



3 Days On, Kishtwar Cloudburst Toll Unclear; Explosives Aid Search for 82

FE NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Two days after a cloudburst hit Chasoti village in Kishtwar district, rescuers on Saturday used explosives to break massive boulders that were blocking access

to the worst-hit sites, as anxious relatives clung to fading hope on the third day of the search for the missing.

Officials said, 82 people, including 81 pilgrims and a CISF personnel, remain untraced, while 60 persons among them three CISF personnel

and a Special Police Officer have been confirmed dead. Around 167 others have been rescued, several with critical injuries. So far, 50 bodies have been identified and handed over to families after legal formalities.

The cloudburst, which struck around 12.25

pm on August 14, triggered flash floods that swept away a makeshift market, a community kitchen set up for the Machail Mata yatra, and a security outpost.

■ See On P/6



Kishtwar cloudburst a 'huge' disaster: CM

FE NEWS NETWORK

KISHTWAR: Calling the Kishtwar cloudburst a huge disaster, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday announced the ex-gratia relief to the affected families.

He said that immediate relief has been disbursed among the affected families, and adequate teams have been deployed to conduct rescue operations.

"Chief Minister's Relief Fund will be utilised for them as well," Omar said while speaking to reporters after meeting the affected families. He took a firsthand stock of the devastation caused by the cloudburst.

The CM, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said he can understand the feelings of the affected families, who want their beloved to be traced either alive or dead.

He said adequate teams, including NDRF, SDRF, Army, J&K Police and others, have been deployed to conduct the rescue operation, adding that a multi-pronged approach has been taken for the ongoing rescue operations.

"So far, the death count is around 60 and 70-80 are still missing. Reports quoting missing figures around 500 or 1000 are incorrect," he said, adding that the number of unidentified bodies is approximately 4-5.

It will take time to remove the rubble from the village, but the machinery will not be removed from here, Omar said. Once the rubble is removed, the rehabilitation process will start, he added.

Terming the Kishtwar cloudburst incident a huge disaster, the Chief Minister said the death toll is possibly going to increase in triple figures. "The death toll of more than 100 people is an incredible tragedy, affecting 100 families. From this, we will see what lessons are to be learnt," he said.

On the demand to shift the affected families from their locations, Omar said they will consult a team of experts to ensure that they are not shifted to a place that will be more prone to such occurrences.

"The hilly areas like J&K, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand are prone to cloudbursts. We will consult a team of experts to make elaborate arrangements to prevent any such tragedies," he said.

Furthermore, as a measure of solidarity and immediate

■ See On P/6



Kishtwar Cloudburst

LG Manoj Sinha Urges Faster Rescue, Relief Operations

FE NEWS NETWORK

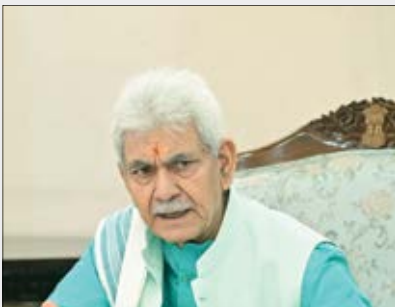
SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday directed officials to intensify relief and rescue operations at cloudburst hit Chashoti village in Kishtwar district.

In a post on X, the Lieutenant Governor, wrote: "Spoke to Senior Officials and took stock of the rescue and relief operations at Chashoti, Kishtwar. I will ensure the reconstruction of homes damaged in flash floods.

I've also directed the senior officials for immediate relief and uninterrupted essential supplies to the affected."

Meanwhile, rescue and relief operation continued for the third consecutive day on Saturday in Chashoti village, where 60 people lost their lives and over 100 others were injured and 75 are reported missing.

Union Minister Jitendra Singh, accompanied by Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat, visited the dev-



astated village late Friday night and reviewed ongoing rescue and relief efforts carried out by the police, army, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), Border Roads Organisation (BRO), civil administration, and local volunteers operating in the high-altitude terrain.

So far, 46 bodies have been identified and handed over to their next of kin after completion of legal formalities. Meanwhile,

■ See On P/6

PM Monitoring Rescue Operations In Cloudburst-Hit Kishtwar: Jitendra Singh

FE NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Union minister Jitendra Singh on Saturday reached out to people admitted in the Government Medical College here with injuries from the cloudburst and flash floods that struck a remote village in Kishtwar district two days ago.



Singh said the search and rescue operations are continuing round the clock and Prime Minister Narendra Modi is personally monitoring the situation.

He said 53 bodies have been recovered so far.

"Prime Minister Modi is personally monitoring the rescue and relief operations. On the very first day, he held a review meeting. On Friday, he spoke to the Lieutenant Governor and the Chief Minister and received a briefing. He continues to assess the situation from time to time," Singh told reporters at the hospital.

