

## !! Continuations from Page 1 !!

### CM reviews rain...

on the situation in Jammu, while Hon'ble Minister @sakinaitoo and Advisor to the CM @nasirsogami provided updates on the situation in Kashmir. The Chief Minister appealed to the people to follow advisories, avoid vulnerable spots, and stay safe," the CM's office said.

Although the Jhelum river and its tributaries are flowing significantly below the danger mark, water levels in parts of south and central Kashmir, including Srinagar, have risen sharply since the rainfall began on Tuesday, officials said.

The Irrigation and Flood Control Department said water gauges are rising and may increase further due to continued rainfall.

"All the concerned authorities are requested to remain alert and take necessary measures. The general public is advised not to venture close to water bodies and exercise caution. All officers assigned flood duties must immediately report to their posts," the department said in a post on X.

The heavy downpour over the past 24 hours also led to the closure of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway (NH-44) due to landslides, shooting stones, and water-logging at multiple locations.

"The highway has been closed for all types of vehicular traffic," officials said.

As a precautionary measure, all educational institutions across the Kashmir division have been closed for the day.

"In view of inclement weather conditions, schools and colleges across the Kashmir division shall remain closed today, on 03.09.2025," authorities said.

Various examinations of Kashmir University and other universities in the valley scheduled for Wednesday have also been postponed.

### LG takes stock...

around 9 relief shelters are ready for emergency situation. The Lieutenant Governor asked the senior officials to take all necessary preventive measures against water borne diseases. He asked the senior officials to ensure rations, blankets, medicines, LPGs and pure drinking water to the affected families and speedy restoration of power infrastructure. He urged the people to take all possible precautions and safety measures. The Lieutenant Governor also assured that no effort is being spared by the Centre to ensure timely assistance to those in need.

### J&K gets 190...

approved before the third round of counselling, further expanding the capacity of medical education in the UT.

The Chief Secretary, J&K, has appreciated the sustained efforts of the Health & Medical Education Department in achieving this milestone and has expressed gratitude to the Ministry of health and family welfare. The national medical commission and Dr. V. K. Paul, Member NITI Aayog, for their guidance and support in the seat enhancement. Pertinent to mention that Dr. V. K. Paul is associated with the Health and Medical Education Department J&K on many initiatives and reforms in the Health and Medical Education Department, which are expected to bring transformative changes in the healthcare ecosystem of Jammu & Kashmir.

### GST Bonanza: Tax...

exercise books will be charged at nil from 5 per cent.

Consumer goods such as tooth powder, feeding bottles, tableware, kitchenware, umbrellas, utensils, bicycles, bamboo furniture and combs will see rate cut from 12 per cent to 5 per cent. The same on shampoo, talcum powder, toothpaste, tooth-brushes, face powder, soap and hair oil has been cut down from 18 per cent to 5 per cent.

She said all individual life and health insurance policies will now attract nil tax in a bid to boost coverage.

Cement will cost less with the tax rate coming down from 28 per cent to 18 per cent. Petrol, LPG and CNG vehicles of less than 1,200 cc and not more than 4,000 mm length and diesel vehicles of up to 1,500 cc and 4,000 mm length would move to 18 per cent rate from the current 28 per cent.

Motorcycles up to 350 cc, consumer electronics like ACs, dishwashers, and TVs too would be taxed at a lower GST of 18 per cent as against 28 per cent currently.

All automobiles above 1,200 cc and longer than 4,000 mm as well as motorcycles above 350 cc, yachts and aircraft for personal use, and racing cars will be charged with a 40 per cent levy. Aerated drinks containing added sugar will be taxed at 40 per cent.

EVs will continue to be charged at 5 per cent.

The financial implication of the rate rationalisation would be Rs 48,000 crore and this would be fiscally sustainable, Revenue Secretary Arvind Shrivastava told reporters here.

The decision by the GST Council would bring down the overall premium as the tax component has significantly come down.

The move to simplify the tax regime - first announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his Independence Day speech - comes as India's exports to the US face a 50 per cent tariff - the highest in the world.

The Indian economy is heavily reliant on consumption with private consumption accounting for 61.4 per cent of the nominal GDP last fiscal.

The GST reforms are likely to boost the economy by up to 0.5 percentage point by the second year of its implementation, effectively neutralising the full impact of the US tariff, economists said.

