

Two killed, flood threat looms as nature's fury strikes J&K again

Water bodies cross danger mark, many areas submerged, over 3,000 evacuated; NH, major roads closed, weatherman predicts improvement

Sajid Raina/Rehan Qayoom Mir

Jammu/Srinagar, Sept 03: Nature's fury has once again struck Jammu and Kashmir with the heavy rainfall claiming two more lives in Rajouri and thousands of people were rescued and evacuated to safer places as multiple areas across the region were flooded on Wednesday, amidst the rise in the water levels in all the water bodies.

The heavy rainfall has claimed the lives of a mother-daughter duo in Rajouri district.

A mother-daughter duo was killed after a wall of their house collapsed due to heavy rains in Sunderbani. The deceased have been identified as Sita Devi, wife of Rattan Lal, and her daughter Sonia Rattan Lal—residents of Tanda Kangri. The bodies were recovered by police and rescue teams.

Similarly, a man went missing at Bantalab near the Telephone Exchange in Rajinder Nagar Nallah in Jammu late Tuesday night, following which rescue teams launched operations to locate him.



Pic: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)

Heavy Rainfall Continues

It is worth mentioning here that Jammu and Kashmir witnessed heavy rainfall for the last three straight days.

Since this morning, Katra has

recorded the highest rainfall of 106.3 mm, followed by 60.4 mm in Jammu, the details reveal. Banihal, Batote and Bhaderwah stations have recorded a precipitation of 36.0 mm, 35.8 mm and 15.0 mm, respectively.

In Kashmir, the highest rainfall since today morning was recorded at Qazigund at 29.6 mm, followed by 29.0 mm at Kokernag and 10.4 mm at Pahalgam.

Furthermore, the water bodies across Jammu and Kashmir,

including the river Jhelum, swelled following the heavy rainfall.

The water bodies in the Kashmir Valley have reached alarming levels following heavy rainfall, with the Jhelum at Sangam, Pampore and Ram Munshi Bagh crossing the danger mark.

The officials said low-lying areas of Srinagar, including Khushipora Telbal, are facing inundation, causing distress among residents. The old Barzulla Srinagar bridge has been closed for traffic movement.

According to the Irrigation & Flood Control Department (I&FC), the latest readings at River Jhelum show: Sangam: 27.29 ft (danger mark: 25 ft); Pampore: 6.30 m (danger mark: 5 m); and Ram Munshi Bagh: 20.98 ft (danger mark: 21 ft).

Other readings include Asham: 10.89 ft (danger mark: 16.5 ft) and Wullar: 1576.54 m (full level: 1578 m).

Regarding tributaries, the data show: Vishow Nallah at Khudwani: 10.50 m (danger mark: 8.5 m); Rambiyara Nallah at Wachi: 5.70 m (danger mark: 5.7 m); | [More on P6](#)

Jhelum swelling, but situation under control: I&FC appeals for calm

- Urges media not to create panic by sharing minute-to-minute updates
- Dal Gates not opened, no cause for alarm: CM Omar



Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Sep 03: As the Jhelum swelled due to incessant rainfall on Wednesday evening, authorities assured that the situation remains under control and urged both people and journalists to avoid creating panic.

Officials appealed to the journalist fraternity and Facebook page administrators not to spread alarm by posting hourly gauge readings or live minute-to-minute updates.

As per data available with the news agency—Kashmir

News Observer (KNO), the latest gauge reading of Jhelum at Sangam stood at 27.60 ft, and at Ram Munshi Bagh it was 21.67 ft. Though slightly above the danger mark, officials said the levels are well within safe limits.

They pointed out that in 2015, when Sangam touched 27.49 ft and Ram Munshi Bagh 21.65 ft, no flooding occurred. "It is safe up to 23 ft at Ram Munshi Bagh, provided there is no breach in embankments. At present, there is no such threat," an official told KNO.

Authorities | [More on P6](#)

Over 3,000 vehicles stranded on Jmu-Sgr National Highway

Mughal, SSG, Sinthan roads closed

Kulgam Police organise langar for stranded people

Umair Gul Ganaie

Qazigund, Sept 03: More than 3,000 vehicles, mostly heavy motor vehicles (HMs), are stranded on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, while all major routes in the Union Territory remain closed on Wednesday after fresh rainfall, officials said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that landslides and shooting stones triggered



by incessant rains blocked the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway at several locations forcing suspension of vehicular movement on Wednesday.

"Restoration work is underway, but frequent shooting stones and poor weather are hampering clearance operations," he said, adding that efforts are being | [More on P6](#)

CM Omar reviews situation following incessant rains

Directs admin to stay on high alert, intensify ground response

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Sept 03: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Wednesday convened an emergency meeting to review the situation arising from incessant rains across Jammu and Kashmir.

Minister Sakina Itoo and Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani briefed him on the latest situation in the Kashmir Valley, while Ministers Javed Ahmad Rana and Satish Sharma reported on conditions in the Jammu division, including flash floods, road blockages and vulnerable habitations near riverbanks and landslide-prone areas.

The Chief Minister directed



the administration to intensify ground response, clear water-logged areas, ensure supply of essential services such as power, water and healthcare, and ensure timely evacuation

of residents from critical zones. He instructed divisional and district administrations to work in close coordination with disaster response agencies, police | [More on P6](#)

Assist people: LG Sinha directs officers

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Sept 03: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has spoken to senior officials and taken stock of the situation in the wake of excessive rainfall across the Union Territory of Jammu Kashmir. He was briefed on rescue and relief measures by Army, Air Force, CAPFs, district administrations, NDRF and SDRF teams on the ground to ensure the well-being of those affected by heavy rain and flood.

He was briefed that people affected by flood in Akhnor were evacuated to safety by BSF, NDRF & Police. People from around 67 villages in Anantnag, Budgam, Pulwama were moved to safer locations and nomadic families in Pulwama and Shopian were provided shelters



by the district administrations.

In Srinagar city, 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 | [More on P6](#)

Edu institutes across J&K to remain closed

KU postpones all exams scheduled for today

KNO

Srinagar, Sept 03: In view of inclement weather and flood like situation, the government Wednesday said all educational institutes in Kashmir division shall remain closed on Thursday.

The government however said that the schools in Jammu division shall continue to remain closed till Friday.

Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Ashul Garg according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that the government has decided to close the functioning

of schools in Kashmir division on Thursday as a precautionary measure.

Garg said, "In view of adverse weather conditions, all educational institutions including schools, colleges, universities and private coaching centers in Kashmir shall remain closed tomorrow on 04.09.2025 as a precautionary measure."

Meanwhile, Director Colleges in an order said that in view of the prevailing inclement weather conditions and as a precautionary measure to ensure the safety and security of students and staff across the Union | [More on P6](#)

Div Com Kashmir urges people to remain alert



Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Sept 03: Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, Anshul Garg Wednesday urged citizens to remain alert throughout the night. He said the next 6-8 hours will be particularly critical and appealed to all residents to follow the advisories issued

by district administrations.

He said preventive evacuations have been activated in Srinagar and parts of South Kashmir and the next few hours are crucial.

Speaking on preventive measures, Garg, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) | [More on P6](#)

Incessant rains wreak havoc in south Kashmir

Jahangeer Ganaie

Pulwama/Anantnag, Sept 03: Continuous heavy downpour for the last two days has triggered flood-like situations in most parts of south Kashmir, inundating villages, damaging bridges, and leaving thousands of people stranded.

Standing crops, orchards, and residential structures have suffered extensive damage, while the administration has launched rescue and relief operations on a war footing.

According to the news agency - Kashmir News Observer (KNO), in Pulwama district, the overflowing Romshi Nallah

breached its banks, partially submerging Gundipora, Hassanwani, Uribagh, and Badibagh villages.

Residents said rainwater entered their homes, damaged stored food grains, and destroyed paddy fields and apple orchards, threatening their livelihood.

"We appeal to the administration to restore the original course of Romshi Nallah. Every time it swells during rains, our villages are cut off, and we face huge losses," said Abdul Majid, a resident of Gundipora.

The situation worsened after the approach road of Chandrigam bridge in

- Villages submerged, connectivity hit
- Several bridges damaged; thousands rescued to safer places

Awantipora area caved in, forcing its closure for vehicular movement. The R&B Department, Awantipora, has diverted traffic through the Chandrigam-Amlar-Bargam-Noorpora route until the bridge is repaired.

Meanwhile, the Kaihgam area of Awantipora witnessed massive waterlogging, with streets and houses submerged. "The drainage system has collapsed. We are virtually trapped inside our homes, unable to move out even for essentials," said Rafiq Begum, a resident.

In Anantnag district, the swelling | [More on P6](#)

MHA team arrives in Jammu to assess flood losses

IMCTs to conduct field visits, review relief measures, prepare reports

Sajid Raina

Jammu, Sept 03: A team from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) arrived in Jammu on Wednesday evening to assess areas affected by heavy rainfall, flooding, and landslides.

Officials told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that the team would review the ground situation, assess damages, and coordinate



with the local administration to ensure both immediate relief

and long-term recovery measures. | [More on P6](#)

Emergency preparedness: Relief centres set up across Srinagar

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Sept 03: As a part of emergency preparedness plan, the Srinagar district administration on Wednesday evening established a network of '15 relief centres' across the city, officials said.

They said these centres, along with deployed nodal officers and medical teams, are meant to ensure a quick and coordinated response in case of any eventuality.

According to an official order issued by the office of

the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the relief centres have been set up at key locations including Ellahibagh, Buchpora, Lalnagar Chanapora, Baddam, Khanyar, Barbarashah, Nowhatta, Raddapora, Palpora, Maloora, Zewan, and Khonmoh.

The order states that these facilities, established in community halls, schools, and panchayat ghars, will serve as safe shelters for affected families during emergencies. The | [More on P6](#)

CS sensitises Kashmir admin about flood preparedness

KT News Desk

Jammu, Sept 03: In view of the prevailing weather conditions and the emerging flood situation in Kashmir, Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo on Wednesday chaired a high level meeting to review and sensitize the divisional and district administrations about the preparedness and response measures.

The meeting was attended by Administrative Secretaries of Jal Shakti, Power Development, Home/DMRR, Health &

Medical Education, Housing & Urban Development, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, besides Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, IGP Kashmir and all the Deputy Commissioners and SSPs of Kashmir Division, and Commissioner SMC, among others.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary took a detailed review of the availability and functioning of essential services, including health, power, and telecom. | [More on P6](#)

Sakeena, Nasir visit Flood Control Room Ram Munshi Bagh

Review prevailing flood situation, preparedness, response measures

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 03: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education Sakeena Itoo along with Advisor to the Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani Wednesday visited the Irrigation and Flood Control Room Ram Munshi Bagh to take stock of the prevailing flood situation and preparedness measures in place.

During the visit, the Minister and Advisor assessed the current water levels, monitoring mechanism in place, and also steps being taken to safeguard vulnerable areas.

Chairing a brief meeting at the Irrigation and Flood Control room, Sakeena Itoo stressed upon the officers for real-time dissemination of information to the public and prompt action in case of any eventuality. She directed that timely alerts and advisories be issued to facilitate safe and orderly evacuation of people from low-lying and flood-prone zones.

The Minister also emphasized on officers to keep men and machinery alert near



embankments of Jhelum to prevent any kind of exigency in case of any breach on embankments.

The Minister and the Advisor urged officers of all line departments to remain in close synergy and maintain round-the-clock vigilance. They called constant awareness measures to ensure that people stay informed and prepared.

The Minister and Advisor assured that the Government is

fully committed to the safety and well-being of the citizens and appealed to the public to remain calm, cooperate with authorities and follow official advisories.

On the occasion, senior officers of the Flood & Irrigation Department, SDRF, and district administration briefed the Minister and Advisor regarding the current water levels steps being taken to safeguard vulnerable areas and other flood prone areas.

