



Red alert

The flood situation remains grim in Gujarat, western Maharashtra, coastal Karnataka and coastal Kerala, with the IMD predicting more rain in the next few days in these States

MAHARASHTRA: The worst affected are the districts of Pune, Satara, Solapur, Sangli and Kolhapur. About 1.5 lakh people have been evacuated from these areas, while at least 16 have died

KARNATAKA: Nearly 44,000 people have been evacuated from the coastal Karnataka and the Konkan region. Belagavi, Uttara Kannada and Shivamogga are the worst-hit



SAKLESHPUR, HASSAN DISTRICT

KERALA: A 'red alert' has been sounded in Malappuram, Kozhikode, Wayanad and Idukki, IMD sources said. Kannur and Kasaragod are on alert

CRISIS COMMITTEE: At the meeting of the National Crisis Management Committee, Cabinet Secretary P.K. Sinha did a status check



We are keeping a close eye on the situation
PINARAYI VIJAYAN
KERALA CM

REPORTS ON PAGES 8 & 9

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NEARBY



Apex court firm on NRC deadline of August 31

NEW DELHI
The Supreme Court on Thursday told National Register of Citizens authorities in Assam to stand firm on the August 31 deadline for publishing its list. "You be prepared to publish it," a Bench of Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justice R.F. Nariman told Assam NRC coordinator Prateek Hajela.

NEWS • PAGE 12

Can 'janmasthan' be a 'juristic person', asks SC

NEW DELHI
On the third day of hearing in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land dispute, the Supreme Court asked whether the birth place or 'janmasthan' can be regarded as a 'juristic person'. A five-judge Constitution Bench, headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi, made the query to 'Ram Lalla Virajman', one of the parties in the case, on Thursday.

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FRIDAY REVIEW • 8 PAGES
(TABLOID)

Statehood for Jammu & Kashmir will be restored: PM

Modi promises more investment, jobs and pay parity for J&K, Ladakh

NISTULA HEBBAR
NEW DELHI

Two days after both Houses of Parliament cleared the reading down of Article 370 and the reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir into two separate Union Territories, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in a televised address to the nation on Thursday, said it was a historic move and a new beginning for Jammu and Kashmir as well as Ladakh. He also unveiled measures that would follow this change.

Mr. Modi, however, stressed that the Union Territory status for Jammu and Kashmir, from being a full State, was a "temporary" measure and that at some point, statehood would be restored. Ladakh, he added, would remain a Union Territory.

Assembly election soon

He also said that the Assembly election, held in a transparent manner and with a process that had integrity, would take place soon, and that MLAs and the Chief Minister would be from among the people of the Union Territory. "You will choose your representative who will emerge from among you. I have full faith that under this new arrangement, we will destroy terrorism and free Jammu and Kashmir," Mr. Modi said.

Mr. Modi's speech, which

lasted 39 minutes, began by explaining the imperative for the abrogation of Article 370, which he termed a "weapon used by Pakistan against India and to invoke sentiments among the people."

"Article 370 and Article 35A had only given terrorism, separatism, nepotism and massive corruption to Jammu and Kashmir. These articles have been used as a weapon by Pakistan," he said.

Disturbances over the last 30 years, Mr. Modi said, had ended up killing 42,000 innocent people.

The Prime Minister pointed out that while the country took justifiable pride in its democratic process of law-making, many of these laws, including the Right to Education, the Minimum Wages Act and Acts to prevent atrocities on Dalits, were not applicable in the State in the past.

He also pointed out that those who had settled in Jammu and Kashmir after Partition could only vote in the Lok Sabha elections and not in the Assembly or local bodies elections. With the reading down of Articles 370 and 35A, this was now over, he said.

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KARAN SINGH BACKS

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SC DECLINES URGENT HEARING

ON J&K STATUS • PAGE 13



Stiff curbs: Security men stop a vehicle for checking in Srinagar on Thursday. • NISSAR AHMAD

Review decision on ties, India tells Pakistan

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Pakistan should review its decision to downgrade ties and suspend trade with India, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Thursday.

In a statement, the Ministry said Pakistan's actions were aimed at presenting an "alarmist picture to the world."

It said the ending of the special status to Jammu and Kashmir was an internal matter of India, aimed at bringing development opportunities to the people

there. Pakistan exploited the lack of development to generate disaffection and "to justify its cross-border terrorism", it said.

"The Government of India regrets the steps announced by Pakistan yesterday [on Wednesday] and would urge that country to review them so that normal channels of communications are preserved," the statement said.

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THREE RETURN ON BUS • PAGE 12

'PAK. AIRSPACE CURBS WILL NOT

HAVE MUCH IMPACT' • PAGE 13

KNEE-JERK • EDITORIAL

Samjhauta Express not suspended: Railways

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

A senior Railways official said on Thursday that the Lahore-Attari Samjhauta Express train service had not been suspended.

The clarification followed Pakistan's decision to stop the train from Lahore to Attari at Wagah in Pakistan, citing security concerns, leaving 110 passengers, including 48 Pakistanis, stranded.

Following this, the Railways sent its crew and guard to escort the train to its destination.

