

Floods expose administrative failures; Bhalla demands accountability, action



TT CORRESPONDENT
JAMMU, SEPT. 12 : The Working President of the Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) and former minister, Mr Raman Bhalla, on Friday strongly condemned the administration for its consistent failure to take necessary flood protection measures over the last decade.

He held the authorities responsible for the large-scale loss of property and agricultural livelihoods in Jammu province, especially in areas severely affected by floods in the last week of August.

During his visit to flood-affected villages, including Dharap, Dharap Kothey, and Shergarh in Jammu district, Mr Bhalla interacted with distressed families and farmers whose lives and means of subsistence have been devastated by the recent floods. He expressed grave concern at the widespread destruction, reporting that hundreds of kanals of standing crops have been washed away or submerged, leaving cultivators in despair.

Bhalla was accompanied by Sarpanch Kashmir Singh, Balkar Singh, Harbans Singh, Prem Kumar, Ranjit Singh, Surjeet Singh, Dadar

Singh, Shanty, Sanjay Katal, and others.

Addressing the gathered residents, Mr Bhalla said, "It is extremely painful to see our hardworking farmers losing their crops once again. The floods have not only damaged agricultural fields but also homes, roads, and basic infrastructure that are lifelines for rural communities. These losses are preventable, and the administration's failure to implement flood mitigation strategies reflects a lack of foresight and commitment."

He pointed out that the floods of 2014 had served as a stark warning, yet no long-term flood protection plans have been enforced.

"Instead of learning from past disasters, authorities have repeatedly ignored the need to strengthen riverbanks, upgrade drainage systems, and ensure timely intervention. As a result, vulnerable communities are left exposed to nature's fury," Mr Bhalla remarked and regretted that no step was taken to prevent flow of water of Balol Nullah in these areas.

The JKPCC leader further criticized the delay in relief and rehabilitation efforts, noting that affected families are still awaiting compensation and support. "People here are

not asking for charity; they are demanding their right to protection and timely assistance. The government must ensure that those who have lost their livelihood are not abandoned to suffer alone," he added.

During his visit, Mr Bhalla personally inspected damaged fields, spoke to farmers, and assured them that their plight will be raised at all platforms. He also urged district and state authorities to conduct thorough damage assessments and expedite relief packages, including financial assistance, restoration of irrigation channels, and repair of access roads.

Highlighting the broader implications, Mr Bhalla said, "Floods not only destroy crops but also erode the confidence of communities. If protective measures are not implemented in a structured manner, repeated disasters will push rural families into poverty, force migration, and further strain local economies."

He called for a comprehensive flood management policy that includes regular maintenance of rivers and drainage channels, construction of embankments, early warning systems, and community-level awareness programs.

"It is high time the administration prioritizes disaster preparedness and works hand-in-hand with experts, engineers, and local communities to build resilient infrastructure," he stated. Bhalla assured the people that he will continue advocating for the welfare of flood-hit families and pressing the government to act with urgency and responsibility. "The people of Jammu deserve dignity, security, and the means to rebuild their lives. Their voices cannot be ignored," he affirmed.

Wari La holds huge tourism potential: LG Kavinder

UT Admin working to unlock new avenues of tourism growth in Ladakh
Aim to make Ladakh a year-round destination for nature, adventure, culture, spirituality
UT Admin promoting homestays, entrepreneurship to benefit local communities

TT CORRESPONDENT

LEH, SEPT. 12 : The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta, today said that Wari La, one of the highest motorable mountain passes in the world, holds immense potential to become a major attraction for domestic and international tourists.

The Lt Governor made these remarks while interacting with tourists during his visit to Wari La, which connects Leh with Nubra Valley through a breathtaking route at an altitude of over 17,000 feet. Known for its pristine beauty, panoramic views of the Karakoram and Ladakh ranges, and adventure tourism prospects, Wari La has remained relatively unexplored compared to other destinations in Ladakh.

The Lt Governor was accompanied by the First Lady Smt Bindu Gupta, Deputy Commissioner Romil Singh, SSP Leh Shruti Arora and other administrative officials.

Shri Kavinder Gupta said that the UT Administration is working on a comprehensive roadmap to unlock new avenues of tourism growth in Ladakh by promoting



adventure tourism, ecotourism, and cultural tourism. He emphasised that the government is focusing on creating better infrastructure, improving road connectivity, and ensuring sustainable development while preserving the fragile ecology of the region.