Div Com inspects preventive measures at Barzulla, Gandbal

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 03: In view of inclement weather conditions & rising water level of Jhelum, Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Anshul Garg on Wednesday visited Barzulla & Gandbal to inspect the protective measures being taken by Irrigation & Flood Control department to clog the vulnerable spots to avoid breaches.

During his visit to the spot of automatic water level recorder near Bone & Joint Hospital, Div Com directed for closure of the gap to avoid any potential threat of breach and flooding. The spot serves as a means for dewatering and out flow of the hospital drainage system.

Div Com instructed the SE, I&FC to find a permanent solution to address the issue and to avoid risk of breach in the left bank of the flood channel near the hospital.

While addressing the media at the spot, Div Com said that currently the water level at Sangam & Ram Munshi Bagh shows rising trend and informed that IMD has reported possibility of receding water level in the later part of the day.

However, he said that the contingency plan has already been put in place by I&FC department to respond to any exigency. Speaking about the reinforcement steps being



taken at B&J hospital, he said that the gap is being filled with sand bags and shall be completed within a couple of hours.

Sharing information about the rescue measures being taken in South Kashmir, he said that District Disaster Management teams are conducting rescue measures in low lying areas and evacuated some families to safer places. Div Com informed that teams of District

Administration Kulgam were on the ground during the night to ensure evacuation of people in nine villages.

"Wherever inundation in low-lying areas in Anantnag & Kulgam has occurred, the administration is following evacuation protocol", he added.

In Srinagar, he said, the teams of district administration are in the field and a contingency plan has been

put in place to immediately respond to any exigency.

"Our emergency control rooms are operational, power supply is up-end, and telecom services are Ok. Hopefully there should be reasonable improvement in couple of hours", he said.

Anshul Garg said we all need to remain alert and people need to follow advisories issued by district administrations and remain away from water bodies. He said that magistrates have been deployed to monitor the ground situation and alert people.

On the occasion, he also inspected the delivery of critical health care services to the patients by the hospital administration and availability of medical & paramedical staff besides availability of medicines.

Div Com also visited Gandbal where he inspected restoration efforts underway for reinforcement of the river bank near the bridge. On the occasion, he interacted with the locals and assured a permanent solution for strengthening of the bank and execution of the remaining works.

Later, Div Com visited the UT level Emergency Operation Centre at Hari Niwas to take the stock of addressing of distress calls of people and resolution of urgent issues faced by them.

Awareness prog continues at Chitternar

KT NEWS DESK

BANDIPORA, SEPTEMBER 03: Block level Master Trainer orientation programme under Aadi Karmayogi - Responsive Governance programme continued on second day today at the Forest Training & Research Institute Chitternar, Bandipora.

The programme is being organised from September 2 to 4, 2025, as part of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs' initiative for tribal transformation.

The sessions on the second day focused on participatory planning, responsive governance and preparation of village-level development plans with emphasis on healthcare, education, infrastructure, digital access and livelihood opportunities. Trainers also highlighted the importance of preserving traditional knowledge while promoting modern skill development.

Resource persons underscored the need to identify local gaps and build the capacity of grass-roots institutions for sustainable tribal development. They stressed that the Aadi Karmayogi programme aims to empower tribal communities by ensuring their active involvement in governance and decision-making processes.

The programme witnessed active participation of officers, BDOs, volunteers and concerned stakeholders, who deliberated on strategies to make tribal villages self-reliant, socially empowered and digitally connected.

Sakeena appeals all doctors, paramedics to remain available

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 03: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo has appealed all doctors, paramedics and other medical staff to remain available round the clock for the wellbeing of the general public in view of ongoing inclement weather conditions.

In a message issued here, the Minister said "in view of inclement weather conditions, I appeal to

all doctors, paramedics, hospital staff, and administration to remain available round the clock. Inclement rains pose a grave risk and our foremost duty is to our people. Let us serve with selflessness, stand united and support each other. Mohalla and Masjid committees must guide communities, while police and administration are on ground to assist. With Allah's mercy, we shall overcome these trying times."

DC Rajouri chairs SDRF Relief Committee meeting

KT NEWS DESK

RAJOURI, SEPTEMBER 03: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma Wednesday chaired a meeting of the SDRF Relief Committee in the VC Room of the DC Office Complex to review relief measures and restoration of disrupted services in rain affected areas.

The DC stressed on providing immediate ex gratia relief to Next of the Kin of the deceased and injured persons, and the cases involving damage to houses. He directed Tehsildars and Agriculture Extension Officers (AEOs) to jointly conduct assessments and submit detailed reports of crop damage. To ensure the welfare

of families shifted from vulnerable areas, the DC asked to deploy officers as camp in-charges to oversee daily arrangements for the displaced people. He also reviewed the restoration of roads, water, and electricity supply, and directed officials to expedite the measures.

The meeting was attended by ADC Rajouri Chander Prakash, ACR Mohd Jahangir Khan, SE PWD Tilak Raj, Ex En PWD Aftab Ahmed, CAO Mohd Amin, Ex En PDD Abdul Rasheed, Ex En PHE Sudesh Kumar, CEO Mohd Iqbal, and other district officers.

ADC Kotranka Dilmir, ADC Kalakote Tanvir Ahmed, ADC Nowshera Pritam Lal Thapa, and all Tehsildars participated virtually.

DLSA Sgr sensitizes students

KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 03: In order to sensitize students on pressing social and legal issues, with a particular focus on the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and the growing menace of drug abuse, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Srinagar Wednesday organized a comprehensive legal awareness programme at Government Boys Higher Secondary School (GBHSS) Nawa Kadal, Srinagar.

The programme was held under the chairmanship of Tasleem Arief, Principal District and Sessions Judge, Srinagar, and was conducted under the supervision of Sajad Ur Rehman, Sub-Judge/ Secretary, DLSA Srinagar.

The event commenced with an awareness video on the Lokpal, presented in the local

language to ensure accessibility and relevance for the student audience.

Addressing the gathering, Deputy Chief Legal Aid Defence Counsel (LADC), delivered an insightful session on the dangers and legal implications of drug abuse. Panel Lawyer spoke on the provisions and protective mechanisms under the POCSO Act, highlighting the importance of safeguarding children from sexual offences and ensuring timely legal intervention.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, who engaged actively with the resource persons, raising pertinent questions and sharing their perspectives.

The interactive nature of the session made it both informative and impactful, fostering a deeper understanding of the legal safeguards available to them.



GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR ESTATES KASHMIR

E-mail:- dde-kmr@jk.gov.in

Tel / Fax:- 0194-2452435

Notice for Attendance Statement of Government Employees

Sub:-Attendance statement of government employees lodged in Pvt. Hotels / Guest Houses and JKTC Hotels for the Summer Session 2025 - required in connection with payment of catering charges to Hoteliers.

All the Drawing and Disbursing officers are requested to furnish Leave Statement / Tour Diary of employees for the month of July and August 2025 who are / were availing mess facilities in the hotels hired by the Estates Department and have remained out of their Head Quarters, whether on leave or tour enabling this office to make payment to the hoteliers in accordance with actual attendance of the inmates in their respective hotels after deducting the period outside station. The requisite information may kindly be furnished to this office by or before 20th September, 2025.

In case no information is received by or before 20th September, 2025, it will be presumed that no officer / official under your administrative control and availing Hotel / Mess facility has proceeded on leave and payment shall be released in favour of the hoteliers. The information may please be furnished to this office through a special messenger under proper acknowledgement or through E-mail: - dde-kmr@jk.gov.in

The matter may kindly be treated as most urgent

No. DDES/Pvt.hotel/2025/3452-53
Dated: 02/09/2025

**DIPK-5885/25
DATED: 03-09-2025**

Deputy Director Estates Srinagar, Kashmir

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER IRRIGATION DIVISION PULWAMA

AUCTION NOTICE NO. 01 OF 2025-26.

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of J&K U.T, e-Tenders are invited on item rate basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt. to participate in the auction / bids for the below mentioned items existing at premises of Irrigation sub division Malangpora and Divisional stores Tahab as is, where is and whatever condition basis.

S. No.	Name of Department	Particulars	No. of trees	Estimated Quantity (in kgs)	Minimum bid value (in lacs)
01	Irrigation Division Pulwama	Auction of walnut produce present inside the premises of Irrigation sub division Malangpora and Divisional stores Tahab. (Species of Tree: Walnut)	13	75 kg	0.093

1. The Bidding document consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, set of terms and conditions and other details can be seen/ downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:

01	Date of issue of Tender Notice	01-09-2025 (04.00 pm)
02	Date of start of downloading	01-09-2025 (04.00 pm)
03	Bid submission start date Technical/ Financial.	01-09-2025 (04.00 pm)
04	Bid submission end date	08-09-2025 (04.00 pm)
05	Date & Time of opening of Bids (online)	09-09-2025 (10.00 am)

Terms and Conditions:-

- Bid must be accompanied by an earnest money of Rs 1000/ (Rupees one Thousand only) and tender document fee of Rs 200/ (Two hundred) in the form of CDR/ FDR pledged in favor of Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Pulwama and shall have to be valid for one year or more after last date of receipt of bid.
- Bidders are advised to use the (My Documents) area in their user on www.jktenders.gov.in portal to store, the required documents as given below:
 - Adhaar Card, 16- Digit Bank Account No. and PAN No.
 - Scanned copy of EMD.
 - Registered mobile number and E-mail ID in the shape of Bidders address form.
 - BQO.
- The earnest money shall be forfeited if:-
 - Any bidder/ tenderer withdraws his bid/ tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modification in terms and conditions of the bid.
 - Failure of successful bidder to execute the agreement within 7 Days after fixation of contract.
- The bidders will have to produce all documents in original whenever asked by the department. The department reserves the right to seek any document at any time for clarification.
- The Executive Engineer reserves the right to accept or reject/ scrap the auction without assigning any reason whatsoever.
- The location specified in the auction cannot be changed under any circumstances.
- The items can be seen on all working days at Dangerpora Pulwama near exchange from 10.00AM to 4.00 PM on all working days.
- Other terms and conditions are as per enclosed Annexure -A.

No.: PID/GS/2223-33
Dated:01-09-2025

**DIPK-5869/25
DATED: 03-09-2025**

**sd/
Executive Engineer,
Irrigation Division Pulwama.**

Kashmir Floods...

Adequate essential stock available: FCS&CA

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Sep 03: Director of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA), Dr. Owais Ahmed Wednesday oversaw the ration supply situation in flood-affected areas of Kashmir and visited multiple depots to ensure uninterrupted availability of essential commodities.

He said that teams have been traveling to various ration depots since morning, taking stock of supplies.

"We are well-equipped with everything, at least for the next six months, in case of any contingency. Our team is on the ground, constantly monitoring for any issues," Dr. Owais Ahmed told reporters.

He further assured that advance ration for September has already been allotted and distributed to residents. "In case of an emergency, we will ensure our stores are well-stocked, preventing any disruption in providing ration to the people," Dr. Ahmed



added. Meanwhile, FCS&CA officials stressed that all precautionary measures are being taken to maintain smooth supply lines amid rising water levels and ongoing flood warnings in parts of the Kashmir Valley—(KNO)

SC upholds JKBOPEE decision for PWtD MBBS, BDS admissions

KNO

Srinagar, Sep 03: The Supreme Court of India has upheld the judgment passed by the Jammu & Kashmir High Court in favour of the decision taken by the Jammu and Kashmir Board of Professional Entrance Examinations (JKBOPEE) regarding the eligibility of Persons With temporary Disabilities (PWtD) for MBBS and BDS admissions.

The Supreme Court dismissed the Special Leave Petition (Civil) challenging the High Court's ruling issued last year in W.P. (C) concerning the eligibility of individuals with temporary disabilities for admission to MBBS or BDS courses for the academic session 2024-25 under the Persons with Benchmark Disability (PWD) category, which falls under the Horizontal Reservation.