Tobacco, gutka, tobacco products and cigarettes will continue to be charged at current 28 per cent plus a compensation cess till such time that loans taken to pay states for revenue loss is fully paid back, Sitharaman said.

The 40 per cent tax will also be levied on services by a race club, leasing or rental services, and casinos/gambling/horse racing/lottery/online money gaming.

Supply of service of third-party insurance of goods carriage will now attract 5 per cent with ITC from 12 per cent with ITC.

### Landslide hits Vaishno...

Mata Vaishno Devi shrine - was suspended due to heavy rain and flooding.

The scheduled train services from New Delhi to Katra have also been short-terminated.

These shuttle services, which started on September 1, were scheduled to run until September 15.

"The shuttle services between Jammu and Katra, which was started to facilitate the movement of daily passengers and stranded persons, have been cancelled today," a Railway official said. This step was taken in view of heavy rains and flooding of the track, he said.

### Woman gives birth...

Superintendent Abdul Baseer Bali said the railway staff and the protection force gave all possible help to the woman.

On reaching Banihal station, Akhtera was carried on a stretcher to a waiting ambulance arranged by a local NGO and taken to the Banihal sub-district hospital, he said. A doctor at the hospital said both the woman and her child were healthy and were admitted for observation. Ashraf said he was grateful to all the people, including railways, for their help.

### GST Council meet...

(UT) economy and called for the Centre's support to deal with the situation, particularly in view of the proposed GST rate rationalisation.

"We may go ahead with the rate rationalisation proposal, while devising a mechanism for compensating States/UTs for their fiscal stability and creating safeguards for translating the benefits from rationalization in the reduced prices to the masses of our country," he said.

Abdullah stated that the GST reforms must consider the unique challenges faced by individual states and UTs.

He detailed how the local economy had been gaining renewed vigour before being "shocked" by the "Pahalgam incident" of April 2025. This event, and its aftermath, have brought major economic sectors-including tourism, handicraft, horticulture, and agriculture - to a standstill.

The chief minister also urged Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman-headed GST Council to address the "geopolitical challenges" facing the country and the severe fiscal pressures on his region following the terror attack.

He talked about substantial loss of jobs and businesses, and a decline in public revenues. "Today, all the sectors of economic activity, including tourism, handicraft, horticulture and agriculture are badly affected. The flight of non-local workers has slowed down development of infrastructure projects," the chief minister said.

Fully endorsing the two-tier (5 and 18 per cent) GST structure proposal, the chief minister said, "My main concern is how do we ensure that this rate rationalisation eases the burden on the common man and makes these specific goods and services more affordable for the masses of our country.

"These often lead to classification disputes, inverted duty structures and compliance complexity. The recommendations of the Group of Ministers and the Union proposal deal with these distortions to a large extent and aim to minimise such aberrations. For the Trade and Industries, these will bring clarity, reduce litigation, and enhance compliance. Hence, I welcome and support the recommendations of the

Group," he said.

"We need to have systemic safeguards to assure us that the proposed rate changes result in major benefits for the consumers and are not cornered in the chain. There should not be any scope for profiteering from this rate rationalisation," Abdullah said.

The chief minister also touched upon national economic issues, noting that the country's growth path is "suddenly challenged by geopolitical challenges" and also pointed to "whimsical trade policies of the colonial era" that he said could restrict India's access to 20 per cent of the global market, affecting thousands of workers in sectors like agriculture, handicraft, and gems and jewellery.

Asserting that the GST, introduced in July 2017, remains the most ambitious federal tax reform in India's fiscal history, he said that through these eight years, several steps and initiatives have been taken in tax structure, administrative mechanism, and technology frontier to improve efficiency and revenue mobilisation from GST as also to facilitate honest taxpayers and dealers.

"The past year has been nothing but challenging for Jammu and Kashmir and for the entire nation. At the national level, we see our growth path suddenly challenged by geopolitical challenges.

"Our economy is steadily accelerating at 6-7 per cent growth rate. We have increased our export competitiveness and raised our share in global markets in goods and in services.

"Our forex reserves had quadrupled to USD 660 billion in the past two decades. But today we seek our market access being severely constrained by whimsical trade policies of the colonial era," he said.

The chief minister said these policies will deprive us of about 20 per cent of the global market and will seriously affect thousands of workers and entrepreneurs in the agriculture, handicraft, marine products, gems and jewellery sectors.