Highlighting the adventure spirit of the region, the Lt Governor noted that hundreds of tourists on bikes are already taking the Wari La route, making it a fast-emerging hotspot for adventure enthusiasts. He said the UT Administration will ensure better facilities and safety measures to encourage such activities and make Ladakh a preferred destination for bikers from across the world.

The Lt Governor also mentioned the ongoing

12th edition of the Ladakh Marathon, which this year featured its largest-ever field with over 6,600 runners from 30 countries worldwide. He said the participation of such a diverse group demonstrates Ladakh's growing global recognition. "People from 30 countries have arrived here, and they are our true tourist ambassadors who will carry Ladakh's message of peace, adventure, and natural beauty across the world," he remarked.

Reiterating the UT Administration's commitment, Kavinder Gupta assured that every effort will be made to take Ladakh to new heights in terms of tourism, sports, and cultural promotion. "Our aim is to make Ladakh a year-round tourist destination, where

visitors can experience natural beauty, adventure, culture, and spirituality," he said.

The Hon'ble Lt Governor has also asked officials to explore more possibilities of organizing adventure sports, cycling expeditions, trekking circuits, and cultural events across the Union Territory to attract diverse groups of tourists. The UT Administration, he said, is committed to extending facilities for homestays and local entrepreneurship, thereby ensuring direct benefits to local communities.

Earlier, during his interaction on the way from Nubra to Wari La, several tourists appreciated the UT Administration's initiatives to improve facilities in the region and expressed optimism about Ladakh emerging as a global hub for high-altitude tourism.

The Lt Governor reiterated that the UT Administration is determined to strike a balance between development and conservation.

"We will ensure that the growth of tourism goes hand in hand with environmental protection and cultural preservation," he added.

CCI appeals Fin Min to extend deadline for filing ITR

TT CORRESPONDENT

JAMMU, SEPT. 12 : In a communication addressed to the Union Finance Minister, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, Sh. Arun Gupta President Chamber of Commerce & Industry highlighted the dual crisis impacting the region. The recent tragic terror attack in Pahalgam on 22 April 2025 and the subsequent security situation, 'Operation Sindoor,' have significantly hampered normal business activities. This situation has been further compounded by heavy rains, landslides, and flash floods across the Jammu division, which have devastated large parts of the region leaving majority business activities non-functional.

Arun Gupta also said that a majority of businessmen are currently engaged in crucial relief and rehabilitation efforts to assist affected families, making it unfeasible for them to complete their tax audit and file their returns by due dates. "The business community is facing unprecedented challenges that have made compliance with the current deadlines nearly impossible," said Mr. Gupta.

"Our priority is to support our community members in this time of crisis. A deadline extension would provide much-needed relief and allow us to focus on recovery without the added pressure of meeting statutory obligations." Arun Gupta, President Chamber of Commerce & Industry, humbly requests the Finance Minister to extend the deadline for filing Income Tax Returns and Tax Audit Reports until at least 31 December 2025.

CUJ in collaboration with SKUAST Jammu distributed saplings of tissue culture Citrus plants to farmers of Samba, launch of OSSCIncDB website



TT CORRESPONDENT

JAMMU, SEPT. 12 : In a significant step towards strengthening advanced horticulture practices and empowering farmers, Central University of Jammu (CUJ), in collaboration with the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Jammu (SKUAST-Jammu), successfully distributed Baramasi citrus saplings to farmers of Samba district under the guidance of Dr. B N Tripathi, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, SKUAST Jammu.

The initiative was undertaken under the project entitled "Development of Quality Planting Material through Plant Tissue Culture for the Farmers of Samba District", sponsored by the Jammu and Kashmir Science, Technology and Innovation Council (JKSTIC).

Prof. Sanjeev Jain, Hon'ble

Vice Chancellor, Central University of Jammu, the chief guest of the event emphasised on the significance of advanced agricultural techniques for the economic growth of the farmers. He appreciated the collaborative efforts of the participating institutes in rendering benefits of research to the society, and welcomed the participation of the farmers in the research efforts in Central University of Jammu.

He also gave valuable suggestions of a few significant crops to the farmers.

Dr. S K Gupta, Director Research, SKUAST Jammu and Guest of Honour, acknowledged the efforts of scientists from SKUAST Jammu and CUJ in developing tissue culture plants of citrus and strawberry. He also welcomed the farming community of Samba district and

requested them to visit KVKs and SKUAST Jammu related to all the farming problems.