JKBOPEE Secretary Dr Shabir Hussain Keen said, "Aggrieved by the rejection of temporary disability certificates by JKBOPEE,



the petitioners approached the Division Bench of the Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court, which set a minimum period of 10 years for a disability to qualify as long-term and eligible for reservation benefits under the PWD category."

He said that out of five petitioners, two filed SLPs (Special Leave Petitions) in the Supreme Court. The SLPs were heard extensively on multiple occasions. After considering both sides, the Supreme Court observed that no relief could

be granted to the petitioners. While the Court condoned the delay in filing, it ultimately dismissed the petitions, vacated the interim order, and disposed of all pending applications.

Dr Keen added that with this decision, the judgment of the Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court stands upheld. The matter regarding the rejection of temporary disability certificates (less than 10 years) by JKBOPEE has now attained finality through the Supreme Court's ruling—(KNO)

Challenge to reservation policy...

HC grants 6 weeks' time to file counter affidavit

KNO

Srinagar, Sep 03: The High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh has granted six weeks' time to the respondents to file a counter affidavit in a case challenging the existing reservation policy. A division bench comprising Justice Sindhu Sharma and Justice Shahzad Azeem granted six weeks' time to the parties to file their counter affidavits in the case.

"Learned counsels for the parties pray for, and are granted, six weeks' time to file counter affidavit," the HC said in its order dated September 02.

The Court has listed the matter for further hearing on October 14.

In a fresh petition, academician and lawyer Zahoor Ahmad Bhat, along with others, has challenged key provisions of the Jammu & Kashmir Reservation Act, 2004. They have challenged Section 3, Section 4, Section 6, Section 8, and Section 9 of the Jammu & Kashmir

Reservation Act, 2004, as well as several rules under the Jammu & Kashmir Reservation Rules, 2005—including Rule 4, Rule 5, Rule 9, Rule 10, Rule 13, Rule 15, and Rule 17. Additionally, they have challenged S.O. 176 dated 15-03-2024, S.O. 127 dated 20-04-2020, S.O. 305 dated 31-05-2024, and SRO 518 dated 02-09-2019.

According to the petitioners, these provisions result in "excessive reservation," cumulatively reserving approximately 70% of posts across various categories, leaving only 30% for open merit/general category candidates.

The petitioners argue that the existing reservation pattern lacks any basis in quantifiable data and contravenes the mandate of Article 16(4) of the Constitution, which permits the state to make provisions for reservation in appointments or posts in favor of any backward class of citizens who, in the state's opinion, are not adequately represented in public services—(KNO)

Work towards fulfilling PM Modi's vision: Dr Jitendra

SAJID RAINA

New Delhi, Sep 03: Union Minister of State with independent charge in Prime Minister's Office, Dr Jitendra Singh, on Wednesday called upon all departments to step up efforts in biotechnology and related sunrise sectors for adding value to the Indian economy.

While chairing a high-level periodic review meeting of all the Science Secretaries at the newly inaugurated Kartavya Bhavan, here, Dr Singh recalled Prime Minister Narendra Modi's emphasis on the Bio-E³ (Bio-Economy, employment, environment) Policy and called upon all departments to work towards fulfilling PM Modi's vision.

Reviewing the preparations for the upcoming Indian International Science Festival (IISF), Dr Singh directed all departments to handhold and nurture start-ups, ensuring their integration into national science festivals. IISF, held annually in different parts of the country, has emerged as a people-centric platform for promoting inclusive growth in science and technology. Dr



Singh also gave detailed inputs on the upcoming Emerging Science, Technology, and Innovation Conclave (ESTIC), India's flagship annual platform that brings together ministries, innovators, Nobel Laureates, global experts, and young leaders.

He said ESTIC will showcase cutting-edge research, deep-tech breakthroughs, and thought-provoking discussions, igniting a new era of scientific leadership

towards "Viksit Bharat 2047."

The Minister reviewed the functioning of the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) and the India Meteorological Department (IMD) in the backdrop of heavy rains across several regions. He stressed the importance of strengthening real-time information dissemination and early warning systems to ensure better preparedness and public safety—(KNO)

Hazratbal shrine inaugurated after 'mega renovation'



REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Sep 03: The historic Hazratbal Shrine in Srinagar was officially inaugurated on Wednesday following months-long Mega Construction and Beautification Project led by the Jammu & Kashmir Waqf Board, officials said.

Chairperson of the Waqf Board, Dr. Syed Darakhshan Andrabi, inaugurated the project. Dr. Andrabi was accompanied by other Waqf Board members and prominent religious scholars, including Maulana Ghulam Rasool Hami and Maulana Mohammad Ashraf. The extensive renovation, initiated

last year, included rebuilding and plastering the inner structure using local heritage crafts, installing a modern digital electrical system, air-conditioning, advanced sound and CCTV systems, and enhancing interiors with gold carvings, Katamband, papier-mache, pinjrakari, calligraphy and glass art.

Chandeliers engraved with Quranic verses and a redesigned Noor-Khana further add to the shrine's grandeur. Dr. Andrabi, who supervised the works, described the project as her "dream initiative" and said it was a blessing to inaugurate it ahead of Milad celebrations. "This state-of-the-art



PHOTO: SHAH JAHANGIR

project has made Hazratbal the most beautiful shrine in the country and the region," she said, thanking everyone associated with the project, including the administration and the public, for their cooperation.

A documentary on the mega project was also screened for visitors during a small function outside the shrine.

Union Minister Kiran Rijju, tweeting on X, congratulated Dr. Andrabi and the J&K Waqf Board. He wrote: "Congratulations to Dr. Darakhshan Andrabi & J&K Waqf Board for leading the historic renovation of Hazratbal Dargah. It reads,

after 1968, this is the first major interior transformation of the shrine. The new design blends modernity with the traditional artistry of Kashmir. A proud cultural milestone for J&K's spiritual heritage. Grateful to PM Shri @narendramodiji & HM Shri @AmitShah ji for their vision & support," Rijju who is India's Minister of Minority Affairs shared on X.

It is worth mentioning that the Hazratbal Shrine, which attracts thousands of devotees from across Jammu and Kashmir and beyond, now stands as a renewed symbol of spiritual and cultural heritage—(KNO)

Kashmiri youth officiates in ICC Tri-series



WARIS FAYAZ

Srinagar, Sep 03: In a proud moment for Kashmir, Asif Iqbal from Khanpora Baramulla has been named to the ICC panel of umpires, officiating in the ongoing T20 tri-nation series featuring Pakistan, Afghanistan and the UAE at Sharjah Cricket Stadium.

Asif (43), who stood as an on-field umpire in the high-octane Pakistan-Afghanistan clash on September 2, began his journey from the narrow lanes of Baramulla where he first played cricket, in the absence of proper playgrounds. His family while recalling his early passion, said, Asif used to play in the bylanes as there was no ground here. "It's not just our pride, but the pride of the whole Baramulla, in fact the entire valley."

After basic schooling in Baramulla, Asif pursued higher studies at Aligarh before moving to Dubai for work. In 2017, he completed his Level-1 umpiring course in Dubai and later trained in Sri Lanka, which paved the way for his international career.

Local Auqaf Head, Malik Shabir expressed joy at Asif's feat while

highlighting the lack of sports infrastructure in the town. "Despite no adequate infrastructure, he made it this far. Our youth have talent, but dilapidated grounds are holding them back. We urge the administration to upgrade facilities," he said.

Mohammed Rafiq Bhat, a JKCA umpire, described Asif as his mentor, and said whenever he had doubts, he would call Asif. "He even took Zoom sessions for me to clear things up. He has been a constant source of guidance and motivation," Bhat said.

According to the accessed details, Asif Iqbal has officiated in multiple high-profile T20 Internationals, beginning with the UAE vs Pakistan match on 29 August 2025 in Sharjah (T20I #3426), followed by UAE vs Afghanistan on 31 August and Afghanistan vs Pakistan on 1 September.

Between 2021 and 2025, he has umpired 21 T20 matches, placing him among the most active officials globally. In 2024, he also stood in three men's ODIs and three Women's ODIs, demonstrating versatility across formats—(KNO)

Ramban woman delivers baby on board train

KNO

Srinagar, Sep 03: A woman gave birth to a baby boy on a train running from Sumbur to Banihal in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Wednesday. An official said that the woman went into labour and delivered a healthy baby boy.

"The Railway Protection Police team promptly provided all necessary assistance to the mother and ensured immediate care. Both the mother and the newborn are safe," he said.

The woman, Akhtara Bano, is a resident of Sumbur village of Ramban. Meanwhile, medical facilities were arranged at Banihal station to ensure timely medical attention for the mother and her child

Meanwhile, as per an official communicate, the railway staff at Banihal Railway Station assisted a woman passenger who delivered a baby on board a train today and arranged for the immediate transfer of the mother and child to the nearby hospital.

The woman, a resident of Sumbur village, was on board Train No. 64651 (Sangaldan-Baramulla) travelling with her husband when she developed severe labour pain as the train reached Banihal. With the help of female co-passengers, the delivery took place inside the coach.

On receiving the information, Station Manager A.B. Bali, along with staff members Lalit Kumar, Mudassir Ahmed

and Manzoor Ahmed, swiftly arranged medical assistance and ensured safe transfer of the mother and child to the nearest hospital. Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police (GRP) also extended support during the process.

Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Jammu Division, Uchit Singhal, and Area Manager, Kashmir Valley, Saqib Yusuf, commended the quick response of passengers and railway employees. They stated that this incident is an "excellent example of humanity and coordination between passengers and railway staff, reflecting Indian Railways' commitment to safeguarding lives."—(KNO)

DC Poonch reviews performance of RDD

KT NEWS DESK

Poonch, Sep 03: Deputy Commissioner Poonch Ashok Kumar Sharma Tuesday chaired a meeting with the officers of the Rural Development Department (RDD) to assess the progress of developmental works and implementation of Centrally Sponsored Schemes across the district.

During the meeting, the concerned officers provided block-wise details regarding the physical and financial progress achieved under key RDD schemes and other ongoing projects.

A detailed review was held on the progress of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) and the status of sanitation initiatives under the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM).

The Deputy Commissioner directed the Block Development Officers (BDOs) to expedite the execution of MGNREGA works, fast-track ongoing projects, ensure timely tendering, initiate new works without delay and complete the set targets within stipulated time frame.

The meeting was attended by ADDC, CPO, ACD, ACP, DPO, XEN REW, BDOs, AEs, JEs and other concerned.

DC Udhampur visits shelter camps

KT NEWS DESK

Udhampur, Sep 03: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Saloni Rai Tuesday visited various shelter camps established for families affected by the floods and reviewed the relief arrangements put in place.

During the visit, the DC inspected the facilities provided at these camps where flood-affected families have been accommodated temporarily. She interacted with the

flood victims, patiently listened to their concerns and assured them of timely relief measures along with continued administrative support.

The DC directed the concerned officers to provide all necessary facilities and services to the camp inmates. She further instructed all departments to remain on high alert and provide swift assistance and support to the affected families. She also distributed relief material among the affected families.

SMVDSB extends relief to landslide affected families

KT NEWS DESK

Katra, Sep 03: In a humanitarian gesture, the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) has undertaken a significant relief initiative as per the directions of Lieutenant Governor and Chairman of SMVDSB Manoj Sinha to support more than 1000 families affected by heavy rainfall and landslides in Katra and other parts of Reasi & Udhampur Districts.

Initially, a relief supply for 400 families was handed over to the District Administration, Reasi to ensure timely distribution of relief material to affected families.