### Two killed in...

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has expressed his condolences to those affected by the tragedy in Kangri, Sunderbani in Rajouri district and wished for the well-being of all those impacted by the incessant rain.

Former MLC and Chief Spokesperson JKPC Ravinder Sharma has expressed deep shock & grief over the death of mother & daughter in a house collapse in Village Kangri in Sunderbani early morning and demanded immediate identification & shifting of families from vulnerable houses.

Expressing grief over causality of Sita Devi & her daughter Sonia, in Kangri house collapse of Beripattan area in Sunderbani, he demanded immediate exgratia relief and free ration, shelter and other necessary material to the poor survivors of the family.

In Anantnag district, police rescued 25 nomadic families stranded under a bridge due to rise in the water level following heavy rains.

The rains led to increase in the water level in rivers, streams and rivulets which are already flowing close or above danger mark, while major roads, including all-weather Srinagar-Jammu national highway, remained closed for the second day owing to multiple landslides and landslips between Udhampur and Banihal, they said.

In a daring operation, the Border Security Force (BSF) pressed its helicopter to launch a high-risk rescue operation to evacuate 45 civilians, including women and children who were trapped in their flooded village in Akhnoor sector near here, officials said.

The rescue mission by the BSF was launched after police, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) teams failed to shift the marooned population of Fathu Kotli village in Garkhal area owing to the continuous rise in the Chenab river; which is presently flowing several feet above its evacuation level of 42 feet, the officials said.

They said senior police and civil officers rushed to the scene early this morning after getting information that the flood waters had entered the village and 45 people were trapped.

After making several attempts to establish contact with the trapped civilians, the civil administration requisitioned the BSF for a helicopter to save the precious lives.

The BSF responded to the call and its helicopter made three sorties to successfully evacuate the 45 trapped civilians from the marooned village to a safer location despite continuous rainfall, the officials said.

As the water level continues to rise in the swollen River Tawi in Jammu city, authorities have launched a multi-agency operation to shore up embankments near the damaged fourth bridge to prevent flooding in the low-lying areas.

Heavy rain in Jammu had damaged the road near the fourth Tawi bridge, causing vehicles to get stuck on the broken stretch on August 26.

"If this area is breached, there will be a huge problem. Civil administration, police, and army are engaged in an operation to prevent it here. The engineering wing is working on it," Superintendent of Police Ajay Sharma told reporters.

Senior officers are monitoring the situation closely.

The breach could inundate large areas near the fourth bridge as the locality is low-lying. Police have asked people to remain alert and shift to safer places from these vulnerable zones.

"If a breach takes place, there is a possibility of intense flooding here. I have told people to remain alert and try to move to safer places. First and foremost, women, children, and the elderly should be shifted," the SP said.

There is, however, no immediate threat as the operation to safeguard the area is underway, he said.

Army personnel and engineering teams have laid large waterproof covers over a major portion of the breach to prevent further water seepage due to heavy rain, officials said.

The area has been sealed off with barbed wire around the damaged road stretch.

A low-lying colony is just 49 to 50 metres away from the "breach" caused by the washing away of a portion of the road connecting the fourth bridge in the city.

Worried residents of neighbouring localities are having sleepless nights. The area has a population of around 7,000 and houses a big business hub, Nehru Warehouse. Jammu city has also been cut off from three main road stretches due to landslides on the Panjirthi-Sidhra road, mudslides on the Manda-Nagrota road, and the closure of one bridge on the River Chenab at Akhnoor.

Two houses collapsed in the old Jammu city and three persons trapped inside were rescued.

The fourth bridge on the River Tawi was again closed following a rise in floodwaters.

Heavy rains over the past 24 hours have resulted in flooding of many areas in south Kashmir, including Pulwama, Shopian and Kulgam.

"Anantnag Police carried out a swift rescue operation at Aang Anzwalla, safely evacuating 25 nomadic families stranded due to a sudden rise in Lidder Nalla," a spokesman of Anantnag district police said in a post on X.

He said immediate relief was provided to the evacuated families.

In neighbouring Kulgam district, five nomadic families were rescued by police from Brazloo village after the water level rose in the Vaishov Nalla on Tuesday night, officials said.

Emergency helplines have been established in various police station areas of south Kashmir where the water level is rising significantly in the water bodies.

Police and civil administration have issued advisories to the general public, urging them not to venture close to water bodies in view of the inclement weather.