"Pakistan authorities had

J&K's identity taken away: Azad

Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad, who was not allowed to go out of the Srinagar airport on Thursday, asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah to apologise to the people of Jammu and Kashmir for having taken away their identity. He accused the Centre of "destroying and mercilessly massacring" the State. "The people are not allowed to raise their voice... I will speak on their behalf," he said. • PAGE 11

'I just want to tell Ammi I am fine'

VIJAITA SINGH
SRINAGAR

A resident of Baramulla in north Kashmir, Sajjad has not heard from his mother for the past week. "Tell them to restore mobile connectivity for only a minute, I just want to tell Ammi I am fine. She could be almost dead without hearing from me," the 27-year-old hotel employee said. "They say everything is normal in Kashmir. The last time I read a newspaper was five days ago. I do not trust what the Delhi-based television channels are airing. There is no celebration here, we are not happy."

Sajjad's sentiments are echoed by a large number of people *The Hindu* spoke to in Srinagar after the Valley was placed under lockdown on the night of August 4. There is palpable anger at the Centre's decision to annul Article 370, which gave a special status to Jammu & Kashmir.

Emotions are running high. Just before noon, some men converged at Zero Bridge, one of the arterial roads of the city, smashed vehicles and tried to damage the camera of a television channel.

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OPPORTUNITIES • PAGE 13

Patterns in the sky



Clouds over the Statue Circle in Jaipur brought some relief to the residents from the scorching sun on Thursday. • ROHIT JAIN PARAS

Bharat Ratna presented to Pranab

Bhupen Hazarika and Nanaji Deshmukh given award posthumously

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Former President of India Pranab Mukherjee, late Bharatiya Jana Sangh ideologue Nanaji Deshmukh and late singer Bhupen Hazarika were on Thursday conferred the Bharat Ratna, the country's highest civilian award.

President Ram Nath Kovind gave the award to his predecessor Mr. Mukherjee, Hazarika's son Tej, and to Virenderjeet Singh, a close relative of Deshmukh, at a brief ceremony at the Durbar Hall of Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Dignitaries present

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu, Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, Home



President Ram Nath Kovind confers Bharat Ratna upon former President Pranab Mukherjee on Thursday. • PTI

Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and several Union Ministers were among those who were present at the function.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, former Vice-President Hamid Ansari, Congress leader in the Lok Sabha, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, Deputy Leader in the Rajya Sabha Anand Sharma and senior Lok Sabha member

Shashi Thakoor were also among the guests.

Soon after receiving the award, the former President went and greeted Mr. Modi and other dignitaries who were seated on the front row. Mr. Mukherjee's daughter Sharmishta and son Abhijeet also attended the ceremony.

When the awards were announced, Hazarika's son Tej had made a public statement about not accepting the award in protest against the proposed Citizenship Amendment Bill that would make it easier for Hindu migrants from Bangladesh to become citizens in Assam. Subsequently, he changed his position and called the award a "great honour" for the family and the people of Assam.

SAIL chairman assaulted in road rage incident

Drunk accused attacked him with iron rod; two arrested, two on the run

SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI

The chairman of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), Anil Kumar Chaudhary, was assaulted in the Hauz Khas area in an alleged case of road rage, the police said on Thursday. Two accused were arrested from the spot while two others managed to flee, said the police, adding that a manhunt has been launched for them.

The incident was reported at 10.30 p.m. on Wednesday when Mr. Chaudhary was returning home from office. His car was hit by another car



Anil Kumar Chaudhary. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

near Ansal Plaza on August Kranti Marg.

"The car then stopped in front of Mr. Chaudhary's vehicle, forcing his driver to apply the brakes. When the driver stepped out of the car, the occupants in the other car

held him by the neck. To pacify the aggressors, Mr. Chaudhary came out of his car and was also attacked," said Vijay Kumar, DCP (South).

Rescued by patrol team

Mr. Chaudhary was assaulted with an iron rod and suffered injuries on his head, neck, knees and legs. Two policemen from Defence Colony police station who were patrolling in the area reached the spot after seeing a man being thrashed on the road, Mr. Kumar said.

"Two of the attackers were caught by the policemen

while two others managed to flee the spot. The arrested accused have been identified as Lalit, a resident of Dwarka, and Amardeep, from Uttam Nagar, and their car has been impounded. They were in an inebriated state at the time of arrest," said Mr. Kumar.

A case under Sections 307 and 34 of the IPC has been registered. Reacting to the incident, Mr. Chaudhary said, "I was taken by surprise by this unexpected and violent attack by the assailants. I am confident that the police will probe the matter and book all the culprits."

FinMin mulls tweaks to FPI surcharge up to Budget

T.C.A. SHARAD RAGHAVAN
NEW DELHI

In a bid to ease the concerns of foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) over the increased surcharge announced in the Budget, the Finance Ministry is considering "grandfathering" the income earned by them up to the Budget (July), a Ministry official said.

Under the proposal, FPIs that are so far structured as trusts will not have to pay the increased surcharge. But if they don't change their structure, they will have to pay the surcharge from the set date. "There is a proposal being considered where the government is considering grandfathering the income earned by FPIs that are trusts up to the date of the Budget," the official told *The Hindu*. "But no decision has been taken as yet on this." Markets reacted favourably to the news that the surcharge would be tweaked, with the Sensex and the Nifty posting their biggest single-day gains since May.

SENSEX SOARS ON REPORTS OF ROLL-BACK • PAGE 15