The relief material includes dry ration kits, utensils, blankets, medicines, buckets, tarpaulin and tents etc. for addressing the immediate needs and helping them cope with the aftermath of the calamity. Furthermore, on the

request of the District Administration; families of village Purana Daroor whose homes have been severely damaged temporarily shifted to Shakti Bhawan, Niharika Complex of Shrine Board, Katra for ensuring their safety and well-being during this challenging period.

Sachin Kumar Vaishya, Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board reaffirms the Board's commitment to supporting the local community, especially during crises and underscored that in coordination with the District Administration, Reasi; The Shrine Board shall provide comprehensive assistance to affected families for ensuring their well-being and safety.

Notably, Shrine Board has undertaken such initiatives during the past to serve the community during times of crisis including COVID-19 pandemic and other calamities as well.

EDITORIAL

Highway Closure Must Not Become Licence For Exploitation

The week-long closure of the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway has exposed a distressing reality: in times of crisis, opportunism often trumps empathy. While landslides and shooting stones blocking the valley's sole surface link are natural challenges, the artificial inflation of prices for essentials like vegetables, poultry, and eggs is a man-made injustice. It is unacceptable that residents are forced to pay nearly double for basic

goods. Collard greens are sold at Rs 90 instead of Rs 50, chicken at Rs 190 per kg, and many other edible items at exorbitant prices, while suppliers cite "shortages" to justify profiteering. This is a moral failure. Vulnerable families, daily wage workers, and fixed-income households bear the brunt of this exploitation. Vendors may argue that limited supplies compel higher prices, but sudden, exorbitant mark-ups, especially on locally grown produce like

Haakh, reveal a blatant disregard for fairness. The administration's response, though well-intentioned, has been inadequate. Forming market checking squads and issuing warnings are reactive steps, not deterrents. What is needed is proactive, visible, and stringent enforcement. The government must act decisively. First, it should immediately cap margins on essential commodities during emergencies and monitor shipments to prevent hoarding.

Second, officials must conduct daily, surprise inspections across all major markets, including Sopore, Baramulla, Srinagar, and beyond, and penalise violators with heavy fines and licence cancellations. Third, the administration should explore airlifting perishables or activating local supply chains to reduce dependency on the highway. Beyond immediate measures, this situation underscores the urgent need for diversifying connectivity, whether through

accelerating the Mughal Road upgrade, exploring tunnel projects, or strengthening air cargo facilities. A single highway cannot dictate survival for millions. In adversity, a society is judged by how it protects its most vulnerable. The administration must demonstrate that exploitation will not be tolerated, not through statements, but through action. The people of Kashmir deserve dignity, not desperation, in difficult times.

Vocal For Local In Food Processing Sector Pradhan Mantri Formalisation Of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME)

How the PMFME scheme helped a Kerala entrepreneur expand production, increase profits, and showcase the power of government initiatives in nurturing local food businesses

Press Information Bureau

Ruby Fresh Snacks in Ernakulam, Kerala, tells the story of how a small dream became a thriving enterprise. Founded by Mr. P M Jaleel in 2011 with groundnut laddoos, the unit grew with the support of the PM Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme. A loan of over 3 lakh rupees in 2021 helped him buy new machines, double production, and expand his product range. Daily profits rose from about 12,000 rupees to nearly 20,000, and his turnover crossed 32 lakh rupees in 2021-22. Today, Ruby Fresh Snacks is not only a source of quality local treats but also a symbol of how government support can transform small entrepreneurs into inspiring success stories.

The Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme was launched on 29 June 2020. It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme that focuses on the growth and formalisation of micro food units across the country. The scheme is part of the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan and supports the Vocal for Local vision in the food processing sector. It provides financial, technical and business assistance to entrepreneurs for setting up new units or upgrading existing ones. The scheme runs from 2020-21 to 2025-26 with an outlay of Rs. 10,000 crores. Its goal is to make micro enterprises more competitive, bring them into the organised sector and unlock new opportunities for growth.

The expenditure under the scheme is to be shared in 60:40 ratio between Central and State Governments, in 90:10 ratio with North Eastern and Himalayan States, 60:40 ratio with UTs with legislature and 100% by the Center for other UTs.

The scheme aims to provide direct support to 2 lakh micro food processing units through credit linked subsidies. It also seeks to create common infrastructure and

strengthen institutional support to drive faster growth in the sector.

India's food processing industry has seen a remarkable growth over the past 11 years, shaped by its strong farm base, growing demand, and supportive government policies. The country is set to become a global leader in this sector, with steady growth ahead. Agriculture remains the backbone of food processing, while the sector itself has become vital to the economy through its rising share in GDP, jobs, and exports.

As of July 2025, for FY 2024-25, agriculture and processed food exports reached approximately USD 49.4 billion with processed food exports constituting around 20.4%, positioning India as a rising global leader in food processing. The number of registered food business operators has expanded from 25 lakh to 64 lakh, reflecting growing formalisation. Infrastructure has also strengthened with establishing 24 mega food parks, 22 agro-processing clusters and completing 289 cold chain projects and 305 processing and preservation units, creating significant additional capacity. Further, 10 projects under Operation Greens have enhanced value addition, while 225 R&D projects have yielded 20 patents and 52 commercialised technologies.

Key components of the Scheme

The program has 4 broad components addressing the needs of the sector:

Support to individuals and groups of micro-enterprises.

Support for Individual Units

Credit-linked capital subsidy of 35% of the project cost.

Maximum ceiling of Rs 10 lakh per unit.

Minimum 10% beneficiary contribution, balance through bank loan.

Support for Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) and Producer Co-operatives

Grant support at 35% with credit linkage. Training and capacity building provided.

Maximum funding as prescribed under scheme norms.

Support for Self-Help Groups (SHGs)

Seed Capital Support

Rs 40,000 per SHG member for working capital and small tools.

Priority for SHGs working on ODOP (One District One Approach) products.

Seed capital given at federation level and disbursed as repayable loan to members.

Branding and Marketing Support

Marketing and branding support is extended to groups of FPOs, SHGs, Cooperatives or SPVs (Special Purpose Vehicles) of micro food processing units. This assistance follows the ODOP (One District One Approach) approach and is limited to products promoted at the State or regional level.

Eligible items for support

Training in marketing fully funded under the scheme.

Development of common brand, packaging and standardisation.

Tie-ups with national and regional retail chains and state institutions encouraged.

Quality control measures to ensure products meet set standards.

Detailed Project Reports (DPRs)

A Detailed Project Report (DPR) is required for proposals. It should include project details such as product profile, strategy, quality control, aggregation of produce, packaging and branding, pricing, promotion, storage, and marketing channels. Plans for sales growth must also be outlined.

Financial support of up to Rs 5 lakh is available from the State Nodal Agency (SNA) for preparing DPRs related to marketing and branding.

The DPR should also carry a flow chart showing activities from raw material procurement to marketing. It must highlight quality control points and present a five-year plan covering promotional work, expansion of producer participation, and

turnover growth.

As part of the scheme, the Ministry provides Guidelines (Model DPR's) for the preparation of Branding and Marketing DPRs. This helps entrepreneurs, FPOs, SHGs, cooperatives, or SPVs develop well-structured proposals with templates, technical terms of reference, and formats required to apply for branding and marketing support.

Support for Common Infrastructure

The following common infrastructure are being funded under the Scheme:

Facilities for assaying agricultural produce, sorting, grading, warehousing, and cold storage at the farm gate.

Common processing units for ODOP produce.

Incubation centres with one or more product lines, available to smaller units on hire. Incubation centres may also be used partly for training. All incubation centres to be run on a commercial basis.

Under the PMFME Scheme, the total number of approved units till 30th June 2025, across different components, are as follows: For the Credit Linked Subsidy component, 1,44,517 applications have been sanctioned, amounting to Rs 11501.79 crore. For the Seed Capital component, 3,48,907 applications have been approved, with a sanctioned amount of Rs 1182.48 crore. The Common Infrastructure component has 93 applications sanctioned, totaling Rs 187.20 crore. Lastly, the Branding & Marketing component has 27 applications approved, with a sanctioned amount of Rs 82.82 crore.

Capacity Building & Research

Capacity building and training form an essential part of upgrading technology and bringing micro food processing units into the formal system. At the national level, National Institute for Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management (NIFTEM) and Indian Institute of Food Processing Technology (IIPT) lead capacity building and research, with financial

support provided for these activities. In collaboration with State-level technical institutes, they offer training and research support to selected enterprises, groups, and clusters. Specialised institutions under ICAR, CSIR, and premier institutes like Defence Food Research Laboratory (DFRL) and Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI) also partner in delivering product-specific training and research across the country.

ODOP focus

The scheme follows the One District One Product (ODOP) approach to scale up procurement, services, and marketing. States identify products, with priority on perishables such as fruits, vegetables, spices, fisheries, and traditional foods like honey and turmeric. Support is focused on processing, storage, branding, and reducing wastage. Capital investment is prioritised for ODOP units, while new enterprises are eligible only for ODOP products. The approach complements cluster-based initiatives under the Agriculture Export Policy and Agriculture Ministry, ensuring stronger value chains and common facilities.

Conclusion

The PMFME Scheme marks a major step in strengthening micro food enterprises and unlocking the potential of local produce. Through its ODOP focus, common infrastructure, skill training, and access to credit, it provides small entrepreneurs with the tools to grow and compete. By reducing wastage, improving value addition, and promoting branding, the scheme not only boosts farmers' and producers' incomes but also creates jobs and supports rural development. It stands as a bridge between tradition and modern markets, driving sustainable and inclusive growth in the food processing sector.

India's Growth Shows Resilience

Country's resilient economy and demographic dividend signal long-term growth confidence

Rouhin Deb

A growing workforce with rising incomes provides not just near-term support for consumption but also long-term confidence in India's demographic dividend.

The month of August has delivered a resounding message from India — one that stands out amid the turbulence of the global economy. The recently released GDP data for the first quarter of FY 2025–26 confirms what many had intuited but few expected to see so strongly: India's economy is resilient, reform-oriented, and ready for renewed growth.

Data from MOSPI shows that India's real GDP grew at 7.8 per cent in April–June 2025, far exceeding analyst expectations and marking a five-quarter high. This performance makes India not only the fastest-growing major economy but also one that is steadily widening its lead over peers.

The numbers are encouraging not merely for their scale but for what they signify about the underlying health of the economy. Supply-side drivers — manufacturing, construction, and services — recorded strong expansion, reflecting broad-based momentum.

On the demand side, robust private consumption and investment provided the bedrock of growth. Private Final Consumption Expenditure (PFCE) grew by 7 per cent, pushing its share of GDP to 60.3 per cent — the highest first-quarter level in 15 years.

Several recent policy steps have buoyed household sentiment: Income tax reliefs



announced in the Union Budget, a 100 basis point cut in the repo rate, and healthy progress in Kharif sowing, each of which has amplified disposable incomes and eased financial conditions. Meanwhile, Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) grew by 7.8 per cent, underpinned by a surge in both public and private investments. The Government's capital expenditure in Q1 was 30.1 per cent higher than the average for the same quarter in the past three years, reflecting its continued focus on infrastructure.

The private sector, too, showed renewed confidence, with new investment announcements rising 3.3 times year-on-year. With RBI data

showing that capacity utilisation has risen both sequentially and year-on-year, the manufacturing sector appears poised for further expansion.

Equally heartening is the macroeconomic stability accompanying this growth. Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation eased to an eight-year low in July 2025, giving households greater spending power and businesses more predictable cost structures. The Union government's fiscal deficit-to-GDP ratio is expected to moderate further to 4.4 per cent in 2025–26, showing steady consolidation from the pandemic-fuelled high reached in FY 2020–21. The labour market is showing encouraging signs. Formal

sector job creation in Q1 FY26 was 1.6 times higher than a year ago. Urban unemployment remains well below pre-pandemic levels, while hiring activity has stayed buoyant — the Naukri JobSpeak index points to continued recruitment momentum.