Many areas in the Kashmir valley witnessed a fresh spell of rain.

In south Kashmir, Qazigund in Kulgam district recorded 90.6 mm followed by Kokernag (89 mm) and Pahalgam (64.4 mm) in Anantnag district while Srinagar experienced 46.1 mm of rainfall during the past 27 hours ending 11.30 AM.

At 1 pm, the Jhelum's upstream gauge reading at Sangam in Anantnag was close to the danger mark of 25 feet and downstream at Ram Munshibagh in Srinagar was almost 17 feet, just one feet below the alert level and four feet below the danger mark.

At Asham in north Kashmir, the gauge reading of Jhelum was almost six feet below alert level at 8.59 feet, the officials said.

However, the rains in Srinagar stopped around noon but the sky remained over-cast.

Issuing a fresh weather forecast at 8.50 pm on Tuesday, a spokesman of the Meteorological department predicted a spell of heavy to very heavy rain at many places over Jammu, Kathua, Reasi, Doda, Udhampur, Rajouri and Ramban district during the next 14-16 hours.

He also predicted moderate to heavy rain or brief intense showers at many places of Pir Panjal range and south Kashmirwith heavy rain over Kishtwar, Poonch, Anantnag, Shopian and Kulgam during next 14-16 hours.

"There is a possibility of cloud burst, flash floods, landslides and water logging at few vulnerable places," the spokesman had said.

He said significant overnight rainfall was recorded in most parts of Jammu region with Reasi experiencing the highest 203 mm of rainfall till 8.30 am followed by Katra (193 mm), Batote in Ramban (157.3 mm), Doda (114 mm), Banihal (95 mm), Jammu (81 mm), Ramban (82 mm), Rajouri (57.4 mm) and Kishtwar (50 mm).

Police and district administration have also issued advisors asking people to remain cautious and stay away from the swollen water bodies and vulnerable areas prone to landslides, while the authorities extended the closure of all government and private schools on Wednesday.

He has also expressed his condolences to those affected by the tragedy in Kangri, Sunderbani in Rajouri district and wished for the well-being of all those impacted by the incessant rain.

Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat on Wednesday visited flood-hit areas of Akhnoor border belt to review the situation after several hamlets were inundated by the overflowing Chenab river.

Accompanied by local MLA Mohan Lal, senior police and Border Security Force (BSF) officials, Prabhat assessed the ground situation and interacted with rescue teams engaged in evacuation and relief work.

He also visited Akhnoor Border Outpost (BOP) to review operations being carried out jointly by the police, BSF and other agencies, officials said. BSF Sunderbani DIG Varinder Datta briefed the team on the conditions along the borderline.

### Three of family...

officials said. They said the anxious neighbours responded to the situation and immediately informed police and the local MLA and started a rescue operation.

The neighbours heaved a sigh of relief when the inmates made contact and informed them that they were holed up inside a room.

The police party and local BJP MLA Yudhvir Sethi also reached the spot and devised a plan to break open the wall of a neighbour's house to reach them.

However, Raman, one of the trapped persons, suggested that they can get out through the ventilator of their room which is opening on the slab of their neighbour's single-room structure.

The police along with the MLA and some locals pulled all the three from the ventilator and completed the rescue operation.

"We are thankful to everyone for their efforts to help us. We have already submitted an application to the office of deputy commissioner seeking permission to carry out urgent repairs," Raman said.

Sethi expressed happiness over the safe rescue of the three members and said clearing debris would have taken at least four days as no machine could be brought here due to narrow lanes.

He asked the deputy commissioner to dismantle the old and unsafe houses in the area which pose a threat to locals after undertaking a safety check.

In another incident, an abandoned building collapsed at Kucha Nahar Singh street in Panjirthi area of the old city. There were no casualties in the incident, the officials said.

### Over 4,000 affected...

the region. They have been evacuated and are being provided food and shelter," a senior officer told PTL. He said the situation is well under control as the rains have slowed down and water levels in rivers have begun to recede.

In Udhampur, over 2,000 people have been shifted to 38 shelter camps following incessant rains, flash floods and landslides. Udhampur Deputy Commissioner Saloni Rai said 30 relief camps have been set up with food and shelter facilities. "Over 2,000 people are housed in these shelter camps, and they are being provided food. Efforts are also being made to restore the highway at the earliest, once weather conditions improve," she said.