The distribution programme marked a milestone in enhancing the availability of high-quality planting material for citrus cultivation. The Baramasi variety, known for its ability to produce fruit throughout the year, is expected to not only improve crop productivity but also provide farmers with a steady source of income.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Vinod Gupta, Professor and Head, Division of Agricultural Extension Education, SKUAST-Jammu, and PI of the project, highlighted the role of plant tissue culture in ensuring disease-free, uniform, and vigorous planting material. Dr. Shelly Sehgal, Associate Professor (CMB), Central University of Jammu, and CO-PI of the project, emphasized the importance of science-led interventions in addressing local agricultural challenges and enhancing farmer livelihoods. Dr. Neeraj Sharma, Scientist, KVK Samba, Co-PI, underlined the significance of promoting citrus cultivation in Samba as a means to diversify and strengthen the district's horticulture-based economy.

Omar Abdullah's NC Govt Exposed: Full Funds to Srinagar, Jammu Still Deprived of CAPEX Share

TT CORRESPONDENT

JAMMU, SEPT. 12 : Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) has accused the NC-led elected government headed by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah of indulging in blatant regional discrimination by depriving Jammu of its rightful share of CAPEX funds.

Addressing a joint press conference here at Party Headquarters today, BJP Spokespersons Gaurav Gupta and Zorawar Singh Jamwal in presence of party Media Incharge Dr. Pardeep Mahotra, revealed that both Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) and Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) were to receive around 740-50 crore each under CAPEX. However, while SMC has been granted full release of funds and is ready to begin developmental works, JMC is still awaiting nearly 726 crore-almost half of its allocation.

"This is a shocking example of step-motherly treatment. Despite Jammu facing devastation from cloudbursts, flash floods, and heavy rains which left roads, drains, water supply systems, and other civic infrastructure crippled, the Omar Abdullah government has not released even a single penny against JMC's 760 crore pro-



posal. The people of Jammu are being pushed to suffer while Srinagar marches ahead," Gaurav Gupta said.

He stressed that the Housing & Urban Development Department (H&UDD), which is under the direct charge of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, has failed in its duty towards Jammu. "By releasing full funds to Srinagar while deliberately stalling Jammu's share, the NC-led dispensation has once again exposed its anti-Jammu mindset. This biased governance is unacceptable and will be resisted at every level," he added.

Gupta further said that if the pending 726 crore is released without delay, urgent works like retaining walls at vulnerable Nallahs, permanent road restoration, and strengthening of water supply systems can be immediately taken up.

"Temporary repairs may give short-term relief, but without permanent solutions, Jammu will remain vulnerable during every monsoon," he warned.

Calling for immediate corrective action, Zorawar Singh Jamwal asserted that the people of Jammu will no longer tolerate discrimination. "Our demand is crystal clear-equal treatment, timely release of funds, and accelerated development."

The Omar Abdullah government must answer why it gave full funds to SMC but denied the same to JMC. This betrayal of Jammu will not be forgotten," he maintained.

Concluding the press conference, Gaurav Gupta demanded immediate release of the pending 726 crore for JMC, stressing that Jammu deserves nothing less than equal treatment and justice.

Arvind inspects Nallahs in Jammu West, directs authorities for immediate desilting



TT CORRESPONDENT

JAMMU, SEPT. 12 : Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Jammu West, Arvind Gupta, on Friday conducted an extensive tour of his constituency to take stock of the situation following the recent rain havoc in Jammu city.

The downpour had triggered waterlogging and blockages in several localities, causing hardships to residents.

Gupta visited Wazir Lane, Durga Nagar, Kabir Colony, Subash Nagar, and Shakti Nagar, where Nallahs were choked with silt and debris, leading to overflowing during the rains. He was accompanied by Ashwani Khajuria, XEn Sewerage & Drainage

West UEED Jammu, along with senior BJP leaders and former Corporators Sanjay Baru, Neelam Nargotra and Chaman Lal Bhagat.

Interacting with the local residents, Gupta assured them that immediate measures were being taken to prevent a repeat of the chaos witnessed during the recent showers.

"The choking of Nallahs is one of the primary reasons behind waterlogging. I have directed the concerned departments to initiate desilting operations at the earliest so that such situations do not recur," Gupta said.

He emphasized that the welfare of people was his top priority.