A growing workforce with rising incomes provides not just near-term support for consumption but also long-term confidence in India's demographic dividend.

Concerns about the deflator being low are also unfounded. Converting nominal GDP (valued at current prices) into real GDP (valued at constant prices) by applying an inflation indicator is a longstanding and globally accepted practice. A small gap between real and nominal GDP growth is simply a statistical reflection of the prevailing low-inflation environment, not a data anomaly.

The GDP deflator covers the full spectrum of goods and services in the economy, unlike CPI (limited to household consumption) or WPI (which excludes services). One of the former Chief Statisticians has even noted that the GDP deflator is "possibly the most accurate measure of inflation." If inflation is low, the deflator will naturally also be low. This is precisely the case in Q1 FY 2025–26.

Beyond the numbers, August brought a symbolic milestone. S&P upgraded India's long-term sovereign credit rating to 'BBB' from 'BBB', the first upgrade in 18 years. The recognition was underpinned by strong economic growth, enhanced monetary policy credibility, and a clear government

commitment to fiscal consolidation.

For India, this upgrade holds real economic consequences. Lower borrowing costs, higher investor confidence, and increased foreign capital inflows are likely to follow. Of course, India is not immune to global headwinds. The imposition of fresh US tariffs has unsettled exporters, and the external environment remains fraught with geopolitical uncertainty and shifting trade alignments.

Yet, the government and industry appear to be preparing themselves for the brace, with reports of constant engagement between them. Growth may moderate in the quarters ahead as the base effect wanes, but the baseline is now higher.

With reforms deepening, investment gathering pace, and macroeconomic stability intact, India looks to sustain growth well above global averages. India's Q1 FY26 print is, however, not a finish line. The recovery is broadening, but sustaining higher growth will depend on further reforms, keeping inflation expectations anchored, and raising productivity.

With the GST Council due this week, locking in GST rationalisation with a stable, lower-rate structure becomes important. If both steady macro anchors from the Centre and a competitive reform push from all the states move in lockstep, India can convert resilience into a higher, more stable growth path.

Rouhin Deb is the Chief Economist, Chief Minister's Secretariat, Government of Assam

Source: The Pioneer

The views expressed by contributors on this page are their own and do not necessarily reflect the policies or positions of the newspaper

DC hands over relief material in Udhampur

KT News Desk

UDHAMPUR, SEPTEMBER 03: Deputy Commissioner Udhampur Saloni Rai Wednesday distributed relief material among the flood-affected families here at the DC Office Complex.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Prem Singh and Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Dr. Umesh Shan among other functionaries were also present.

The DC interacted with the affected families, listened

to their grievances and assured them of all possible assistance from the District Administration.

She expressed deep anguish over widespread destruction caused by the prolonged spell of heavy rains and flash floods in Udhampur district and elsewhere in the UT.

The DC further informed that efforts are being made to expedite relief, rehabilitation and restore damaged infrastructure and provide temporary shelters to the displaced families.

Eid-Milad-Un Nabi (SAW) arrangements finalized

KT News Desk

UDHAMPUR, SEPTEMBER 03: To finalize the necessary arrangements in connection with ensuing Eid-Milad-Un Nabi, a meeting of the District Officers was held Wednesday under the chairpersonship of Deputy Commissioner Saloni Rai here in the Conference Hall DC Office Complex.

Additional Deputy Commissioner, Prem Singh; IAS Probationer Seerat Baji; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Dr Umesh Shan and other District Officers besides representatives from civil society attended the meeting.

Detailed discussions were held on the arrangements for the auspicious day, especially the availability of drinking water supply, uninterrupted power supply, provision of First Aid, Fire safety, availability of quality consumable items and a check on overpricing, besides proper sanitation in the city.

The DC directed the

concerned departments to take measures to ensure adequate water supply, First Aid, uninterrupted power supply, security arrangements and cleanliness in the district.

The Municipal authorities were directed to conduct special cleanliness and sanitation drives in the towns.

To keep a check on the rates and quality of the eatables, a team of officers was constituted to conduct frequent inspection of the market.

The Chief Medical officer was directed to keep available Medicare facility at the venues of congregations and special prayers. The District Police was asked to deploy adequate police personnel at traffic jam prone places of the town besides ensuring traffic regulation by the Traffic police.

The representatives of market organizations were directed to prominently display the approved rate lists of eatables in the shops.

Safety of public government's foremost priority: Sakeena Itoo, Nasir visit Anantnag, take stock of flood situation

KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, SEPTEMBER 03: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo along with Advisor to the Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani Wednesday visited Anantnag and took first hand appraisal of the prevailing flood situation in the district.

During the visit, the Minister and Advisor visited flood gauge station Sangam and assessed the current water levels. They reviewed the latest readings recorded at the gauge station and interacted with the officials of the Irrigation & Flood Control Department.

Officers of Irrigation and Flood Control department briefed the Minister and Advisor about the prevailing discharge levels, forecast trends, and precautionary measures being undertaken to ensure timely response in case of further rise.

On the occasion, the Minister emphasized that safeguarding public health and safety remains the government's foremost priority. She directed the concerned officers to maintain close vigil, ensure round-the-clock monitoring of river levels and remain fully prepared with emergency response plans.

The Advisor to the Chief Minister underlined the importance of coordination among line departments for effective disaster preparedness. He stressed the need for real-time information flow to both district administrations and local communities, so that any emergent situation can be handled without delay.

Later, the Minister and the Advisor also held a meeting at



district headquarters Anantnag to review the prevailing flood situation in Anantnag and Shopian districts.

The meeting was attended by MLAs Altaf Ahmad Wani, Abdul Majid Larmi, Reyaz Ahmad Khan and Zaffar Ali Khatana; Deputy Commissioner Anantnag, Syeed Fakhruddin Hamid; Chief Engineer, FC Kashmir, ADDC, ADC, ACR, ACD, Anantnag, Exen PHE Bijbihara, Exen Flood Control Anantnag, AEEs of various wings and other concerned officers while as ADDC Shopian and other concerned officers of the district Shopian participated in the meeting virtually.

During the meeting, the Minister directed the officers to maintain round-the-clock monitoring of water levels of all rivers and streams and ensure swift communication mechanism between field staff and control rooms. She asked the Deputy Commissioners to disseminate necessary alerts to the public through their respective control rooms on

hourly basis so that people in vulnerable areas can be safely evacuated at the earliest in case of any exigency.

The Minister further stressed upon officers to ensure adequate stock of ration, availability of drinking water and other essential items. She also called upon the health authorities to keep availability of medicines, and readiness of medical teams to deal with any possible exigency. She further asked them to deploy mobile medical teams to vulnerable areas.

During the meeting, the Minister and the also took stock of the functioning of disaster management teams. They stressed on coordinated action between civil administration, police and local volunteers to deal with any kind of exigency. They reiterated the Government's priority to safeguard lives and appealed to the general public to remain calm yet cautious and cooperate fully with the administration by following advisories and safety guidelines.

Implementation of ABDP works reviewed

KT News Desk

KISHTWAR, SEPTEMBER 03: Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar Pankaj Kumar Sharma Wednesday chaired a review meeting to assess the progress of developmental works being carried out under the Aspirational Block Development Programme (ABDP) of the Government of India.

The meeting focused on the Aspirational Block Marwah. The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the current status of key performance indicators

across health and nutrition, education, Agriculture and allied sectors, basic infrastructure, drinking water, sanitation, financial inclusion and social development.

Each indicator was thoroughly reviewed, with discussions centered on current progress, suggestions for enhancement, and areas requiring urgent attention. He directed all concerned officers to intensify efforts to bridge gaps in sectors showing and to take immediate corrective measures to improve performance indicators and

achieve the set targets.

The DC also stressed the need for collaborative efforts from all line departments to ensure holistic and timely development.

The meeting was attended by CPO Kishtwar Akhil Thakur, CMO Kishtwar Dr. Rajinder Kumar, CEO Kishtwar Sanjay Dogra, CAO Kishtwar Kushal Chandel, ExEn Jal Shakti Kishtwar Sanjeev Kumar Gupta, CDPO Marwah Dr. Kuldeep Kumar, LDM Kishtwar Harsh Rawal, besides other concerned officers.

CEO DDMA assesses relief, restoration efforts in Ramban

KT News Desk

RAMBAN, SEPTEMBER 03: Additional Deputy Commissioner Ramban Varunjeet Singh Charak, who also serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), Wednesday chaired a meeting of key departments to review scale of rain and flash-flood induced damage to public infrastructure in the district.

The ADC took stock of

damages to both public and private infrastructure, the progress of restoration works and other relevant information pertaining to agriculture and allied sectors.

The meeting was attended by ACR Shokat Hayat Mattoo; CPO Dr. Shakeeb Ahmed Rather; Executive Engineers of PWD, JPDCL, PMGSY and Jal Shakti, Tehsildars and other concerned officers.

The ADC directed Tehsildars

to submit compensation cases for losses suffered by affected people in their jurisdictions. They were directed to physically verify the damaged infrastructure, collect pre- and post-damage status reports, and submit cases to provide relief to genuine applicants under SDRF norms.

It was informed that ex-gratia relief has already been provided to the families of the deceased by Chairman DDMA

Samba admin accelerates infra development under SASCI

KT News Desk

SAMBA, SEPTEMBER 03: To fast-track developmental projects in the district, Deputy Commissioner Samba Ayushi Sudan Wednesday asked the executing departments to ensure strict adherence to project timelines and implement a robust monitoring mechanism.

She was speaking at a meeting convened to assess the progress of projects sanctioned under the Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI) scheme.

The high-level meeting, held at DC Office Complex Nandini Hills, brought together key departmental heads and project stakeholders to ensure optimal utilization of allocated funds and timely completion of critical infrastructure projects.

Deputy Commissioner Sudan emphasized the administration's commitment to transforming Samba's infrastructure landscape through efficient project execution. She directed all concerned officers to eliminate procedural delays and maintain complete transparency in project implementation. The DC issued clear directives to accelerate the pace of developmental works, remove

operational bottlenecks hampering project progress, ensure strict adherence to project timelines, and implement robust monitoring mechanisms.

The meeting witnessed active participation from developmental departments including Public Works, Health, Water Supply, Power and Industrial Development, reflecting the administration's integrated approach to development. The cross-departmental synergy is expected to streamline project execution and maximize resource utilization.

"Our focus should be on delivering projects that enhance public welfare and strengthen district infrastructure," Deputy Commissioner Sudan remarked, emphasizing that periodic reviews will be institutionalized to track progress and ensure accountability at every level.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner Samba, General Manager DIC Samba, Chief Medical Officer Samba, Executive Engineers PWD (R&B) Division and Electric Division Vijaypur, JPDCL Jammu and Jal Shakti Department PHE Division Samba among others.

DC Reasi seeks explanation from 13 officials



KT News Desk

REASI, SEPTEMBER 03: On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Reasi Nidhi Malik, explanations have been sought from several officers and officials who were found absent from duty amid the ongoing relief operations.

In view of the inclement weather conditions, the District Administration Reasi has been actively engaged in relief and restoration operations across the district under the supervision of the Deputy Commissioner. To ensure uninterrupted functioning of essential services, the General Administration Department (GAD) as well as the District Administration had already cancelled the leaves of officers and officials.

Despite these clear instructions, it was found that 13 officials, including Chief Agriculture

Officer, District Agriculture Officer, eight Block Development Officers (BDOs), Medical Officer Dharmari, an Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) and one Senior Assistant posted in Mahore Sub-Division—left their stations without seeking permission from the competent authority. Such conduct of these officials amount to serious dereliction of duty and a violation of government directives.

The concerned officials have been directed to explain their position for remaining absent from duty amid the ongoing relief operations.

The district administration Reasi has reiterated that strict disciplinary measures will be taken against any officer or employee found violating orders, especially at a time when their services are vital for ongoing relief and restoration efforts.

