sunil Kumar Bhat, said.

He said the Pandit community has reopened the temple after 35 years.

"We hope that this (gathering) will be an annual affair and we pray to Mata Rani that the community members return to Kashmir sooner," he said.

Bhat said a few Kashmiri Pandits, mostly working under the Prime Minister's Package, re-established the temple and have approached the district administration for the construction of a new one, as the old temple was in ruins.

"We are planning construction. We have established a Shiving there that we recovered while cleaning and restoring this place," he said.

The reopening ceremony reflected the valley's famed composite culture as local Muslims joined the celebrations. "Without the local com-

munity, this would not have been possible," Bhat said, adding that their support has been tremendous.

"When we came here, we were only four people. Today, the whole village is with us. This shows the support of the local community," he said.

An elderly local Muslim said the Pandit community is more than welcome to return to their roots.

"These people are residents of this village. We used to live and eat together before the situation worsened. If they need anything, we are there to support them," he said.

He said the Kashmir valley is the 'janambhumi' of the Pandits and members from both the communities grew up together.

"How can we forget the times we spent together? We are happy that they have come here and offered prayers. This is a matter of their faith," he said.

Need to take urgent steps to tackle growing climate unpredictability: Farooq

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: National Conference President Farooq Abdullah on Sunday expressed deep concern over the alarming rise in extreme weather events in Jammu and Kashmir and the broader Himalayan region, which have caused severe damage to both human lives and property.

In a statement issued here, Abdullah called for urgent, proactive measures to address the growing climate unpredictability, stressing the need for sustainable development strategies that ensure the protection of life and livelihood in the region.

"The increase in weather vagaries, ranging from flash floods, landslides and prolonged dry spells to erratic rainfall patterns, has become a pressing concern for the people of Jammu and Kashmir," Abdullah said.

He added that these unpredictable weather events are not only threatening the region's ecological balance but also impacting local population, their agricultural livelihoods, infrastructure and most tragically, human lives.

Pointing out that the broader Himalayan belt is particularly vulnerable to climate change, the former chief minister of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir said sustainable development must become the cornerstone of future planning, where the immediate need for economic growth does not come at the cost of safety of the environment or people. "Development should no longer be seen as just economic growth.

It should encompass environmental protection, ecological conservation and social equity," he said.

All J&K Sain Samaj Sabha, Federation of Karpoori Thakur Officials & Professionals felicitate meritorious students

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The All J&K Sain Samaj Sabha, in collaboration with the Federation of Karpoori Thakur Officials and Professionals, New Delhi, organised a proud felicitation programme to honour meritorious students of the community who secured 75% and above marks in Classes 10th and 12th during the academic session 2024-25.

The event was held at the All J&K Sain Samaj Sabha Bhawan near Rani Park, Kachi Chawani, Jammu, and witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, parents, community leaders, and office bearers from Kathua, Samba, and Udhampur units. Students were honoured with mementos and merit certificates as a mark of recognition for their hard work and achievements.

A special highlight of the programme was the remarkable presence of a large number of Nari Shakti (women) from the community, who graced the occasion and encouraged the young



achievers.

Kewal Krishan Fottra, President of All J&K Sain Samaj Sabha and Coordinator of the Federation, thanked the guests and participants for their cooperation in making the programme successful. Addressing the gathering, Fottra urged students to strive for excellence in their studies and careers, while also advising parents to extend every possible support to their children in fulfilling their aspirations.

Kamini Kapoor (Retd. Principal), the Chief Guest of the event, underlined the importance of education, saying, "Education is power, without which man is like an animal. Students must pur-

sue knowledge with determination to shape a bright future."

Other distinguished speakers included Nirmal Sajgotra (Retd. Sr. Master), who spoke on the role of women in building strong families and societies; and Advocate Rajinder Chanyal, who emphasized community unity and collective responsibility.

Several senior community members and intellectuals, including Madan Lal Pandey, Sham Lal Bhoglia, Rakesh Supkal (Retd. Pvt. Principal Secretary), Kishore Kumar (Editor Amar Ujala), Kasturi Lal Basotra (Retd. DSP), Manohar Lal Tidyarl Retd SO, Ashok Jagotra, Ashok

Cache of war-like stores recovered from hideout in Kupwara

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Security forces busted a hideout and recovered a cache of war-like stores in Kupwara district, Army said on Sunday.

Based on specific intelligence inputs, security forces had launched a search operation at the general area of Kotnala in the north Kashmir district in the early hours of Sunday, an Army official said.

A Chinese pistol, four Pakistan-origin UBGLs (under barrel grenade launchers), four Chinese hand grenades, a sniper rifle magazine, 26 sniper rounds, an AK-47 magazine, 144 AK-47 rounds, a bag, and two Chinese reading leaflets were recovered, the official said.

The search operation is still in progress, he added.

BJP delegation discusses flood situation with LG



BJP delegation led President Sat Sharma calling on LG Manoj Sinha in Jammu on Sunday.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A delegation of BJP leaders led by Sat Sharma, President, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Jammu and Kashmir called on the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, on Sunday.

The delegation comprised Ashok Koul, General Secretary (Organisation) J&K, and Sanjita Dogra, Baldev Singh Billawaria and

Gopal Mahajan-General Secretaries BJP J&K UT, discussed the flood situation and damages due to heavy rain.

They also put forth various important matters pertaining to the welfare of people affected by the natural calamities in the region, including a special compensation package for restoration of damaged property and infrastructure.

Sumbria, Manohar Lal Fottra Retd AO, Sudesh Tidyarl Retd SO, Rattan Lal Retd Inspector JMC, Om Prakash Mangotra, Omparkash Jagotra, Naresh Kumar, Sanjay Sajgotra Chairman, Ashok Tripathi Senior Vice President, Sudesh Tidyarl Vice President, Nek Ram Secretary Estates and others, also addressed the gathering, sharing their views and suggestions. Other prominent members of the community present on the occasion were Sharda Chanyal Retd Sr Master, Dr Nirdosh Kumari, Usha Kiran Sr Master, Lalita Rani Retd SO, Sudesh Kumari Retd SO, Binla Pandey Retd SO JKP, Kunti Devi Retd SO, Pushpa Mangotrs Retd Sr Master, Gourav Sikka, Surinder Seotra, Mukesh Mangotra, Darshan Mangotra, Lekh Raj, Dharam Paul and others.

The function concluded with words of encouragement for the meritorious students and a collective pledge to further strengthen the community through education, unity, and social service.

Soldier dies in accidental fire

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: A soldier lost his life in an accidental fire in Ganderbal district, officials said on Sunday.

The officials said the incident happened on Saturday night when the service rifle of Constable Chotu Kumar, of the Army's Rashtriya Rifles, went off accidentally when he jumped from a truck upon reaching Manasbal area of the central Kashmir district.

"The trigger of his rifle got pressed accidentally and Constable Kumar received bullet injury below the chin, resulting in his on spot death," the officials added.