"Our administration is committed to providing timely solutions. Departments have been instructed to work in a mission mode to ensure proper drainage facilities. Accountability will be fixed if there is any laxity," he added.

Gupta also directed officials to deploy additional manpower and machinery for clearing blockages and appealed to residents to cooperate by not dumping household waste into the drains.

He assured that all necessary steps would be taken to strengthen drainage infrastructure in Jammu West.

"The recent rains were a wake-up call. We cannot afford complacency. Preventive measures are being put in place to protect people from such inconvenience in the future," Gupta maintained.

Local residents expressed satisfaction over the MLA's proactive approach and hoped for swift redressal of the drainage issues.

ABVP demands Postponement of JKPS 10+2 Lecturer Exam

TT CORRESPONDENT

JAMMU, SEPT. 12 : Akhil Bhartiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) Jammu Kashmir has demanded the postponement of the JKPS 10+2 Lecturer Exam, scheduled to be held from September 27 to October 19, 2025. The demand comes in the wake of the recent flood crisis in Jammu Province, which has left a devastating impact on the lives of thousands of students.

The recent flood crisis in Jammu Province has left a devastating impact on the lives of thousands of students. The catastrophic floods and cloudbursts have resulted in loss of lives, destruction of homes, roads, and infrastructure, and displacement of a large population. In such a situation, it is imperative that the JKPS 10+2 Lecturer Exam, scheduled to be held from September 27 to October 19, 2025, be postponed.

Sannak Shrivats, State Secretary, ABVP Jammu Kashmir, "The recent floods in Jammu Province have brought unprecedented challenges to our students. The destruction of

homes, roads, and infrastructure has made it impossible for them to prepare for the JKPS 10+2 Lecturer Exam. We demand that the JKPS authorities postpone the exam for at least 2 months to give our students a fair chance to succeed. It's a matter of justice and fairness. We will continue to fight for the rights of our students until this demand is met."

The students of the Jammu division are still struggling to cope with the trauma and aftermath of the floods. Many have lost their study resources, and some have even lost their loved ones and homes. The recent clashes and curfew imposed in some regions have further exacerbated the situation, making it impossible for students to prepare for the exam.

Given the unfair advantage that students from other regions may have, it is only fair that the exam be postponed for at least 2 months. This will provide students from Jammu division with a fair opportunity to prepare and appear for the exam with ease of mind.

Sawhney Visits Flood-Hit Sandhi Area in Jammu East, Distributes Relief Material

TT CORRESPONDENT

JAMMU, SEPT. 12 :

Former Minister of J&K and Ex-MLA Jammu East, Yogesh Sawhney, visited the flood-affected area of Sandhi in Jammu East to assess the situation and extend support to the people hit by the recent heavy rains and flash floods. During his visit, he interacted closely with the local residents, listened to their grievances, and assured them that their concerns would be taken up at the appropriate platforms. He also supervised the condition of the affected localities and distributed relief material, including food and other essential supplies, to the distressed families.

The visit was marked by the participation of several representatives Sawhney to discuss the situation on the ground, including Ward No.1 - Bhushan Lal and Dhoon, Ward No.2 - Sultan Mohd and Mushtaq Mohd, Ward No.3 - Kaku Din and Naik Mohd, Ward No.4 - Niak Ram and Parkash Chand, Ward No.5 - Mohd



Yousaf and Nazir Ahmed, and Ward No.6 - Nazir Ahmed, Tara Chand, Maqbool Hussain, Bashir Ahmed, and Nazir Hussain. Their presence highlighted the collective concern of local leadership in addressing the grievances of flood-affected residents.

Speaking on the issue, Sawhney expressed deep concern over the hardships being faced by the people of Sandhi and neighboring areas. He said that the recent floods have caused extensive damage to homes, livestock, and local infrastructure, leaving families in distress. He stressed that the government must act swiftly to provide immediate compensation and rehabilitation measures for the affected families. He further added that the

administration's role should not be limited to temporary relief but must focus on long-term preventive measures to safeguard such vulnerable regions from recurring damage.

Sawhney also highlighted that several local residents brought up their pressing issues, including the lack of adequate drainage systems, poor infrastructure, and insufficient relief measures reaching the ground level. He assured the people that he would raise these concerns with the relevant authorities and push for urgent redressal. He noted that the voices of the people should not go unheard and emphasized the importance of officials visiting the ground realities instead of relying only on reports.