DC Poonch reviews measures to curb accidents

KT News Desk

POONCH, SEPTEMBER 03: Deputy Commissioner Poonch Ashok Kumar Sharma, who also chairs the District Level Road Safety Committee (DLRSC), conducted a detailed review meeting to assess and strengthen road safety measures across the district.

The discussions focused on immediate and long term steps to be taken to minimize road accidents and ensure the safety of commuters.

The Deputy Commissioner issued strict directions to all concerned departments to install speed limit signboards, convex mirrors, and crash barriers at vulnerable points, based on need and priority.

In a significant directive to the Chief Education Officer, the DC emphasized that vehicles must not be permitted



to carry pre-nursery students. Additionally, he stressed on holding awareness programs in schools and colleges to educate students on road safety rules

and regulations. Addressing infrastructural concerns, the Deputy Commissioner directed the executive engineers to

immediately identify and rectify black spots—accident-prone areas—on roads to ensure the safe movement of the public.

The Committee also underlined the need for strict enforcement against negligent driving, calling for revocation of driving licenses of individuals found guilty of accidents due to careless or reckless behavior.

The DC reiterated the district administration commitment to building a safe and responsible road culture, urging all stakeholders to work in close coordination for effective implementation of safety measures.

The meeting was attended by ADC, Tahir Mustafa Malik, ASP, Mohan Lal, SE, CMO, Dr. Parvaiz Ahmed Khan, Chief Education Officer, ARTO Basharat Mehmood, DIO NIC, Parvinder Singh, Executive Engineers besides other concerned officers were present.

Nodal Officers sensitized about NTCP

KT News Desk

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 03: A one day sensitization workshop on National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP) was Wednesday held for the Nodal Officers of key stakeholder departments by State Tobacco Control Cell Directorate of Health Services Jammu.

Participants from Health, Police, Sales Tax Excise, Education, Labour, members from Civil Society and several other stakeholders attended the workshop.

In his address, Director Health Services, Jammu Dr Abdul Hamid Zargar highlighted the impending need for eradicating the menace of Tobacco consumption. "More than 50 lakh persons lose their life to tobacco attributable causes yearly worldwide— the number of deaths in India being 13.5 lakh,"



the DHSJ said. He said that the Department of Health is actively working in the field of Tobacco Cessation and has established Tobacco Cessation Centers in all the District Hospitals of Jammu Division, where the people are being provided free counselling and medicines to help them quit its use. He informed the participants of the efforts being made by the department to create awareness amongst the population regarding the ill effects of Tobacco, and prevent the people from picking up this habit.

He stressed about the

importance of multi stakeholder cooperation in Tobacco Control and the role of each Department to address the growing menace of Tobacco. He impressed upon the participants to implement the provisions of COTPA 2003 and other tobacco control laws in letter and spirit.

The participants were sensitized about the Epidemiology of Tobacco use, Tobacco Control Laws including COTPA-2003 and PECA 2019, Tobacco Free Educational Institutions and Tobacco Free Village initiative of Government of India.

Govt announces next-generation GST reforms to make life easier for citizens, boost economy

KT News Desk

New Delhi, Sept 03: In a landmark announcement from the Red Fort on Independence Day 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi revealed a series of transformative GST reforms designed to benefit every citizen and stimulate economic growth. The reforms focus on simplifying the tax structure, reducing costs on daily essentials, and making insurance and healthcare more affordable. With a strategic multi-sectoral approach, these changes aim to improve quality of life, promote ease of doing business, and support vital sectors such as agriculture, health, and small industries.

Next-generation GST reforms, as announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi from the ramparts of Red Fort on 15th August 2025, represent a strategic, principled, and citizen-centric evolution of a landmark tax framework, which will enhance the quality of life of every last citizen

GST Council approves reforms with a multi-sectoral and multi-thematic focus on improving

the lives of all citizens and ensuring ease of doing business for all, including small traders and businessmen

GST Council approves rate rationalisation with a focus on Common-man, Labour-intensive Industries, Farmers and Agriculture, Health, Key Drivers of the economy

Exemption of GST on all individual life insurance policies whether term life, ULIP or endowment policies and reinsurance thereof to make insurance affordable for the common man and increase the insurance coverage in the country.

Exemption of GST on all individual health insurance policies (including family floater policies) and policies for senior citizens) and reinsurance thereof to make insurance affordable for the common man and increase the insurance coverage in the country

Rationalisation of the current 4-tiered tax rate structure into a citizen-friendly 'Simple Tax' - a 2 rate structure with a Standard Rate of 18% and a Merit Rate of 5%; a special de-merit rate of 40% for a select few goods and



services

Reduction of GST from 18% OR 12% to 5% on a host of common man items such as, hair oil, toilet soap bars, shampoos, toothbrushes, toothpaste, Bicycles, Tableware, kitchenware, other household articles, et al

Reduction of GST from 5% to NIL on Ultra-High Temperature (UHT) milk, Prepackaged and labelled chena or paneer; All

the Indian Breads will see NIL rates (Chapati or roti, paratha, parotta, etc)

Reduction of GST from 12% OR 18% to 5% on almost all of the food items such as packaged namkeens, Bhujia, Sauces, Pasta, Instant Noodles, Chocolates, Coffee, Preserved Meat, Cornflakes, Butter, Ghee, etc.

Reduction of GST from 28% to 18% on Air-conditioning

machines, TVs-32 inch (all TVs now at 18%), Dishwashing machines, Small cars, Motorcycles equal to or less than 350 CC

Reduction of GST from 12% to 5% on agricultural goods, such as tractors, agricultural, horticultural or forestry machinery for soil preparation or cultivation, harvesting or threshing machinery, including straw or fodder balers, grass or hay mowers,

composting machines etc

Reduction of GST from 12% to 5% on labour intensive goods such as Handicrafts, Marble and travertine blocks, granite blocks, and Intermediate leather goods

Reduction of GST from 28% to 18% on Cement

Reduction of GST from 12% to NIL on 33 lifesaving drugs and medicines and from 5% to NIL on 3 lifesaving drugs & medicines used for treatment of cancer, rare diseases and other severe chronic diseases.

Reduction of GST on all other drugs and medicines from 12% to 5%.

Reduction of GST from 18% to 5% on various medical apparatus and devices used for medical, surgical, dental or veterinary usage or for physical or chemical analysis

Reduction of GST from 12% to 5% on various medical equipment and supplies devices such as wadding gauze, bandages, diagnostic kits and reagents, blood glucose monitoring system (Glucometer) medical devices, etc

Reduction of GST from 28% to 18% on Small Cars and

Motorcycles equal to or below 350cc

Reduction of GST from 28% to 18% on buses, trucks, ambulances etc

Uniform rate of 18% on all auto parts irrespective of their HS code; Three-Wheelers from 28% to 18%

Correction of long-pending inverted duty structure for the manmade textile sector by reducing GST rate on manmade fibre from 18% to 5% and man-made yarn from 12% to 5%

Correction of inverted duty structure in fertilizer sector by reducing GST from 18% to 5% on Sulphuric acid, Nitric acid and Ammonia

Reduction of GST from 12% to 5% on renewable energy devices and parts for their manufacture

Reduction of GST from 12% to 5% on "Hotel Accommodation" services having value less than or equal to Rs. 7,500 per unit per day or equivalent

Reduction of GST from 18% to 5% on beauty and physical well-being services used by common man including services of gyms, salons, barbers, yoga centres, etc.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Two killed, flood threat

Lidder Nallah at Batkoot: 1.38 m (danger mark: 1.65 m); and Sindh Nallah at Doderhama: 3.63 m (danger mark: 3.9 m).

Many Areas Submerged

Meanwhile, in Khushipora Telbal, eyewitnesses told KNO that water levels in the area are rising, with sudden inundation of houses, lanes and the main road.

Residents rushed to move their belongings to the upper storeys. "Water entered our homes within minutes. We could do little except protect children and elderly members," said a local.

Some parts of Mehjoor Nagar and Telbal are also waterlogged. Many households reported damage to goods stored on ground floors, while movement in the areas remains severely restricted.

In the Jammu division, the rivers like Tawi, Chenab, Basantar, Ujh, and Ravi, along with their tributaries, are flowing at or above danger levels, exacerbating flood risks in low-lying areas.

The Tawi River in Jammu was recorded at 15 feet, one foot above the danger mark, while the Chenab River in Akhnour was flowing four feet above the evacuation level of 42 feet.

Rescue Operation Launched, Over 300 Evacuated

The flooding has left around 40 people trapped in a village in Akhnour. The Border Security Force (BSF) evacuated 47 civilians from Village Fattu Kotli using two helicopters. Jammu Police carried out evacuations in Akhnour, Khour, Belicharana, Miran Sahib, and other affected areas.

In Anantnag district, police rescued 25 nomadic families stranded under a bridge after water levels rose due to heavy rains.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Doda, Harvinder Singh, said that continuous rainfall from early yesterday morning until the evening caused significant disruption across the district. The heavy downpour resulted in extensive damage, with approximately 60 to 70 houses destroyed, around 150 severely damaged, and another 350 to 400 partially affected. In addition to residential losses, the district's roads, schools, power infrastructure, and water supply systems suffered considerable impact. Restoration and repair work is currently underway to address these damages, he said.

Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, said that around 2,500 people were rescued from flood-affected areas of Kulgam.

In the Mahore subdivision of Reasi district, 86 houses were affected, and 100 families were shifted to safer locations. The official said rescue teams continue operations, and food and essential supplies have been provided to all displaced families.

Amid the prevailing situation, the authorities have urged residents to follow advisories and remain alert while rescue teams continue relief operations across the region.

Weatherman Predicts Improvement

Meanwhile, the weatherman has predicted an improvement in the weather conditions from tomorrow, but stated that a brief spell of rain and thunder at a few places with moderate showers over a few places of Jammu division cannot be ruled out for the next few days till September 07.

Director Meteorological department (MeT), Dr Mukhtar Ahmad, said that from September 08 to 11, a spell of moderate rain is expected over a few districts of Jammu division during 8th late night and 9th morning and improvement thereafter till 11th evening.

The MeT has also issued an advisory, advising people to stay away from water bodies, Nallas, river embankments and loose structures, etc.

NHs, Roads Closed

Nonetheless, the heavy rainfall has triggered multiple landslides and mudslides, leading to the closure of several vital roads and highways across the division.

Jammu-Srinagar National Highway remains closed for the second consecutive day due to landslides and land subsidence at Thard in Udhampur, with additional

blockages reported at Chanderkote, Kela Morh, and Battery Cheshma in Ramban.

The traffic on Jammu-Pathankot Highway also remained disturbed due to being blocked near Vijaypur in Samba district following the damage of a pillar of the Devak River bridge.

The Bani-Basohli road (blocked at Sukha Nallah), Basohli-Mabanru road (at Dhani), Mahappur-Kathua road (at Peddy Nallah), and Qiala Chak-Ramkote road (near Kali Mata Mandir in Galak) remain closed. The Mughal Road and Jammu-Kishtwar National Highway are also shut due to landslides and shooting stones.

A massive landslide has also blocked the Doda-Pul Doda road on the Batote-Kishtwar stretch following continuous rainfall in the district, and authorities have advised people to avoid travel in the affected area until clearance work is completed.

The Jammu-Rajouri road between Tanda and Kalidhar Mandir is also closed, while the 4th Tawi Bridge has collapsed amid rising river levels, suspending traffic movement.

Also, the Jammu-Rajouri-Poonch National Highway has remained closed since last night at Chowki Choura near Kandi Tunnel, leaving many vehicles stranded due to the disintegrated road surface. Officials have called for the immediate restoration of the highways to reconnect Rajouri with Jammu.