### BDO among 3...

Reasi, SDM Mahore, clarifying the reasons for your unauthorised absence from headquarters.

"You are further required to show cause why disciplinary action should not be initiated against you for this lapse," the order said. It added that the deputy commissioner of Reasi, on August 29, reiterated the General Administration Department's direction to employees not to leave their headquarters without approval.

However, the officials had left their headquarters without obtaining permission from the sub-divisional magistrate of Mahore or any competent authority, constituting a violation of the directives, the notice stated.

The additional district development commissioner noted that the entire district remains under severe risk of landslides and cloudbursts, with seven deaths already reported from Gulabgarh due to incessant rains.

### Notorious drug peddler booked under PIT NDPS Act

#### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAMBAN: In its continued efforts to combat the drug menace, Ramban Police have booked a notorious drug peddler, Yasir Ahmed alias Bhurha, son of Ghulam Nabi Sheikh, a resident of Kowbagh, Tehsil and District Ramban, under preventive detention as per the provisions of the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (PIT NDPS) Act. Yasir Ahmed has been repeatedly involved in the sale and distribution of contraband substances in Ramban and its adjoining areas, posing a significant threat to the safety and well-being of the local population-particularly the youth. Acting on the directions of the Senior Superintendent of Police, Ramban, a detailed dossier was prepared and submitted to the competent authority. Upon obtaining the necessary sanctions, Yasir Ahmed was formally detained under the PIT NDPS Act and has been lodged at District Jail Baderwah. The accused was not only a habitual offender but also a disruptive influence, allegedly drawing local youth into the web of drug abuse.

### Drug peddler apprehends with approx 11 grams of heroin

#### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SUNDERBANI: Continuing its drive against drug menace a team of Police Station Sunderbani during routine naka checking near GDC Sunderbani apprehended one person identified as Abdul Qayoom S/O Mohd. Aslam R/O Rattal, Challas Rajouri.

During his personal search, 11 grams of heroin-like narcotic substance was recovered from his possession. The accused was arrested on the spot and the contraband seized. In this regard a case FIR No. 57/2025 U/S 8/21/22 NDPS Act has been registered at Police Station Sunderbani and investigation is underway.

## Stakeholders appeal for extension of PMGSY Tenders in Jammu Division

#### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: In light of the ongoing adverse weather conditions affecting the Jammu Division, stakeholders are urging the government to extend all tenders under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY). The region is currently grappling with widespread disruptions to internet connectivity and road access, severely hampering the ability of contractors and agencies to participate in the tendering process.

The lack of reliable infrastructure-both digital and physical-has created an uneven playing field, making it nearly impossible for many to submit bids or access necessary documentation. This situation not only undermines the transparency and inclusivity of the process but also risks delaying critical road development projects intended to benefit rural communities. "If the government is truly committed to improving road infrastructure in Jammu Division, it must first ensure that the tendering process is fair and accessible to all," said a local contractor affected by the disruptions. "Extending the deadlines is not just a logistical necessity-it's a step toward equitable development."

Stakeholders emphasize that a tender extension would allow time for conditions to stabilize, ensuring broader participation and better project outcomes. They call upon the concerned authorities to act swiftly and responsibly in the interest of regional development and public welfare.

### SP South visits landslide hit Barmini, assesses damage at Gadigarh, Azad Nagar

#### ■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: On the directions of SSP Jammu and DIG JSK Range, SP City South Jammu conducted extensive visits to the areas severely affected by the recent inclement weather: SP South, along with SHO Channi Himmat and ICPP Chatha, visited the landslide-hit area of Barmini, where he personally assessed the situation on ground. He interacted with the local residents, ensured that the affected families who were shifted to safer locations, shall have necessary relief and rescue measures were briefed to the ground staff to prevent further loss or inconvenience. Also SP South along with IC PP also visited Gadigarh, where a significant number of houses were reported to have been damaged. He reviewed the extent of the damage and directed police teams to provide all possible assistance to the affected families. SP South also visited Azad Nagar, where four houses were damaged. During this visit, local public representatives including MLA Dr. Narendra Singh Raina and other dignitaries were also present. SP South ensured smooth coordination during the visit, interacted with the residents, and reaffirmed Jammu Police's commitment to stand by the people during every natural calamity. The SP South appreciated the swift response of the local public and police staff and instructed field officers to remain vigilant, extend maximum assistance, and keep close liaison with the civil administration for continued relief efforts.