Army Launches Rescue & Relief Ops

In the ongoing devastating floods in Jammu region, the troops of White Knight Corps undertook prompt rescue and relief operations in the general areas of Dhar Khour & Channi Village, Akhnour.

The rescue columns, in coordination with civilian agencies, evacuated 80-90 civilians, including children, to safety. Among those rescued were two persons in critical condition.

In order to provide immediate assistance, two Medical Camps have been established by troops of White Knight Corps at Pallanwala & Palatan.

The medical support was extended to all evacuees, reinforcing the Indian Army's commitment to stand by people in every crisis. (KNO)

Jhelum swelling, but

reminded that the devastating 2014 floods occurred only after Jhelum crossed record levels of 34.7 ft at Sangam and 29.5 ft at Ram Munshi Bagh. "Compared to that, today's levels are normal and there is no need for panic," the official added.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah also urged calm, saying: "Dal Gates have not been opened, Kandizaal bund has not been breached or broken. The Jhelum is climbing but at a much slower rate than was feared. The administration is not going to lower its guard, we continue to monitor the situation very closely, but at the same time we appeal to people not to believe rumours that are being spread unnecessarily."

Officials reiterated their appeal to journalists and Facebook page owners to report responsibly and avoid spreading unnecessary fear. "Creating panic only causes distress among the public. The situation is being closely monitored, and there is no cause for alarm," they said. (KNO)

Assist people:

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.

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.

CM Omar reviews

and health departments, and to maintain readiness for any eventuality. CM directed that adequate stock of ration, fuel, medicines and drinking water be made available in vulnerable areas, with emergency medical teams kept on standby.

Chief Minister has been taking hourly updates on rising water levels in Jhelum and its tributaries, status of power & water supply,

road connectivity and has directed concerned departments to ensure that advance warnings are issued to the general public about any eventuality and for administration to provide timely help and assistance to people.

Appealing for public cooperation, the Chief Minister urged people to follow advisories, avoid unsafe areas, and report emergencies promptly. He assured that the government is closely monitoring the situation and committed to mitigating hardships.

"The safety and well-being of our citizens is our top most priority. I appeal to the public to stay vigilant, extend cooperation to the administration. Together, we will overcome this challenge," CM Omar Abdullah said.

The Chief Minister directed officials to provide regular updates and reaffirmed that all possible measures are being taken to ensure relief and safety of the affected families.

Over 3,000 vehicles

made to reopen the highway by Thursday.

In addition to the National Highway, other vital roads have also been shut. The Srinagar-Sonamarg-Gumri (SSG) Road, connecting the Valley with Ladakh, is also blocked, while the Sinthan Top Road and Mughal Road have been rendered unsafe after heavy rains triggered slides at several points.

"The continuous rainfall has made restoration work difficult. Our teams are on the ground, but safety remains a priority as fresh landslides occur intermittently," a Traffic Department official said.

The closure of these roads has severely hit connectivity, affecting both essential supplies and passenger movement. Fruit-laden trucks from Kashmir, meant for markets outside the Union Territory, have also been left stranded.

"We have been prioritising fruit trucks for the past several days as the highway has not been fully restored since August 26. A 20-km stretch between Udhampur and Chenani, particularly a 10-km patch between Bani Nullah and Samroli, is badly damaged. The worst-hit points include Tharad Bridge, Balli Nullah, and both carriageways at Samroli," the official said.

He said that if the weather stabilises, two-lane traffic could be restored soon. "Our men and machinery are at work, we just need a window of clear weather to speed up restoration," he said.

Meanwhile, Kulgam Police on Wednesday organised a langar (community kitchen) at Qazigund for drivers and commuters stranded due to traffic disruptions on the highway.

The initiative was led by SSP Kulgam, Sahil Sarangal (IPS), along with Additional SP (Highway) Qazigund, SDPO Qazigund, and other police officials. Adequate arrangements of wholesome meals and drinking water were made on the spot, providing much-needed relief to those in distress.

The gesture evoked wide appreciation from commuters and locals alike, who lauded the police's commitment to public welfare beyond conventional policing. Police said the endeavour reaffirms their resolve to stand shoulder to shoulder with the community in every circumstance.

Similarly, Udhampur Police provided food, water and other basic items to stranded people and ensured their safety till the road is restored. "Due to heavy rains and landslides, the highway remained closed, leaving many passengers and drivers stranded. Udhampur Police provided essentials and ensured their safety till the road is restored," a spokesperson said. (KNO)

Edu institutes

Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, all Government Degree Colleges, GCETs, private colleges in the UT of J&K shall remain closed on September-04.

In the meantime, Director of School Education Jammu (DSEJ) in an order said that the schools across Jammu and division shall remain closed till September-05 in view of inclement weather and flood like situation.

"In reference to the weather alert issued by the IMD and also keeping in view the incessant rains, landslides, flash floods, and severe waterlogging in low-lying areas, all government and private schools across Jammu Division shall remain closed till 05-09-2025 to ensure the safety of students and staff," DSEJ said.

The directorate further ordered that online classes shall be conducted wherever possible to maintain continuity of education.

The University of Kashmir officials also said that in view of adverse weather conditions, the university shall remain closed on Thursday. "All examinations scheduled for the day are postponed. The fresh dates will be notified separately." (KNO)

Div Com Kashmir

assured that essential supplies, including food, diesel, petrol, and kerosene, are sufficiently available, and there is no need to panic.

He added that health, power, and telecommunication services are functioning normally across the Valley.

Preventive evacuations have been activated in several areas, particularly in Srinagar, Kulgam, Anantnag, and Pulwama. "Field teams, including revenue officers, magistrates, police, and SDRF personnel, are actively monitoring water levels and assisting citizens to move to safer locations," he added.

Garg noted that while water levels had receded in some areas during the day, continuous rises have been observed at Sangam and Ram Munshi Bagh. Field teams are closely monitoring these locations to prevent any risk to life and property.

He further stated that more than 300 relief shelters have been identified across districts, equipped with blankets, ration materials, power and water supply to support people in need. Citizens relocating to higher grounds or relatives' homes are being guided by administration teams.

"Mughal Road restoration work is ongoing, essential supplies are being replenished, and our health systems remain fully functional," Garg said. He stressed that emergency help desk at the UT level and district-level Emergency Operation Centres are operational and residents can also contact the widely publicized emergency number 112 for assistance.

The Divisional Commissioner cautioned that while the overall situation is under control, extreme vigilance is required. "The next few hours will be critical. I urge all citizens to remain alert, cooperate with field teams, and follow district advisories throughout the night," he said. (KNO)

Incessant rains

Brengi Nallah has inundated several low-lying areas. The water entered important institutions, including the BDO office, Anantnag, Soutul-Awliya Darul Uloom, and Idhara Tehqiqat, many residential areas and offices, forcing closure of official and educational activities.

Farmers in the area fear large-scale devastation if the rains continue. "Paddy fields and orchards are under the water. If the water does not recede soon, the damage will be irreversible," said Ghulam Hassan, a farmer from Pulwama.

Similar situations were witnessed in south Kashmir's Kulgam, especially in Khudwani-Qaimoh, where water entered residential areas. Authorities said rescue teams, along with men and machinery, have been deployed at vulnerable points to strengthen embankments and restore connectivity.

At many places, including SIDCO Lassipora, the electricity line has suffered damage, due to which power supply has remained cut off to many areas, they said, adding that efforts are on to restore supply in the affected areas.

District officials confirmed that thousands of people have already been shifted to safer places in both Pulwama, Kulgam and Anantnag and even parts of Shopian.

The water level in most of the water bodies continues to rise, due to which there is fear among the people, while the administration is struggling on high alert. (KNO)

CS sensitises

across the Valley. He stressed that uninterrupted supply of essential commodities such as food grains, LPG, fuel, and petroleum products must be ensured for the public.

Emphasizing the importance of preventive action, the Chief Secretary directed all Deputy Commissioners to identify vulnerable areas and initiate precautionary evacuation where required.

He also instructed them to earmark and prepare adequate relief shelters for

accommodating evacuees, ensuring that all necessary arrangements are put in place in advance.

The Chief Secretary underscored the need for the administration to remain in close contact with the public and extend timely assistance. He directed that emergency helpline numbers, including those of the Emergency Operation Centre, be widely publicized so that people can reach out to authorities without delay in case of any exigency.

He further asked the district administrations to issue advisories in accordance with local requirements and ground realities, urging them to maintain strong presence on the ground to take immediate mitigation measures in this crucial hour.

Reiterating the government's commitment to safeguarding the lives and well-being of citizens, the Chief Secretary called upon all concerned departments and officials to work in close coordination and respond proactively to the evolving situation.

Emergency preparedness

administration has also appointed officers from various departments — Revenue, Rural Development, Agriculture, Labour, Cooperatives, and District Industries Centre — as local officers for each centre.

Their mandate includes coordinating relief measures, maintaining communication with district control rooms, and ensuring adequate food, shelter and other essential services.

Further, the Health Department has deputed a team of doctors and paramedical staff at the designated centres. Notable among them are Dr. Rubeeza Aziz (ZMO Zadibal), Dr. Arshid Qadri (ZMO Khanyar), and Dr. Sameena Jan (ZMO Batamalo), who will oversee medical preparedness and provide round-the-clock support if required.

The order also highlights nine evacuation-prone areas — Peerzoo Island, Kursoo Rajbagh, Padshahi Bagh, Lasjan, Soiteng, Gandbal, Pamphosa Colony Palpora, Maloora, and Parimpora — where these centres will play a critical role during rescue and rehabilitation operations.

Moreover, departments such as SMC, KPDC, PHE, Food & Civil Supplies, and R&B have also been roped in for smooth coordination.

Officials, as per KNO, said the initiative is a proactive safety measure aimed at minimizing risks and ensuring that Srinagar is fully equipped to respond swiftly in the event of floods or other emergencies. (KNO)

MHA team arrives

The visit comes in the wake of unprecedented rainfall across Jammu and Kashmir, which has caused extensive damage to property and infrastructure.

Since early August, over 150 people have lost their lives in rain-related incidents in the Union Territory, including a significant number of casualties among pilgrims. Rescue operations are ongoing in several districts.

On September 1, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs announced the formation of Inter-Ministerial Central Teams (IMCTs) to evaluate damage caused by heavy rains, flash floods, landslides, and cloudbursts in Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Punjab.

Each team is led by an officer of Joint Secretary rank from the MHA or the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and includes members from the departments of expenditure, agriculture and farmers' welfare, Jal Shakti, power, road transport and highways, and rural development.

According to officials, the IMCTs will conduct field visits to affected districts, examine relief measures already implemented by state and Union Territory administrations, and prepare detailed assessments that will guide further central assistance.

The initiative follows a mechanism introduced by Home Minister Amit Shah in 2019, under which multi-ministerial teams are dispatched immediately after a major disaster, rather than waiting for detailed reports from the states. The officials said the IMCT's findings from Jammu and other affected states will form the basis for further central intervention, ensuring that resources are directed efficiently for relief, rehabilitation, and long-term mitigation efforts. (KNO)

India kills us with tariffs: Trump

Claims Delhi now offers 'no tariffs' to America

PTI

New York/Washington, Sept 03: India kills the US with tariffs and the country has now offered "no tariffs" to America, President Donald Trump has said, amid New Delhi's escalating tensions with Washington over his administration's policies on trade and tariffs.

"They have tariffs against us. China, which kills us with tariffs. India kills us with tariffs. Brazil kills us" with tariffs, Trump said in a telephone interview with The Scott Jennings Radio Show on Tuesday.

Trump added that he understands tariffs better than other countries.

"I understood tariffs better than any human being in the world. And now with my tariffs, they were all dropping them. India was the most highly tariffed nation... And you know what, they've offered me no tariffs in India anymore. No tariffs," Trump said.

"If I didn't have tariffs, they would never make that offer. They would never make that offer. So you have to have tariffs. We're going to be economically strong," he added.

With a federal appeals court ruling that most of Trump's tariffs imposed on countries



around the world are illegal, Trump said that the court case is sponsored by other nations because they're taking advantage of us.

"...they're not going to take advantage anymore," he added.

Later, speaking at the White House, Trump said that America gets along with India very well, but the relationship was one-sided for many years since Delhi was charging Washington "tremendous tariffs". "No,

we get along with India very well," Trump said in response to a question on whether he is considering taking away some of the tariffs imposed on India.

He said that for many years, the relationship between India and the US was "one-sided" and that changed when he assumed office.

"India was charging us tremendous tariffs, about the highest in the world," Trump said, adding that the US was

therefore not doing much business with India.

"But they were doing business with us because we weren't charging them, foolishly, we weren't charging them," he said, adding that India was pouring its products into the US.

"They'd send it in, pour it into our country. Therefore, it wouldn't be made here, which is a negative, but we would not send in anything because they were charging us 100 per cent tariffs," Trump said.

The US president cited the example of Harley Davidson motorcycles, saying the company couldn't sell into India because there was a 200 per cent tariff on a motorcycle.

"So what happens? Harley Davidson went to India and built a motorcycle plant, and now they don't have to pay tariffs, same thing as us," he said.

On Monday, Trump claimed that India has now "offered" to cut its tariffs to nothing, "but it's getting late", as he said that India buys most of its oil and military products from Russia and very little from the US.

The Trump administration has imposed 25 per cent reciprocal tariffs on India and an additional 25 per cent levies for Delhi's purchases of Russian oil, bringing the total duties imposed on

India to 50 per cent, with effect from August 27.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has asserted he can't compromise on the interests of farmers, cattle-rearers, small-scale industries, cautioning "pressure on us may increase, but we will bear it".

India has called the tariffs imposed by the US "unjustified and unreasonable".

New Delhi said that, like any major economy, it will take all necessary measures to safeguard its national interests and economic security.

In 2024-25, the bilateral trade in goods between the two countries stood at USD 131.8 billion (USD 86.5 billion exports and USD 45.3 billion imports).

Speaking at an event recently in Delhi, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said India has certain "red lines" in its negotiations for a trade deal with the US and it will stand firm in protecting the interests of farmers and small producers.

Jaishankar also sounded critical of the US for targeting New Delhi's energy ties with Moscow and wondered why the same yardstick has not been applied to China and the European Union, the largest importer of Russian crude oil and Russian LNG, respectively.

BSF launches drone warfare school to train troops for future battles

PTI

New Delhi, Sept 03: The BSF, which guards India's borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh, is training special units of "drone commandos" and "drone warriors" for modern warfare involving remote-controlled aerial platforms, with plans to deploy them in missions such as Operation Sindoor.

A 'School of Drone Warfare' was inaugurated by Border Security Force (BSF) director general Daljit Singh Chawdhary at the officers' training academy of the force in Tekanpur, Madhya Pradesh, on Tuesday. PTI had reported in July that the about 2.65 lakh personnel strong force was raising its maiden "drone squadron" following the lessons learnt after Operation Sindoor. "The School of Drone Warfare will provide special training to the border guarding troops of the force in combating modern strategic challenges," a force spokesperson said.

"The institute will prepare drone commandos and drone warriors through five special courses that include unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) operations, anti-drone warfare and surveillance and intelligence gathering," he said.

The school has simulators and

live drone flying zones, facilities for payload integration in the UAVs and night operations, tools for radio frequency (RF) jammers and kinetic interceptors, apart from linked hardware and Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools.

The BSF DG, after the inauguration of the school, addressed the trainee officers and spoke about the ongoing three-year-long Russia-Ukraine war, where drones have played an important role apart from some other battles and the strategic takeaways from Operation Sindoor conducted by India against Pakistan in response to the Pahalgam terrorist attack, a senior officer said.

Chawdhary also spoke about the role of AI and machine learning (ML) in combat, proactive and weaponised drone use for decisive outcomes, the importance of FPV (first person view related to remote piloting of Kamikaze drones) and strategic changes in national policies, the official said.

Eighteen BSF troops, during the Independence Day in August, were awarded gallantry medals for displaying "conspicuous bravery" and "unmatched valour" during Operation Sindoor. These included two personnel who were decorated with the military-issued Vir Chakra posthumously.

The force also tackles Chinese-made Pakistani drones that

Pawan Khera's wife also has 2 voter IDs: BJP

Says Rahul can't extricate himself from 'criminality' in his ranks

PTI

New Delhi, Sept 03: The BJP on Wednesday alleged that Congress leader Pawan Khera's wife also has two active voter ID cards, and said party leader Rahul Gandhi cannot extricate himself from such "acts of criminality within his own ranks".

This comes a day after the ruling BJP alleged that Khera had two voter IDs and Gandhi was running a campaign against voter-roll revision in Bihar to "protect and hide" his party's theft of votes.

There was no immediate response from the Congress, Khera or his wife Kota Neelima, who is also a party leader in Telangana, to the BJP charge. "Kota Neelima, another Congress leader, candidate from the Khairatabad (60) Assembly segment in Telangana, and wife of Pawan Khera, also holds two active EPICs (Electors Photo Identity Cards) - one registered in Khairatabad (Assembly constituency in Telangana) and



another in New Delhi," BJP IT department head Amit Malviya said on X.

"It is now quite obvious that Congress leaders hold multiple EPIC numbers and are registered voters in more than one place. This is no coincidence.

"Those indulging in 'Vote Chori' are the very ones maligning common citizens for exercising their democratic rights and weakening our institutions," he charged.

Gandhi cannot "extricate" himself from "these acts of criminality"

within his own ranks, particularly involving people aspiring for public office and members of his "inner coterie", the BJP leader said, and demanded a response from the Congress leader, who is also the leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha.

Malviya also demanded that the Election Commission launch a probe into the matter.

Attacking Gandhi over Khera and his wife allegedly possessing two voter ID cards, BJP national spokesperson Shazia Ilmi said the Congress, which calls itself a 'mohabbat ki dukan', is actually running "farzi-wada aur fareb ka bazaar" (a market of fraud and deceit). "While the Congress' CWC member and media head Pawan Khera has two EPICs, it turns out that his wife Kota Neelam, who was the party's candidate for the Khairatabad Assembly seat in Telangana in 2023 state polls, also possesses two EPICs," Ilmi said during a press conference at the BJP headquarters.

Goyal assures help to exporters to deal with global trade uncertainties

PTI

New Delhi, Sept 03: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Wednesday assured exporters to support them in dealing with steep tariffs imposed by the US, an official said.

He also reaffirmed the government's commitment to safeguarding the interests of Indian exporters amid the evolving global trade scenario.

He assured industry representatives that the government is actively engaged in creating an enabling environment to help exporters navigate recent challenges, the official said.

The minister urged exporters to upgrade product quality, align with global standards, diversify supply



chains, and explore alternate markets.

These issues were discussed during a meeting convened by the commerce ministry with representatives of export promotion councils (EPCs) and industry associations to address rising global tariffs, explore solutions, and chart a path forward amid shifting trade dynamics. "He

assured EPC and industry representatives that the government remains committed to providing a supportive ecosystem through ease of doing business initiatives, targeted trade support, and timely policy interventions to mitigate the impact of rising tariff measures," the official added.

The government is working on an export promotion

mission. Rs 2,250 crore was budgeted for the mission. As part of the immediate or short-term response, the government is considering several steps to ease liquidity, prevent insolvencies, and provide greater flexibility for units in SEZs, and promote targeted import substitution.

An exporter said issues flagged by them include fiscal incentives, resumption of interest subsidy scheme and funds under Market Access Initiative. However, it is unlikely that the government would extend subsidy support, the exporter said.

The discussions primarily centred around recent developments regarding imposition of a steep 50 per cent tariff by the US on Indian products.

5 best fruits for kidney health

How to boost function and protect kidneys naturally

TOI HEALTH

New Delhi, Sept 03: Often overlooked, our kidneys play an important role in filtering out waste and removing toxins from our body. And so, it is important to have the right foods that support kidney health and prevent chronic kidney disease. Certain fruits are not only rich in vitamins and minerals, but are also rich in antioxidants that can help reduce oxidative stress and inflammation-- this improving overall kidney performance. Some fruits also help in preventing kidney stones, thus supporting long-term renal health. So, here we list some such fruits for kidney health that boost function and protect your kidneys naturally:

Blueberries

Blueberries are rich in antioxidants, particularly anthocyanins, which helps fight oxidative stress and reduce inflammation in the kidneys. Having blueberries regularly can help slow down the progression of kidney damage and improve overall kidney health.

A 2025 study titled 'Effect of Blueberry Supplement on Alleviating Aged Associated Kidney Dysfunction in Rats' showed that blueberry extract supplementation helped in reducing age-related kidney alterations, oxidative stress, and inflammation in rats-- thus preserving kidney function and its structure.

Meanwhile, blueberries are also low in potassium, which makes them a safe fruit choice for most people who have kidney related issues. So, add a handful of blueberries to your daily diet to fight inflammation and improve kidney function naturally.

Cranberries

Cranberries are known for preventing urinary tract infections (UTIs)-- this indirectly supports kidney health. A 2023 updated meta-analysis published in JAMA reads, "Cranberry products-- including juice or capsules-- reduced the risk of symptomatic, confirmed urinary tract infections (UTIs) in several groups, according to results published in the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews." This, in a way, reduces straining the kidneys. Also, taking cranberries regularly can help maintain urinary and kidney health. They

also contain antioxidants that fight inflammation and oxidative damage.

Apples

It's often said, 'An apple a day, keeps the doctor away' and rightly so! Apples are rich in fiber, vitamin C, and anti-inflammatory compounds. As per National Kidney Foundation, apples are a kidney-friendly fruit due to their antioxidant content, fiber, and low potassium, which can help reduce inflammation and help in detoxifying the kidneys.

Having apples regularly also helps in reducing cholesterol naturally, which in turn can reduce the pressure on kidneys. So, include apples in your daily diet to support your kidneys and overall health.

Red Grapes

Red grapes are rich in flavonoids and antioxidants, including resveratrol, which helps in reducing inflammation and oxidative stress in the kidneys. A 2024 study in mice shows that long-term grape consumption led to renal health and resilience against kidney fibrosis and related damage.

Meanwhile, another study conducted on rats showed that grape consumption can protect against kidney damage caused by chronic conditions like diabetes and hypertension.

The flavonoids and antioxidants found in red grapes naturally improve cardiovascular health, thus indirectly supporting kidney function. Red grapes also have low amounts of sodium and potassium, which makes them suitable for kidney-friendly diets. Also See: Kidney health: Best drinks for strong, healthy kidneys beyond water

Pomegranates

Pomegranates are a rich source of antioxidants, vitamins, and polyphenols that help in reducing inflammation and oxidative damage in the kidney tissues. A 2023 research published in Oxidative Medicine and Cellular Longevity shows that pomegranate juice may help in protecting the kidneys from damage caused by chronic diseases.

Pomegranates also promote better blood flow and good heart health, which benefits kidney function. So, include pomegranates in your diet regularly and have them as seeds or (unsweetened) juice.

Thursday
4th Sept.

INOX
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Movies Watch List

WAR 2 (U/A 16+)
HINDI - 10:40 AM, 02:30 PM

SAIYAARA (U/A16+)
HINDI - 12:00 PM, 03:15 PM, 6:00 PM

PARAM SUNDARI (U/A13+)
HINDI ATMOS - 11:00 AM, 02:00 PM, 05:00 PM
HINDI - 06:40 PM

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Nature's Rage Continues: Flood Threat Looms Large Over J&K

For Kashmir Pics: Jahangir Shah (KNO/KT)



For Jammu Bikas Bhagat (KNO/KT)