Singh, who had visited the disaster-hit Chisoti village on Friday night and returned on Saturday afternoon, was briefed about the treatment given to the injured.

"When the Prime Minister himself is monitoring the efforts, every government department is fully active and working in tandem. The compensation will also be more than expected," he said.

He said the Union Territory government has no reservations in this matter.

"Along with the Army, BSF, CRPF and other Central forces, the Government of India and the state administration are fully involved in rescue operations. The DGP (director general of police) himself is camping there as part of the support structure. The Border Roads Organisation is involved as there is a lot of debris to be cleared," he added.

Terming it a "big catastrophe", Singh said, "When compared to similar calamities in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, this is the biggest catastrophe so far. This is a testing time for all of us."

He explained that the Air Force support structure could not operate in Chisoti due to weather constraints. "We dispatched vehicles carrying equipment overnight so that the rescue operation does not fall short of them. But two Indian Air Force helicopters are still stationed in Udhampur, ready for deployment."

The Union minister said that different news channels are reporting different figures, but according to the official data, 53 bodies have been recovered till last night. "Except for four,

■ See On P/6

Janmashtami Celebrated With Fervour In Srinagar

■ Colourful processions, special prayers mark occasion



FE NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The heart of Srinagar, Lal Chowk Saturday witnessed vibrant celebrations on the occasion of Janmashtami, as devotees gathered in large numbers to mark the birth anniversary of Lord Krishna with prayers, bhajans and colourful processions.

Amid chants of "Hare Krishna, Hare Rama," devotees carrying flags and idols of Lord Krishna moved through the city centre, drawing the attention of passersby.

As per the details, the heart of Srinagar—Lal Chowk echoed with chants and hymns, creating a

festive atmosphere.

Rajesh Kumar, one of the devotees participating in the procession, told KNO that it was heartening to see such celebrations taking place in the centre of Srinagar. "Janmashtami is a reminder of peace, love and devotion. We are happy to celebrate it openly," he said.

Another devotee, Meena Sharma, said the participation of children in cultural performances and bhajan singing made the event even more joyful. "These celebrations bring our community together and strengthen our faith," she said.

Similarly, the organisers of the event

■ See On P/6

Kashmir Eateries Lose 80% Business After Rotten Meat Scare

FE NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Restaurants and cafes across Kashmir are witnessing a sharp decline in business after authorities seized 1,200 kilograms of rotten and unfit meat from various locations in the Kashmir Valley in the last couple of weeks.

Restaurant owners report up to an 80 per cent drop in customers, leaving dining halls nearly empty, as people avoid eating outside.

Sharing details about the losses, Babar Chowdhary, head of the Jammu and Kashmir Hotel and Restaurant Association said, that the industry has lost more than half its market in recent weeks.

He said over 80 per cent of restaurant sales have been affected across the Kashmir Valley, with Srinagar city being the most impacted. "The restaurants, cafeterias and other eateries in Srinagar are empty these days and people avoid eating outside," he said.

Chowdhary added that the rotten meat and unbranded, unlabelled frozen food seizure has caused this situation and that the government must act tough against the culprits.

He demanded stricter inspections of meat entering the Union Territory and the establishment of a food-testing laboratory at Lakhanpur. "The rotten meat scandal has affected everyone in the business and damaged public confidence," he said.

Similarly, shops and restaurants, including the longstanding Khayam Food Court, have reported the same losses, saying they have been hit hard by the ongoing scare.

One shop owner said their sales have dropped by nearly 50 per cent over the past two weeks. "Even regular customers are hesitant to eat here, and new customers are avoiding the shop entirely," he said.

He said that people are scared after hearing about the rotten meat seizure, which has completely shaken their trust in the market. "We have been serving fast food to the valley for decades, but this sudden loss of confidence has left us

■ See On P/6

MeT predicts heavy rains, warns of flashfloods and cloudbursts in J&K

FE NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Meteorological Department on Saturday issued a weather advisory predicting heavy rains and thunder showers in several parts of Jammu and Kashmir between August 17 and 19, warning that the conditions may trigger

cloudbursts, flashfloods, landslides, mudslides and shooting stones in vulnerable areas.

Officials said there is a forecast of light to moderate rain and thundershowers at many places during this period, with heavy rainfall expected in parts of Jammu division including Jammu, Reasi, Udhampur, Rajouri, Poonch, Samba and Kathua. Moderate intense showers are also likely over Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban districts, along with brief but intense showers in some parts of Kashmir division accompanied by gusty winds.



"This weather transition may likely cause cloudbursts and flashfloods at few vulnerable places, along with landslides, mudslides and shooting stones," officials said, adding that people should avoid water bodies, streams, river embankments and unstable structures.

The advisory has also urged travelers, transporters, tourists and trekkers to plan their journeys carefully in view of the weather conditions. The department further stated that between

■ See On P/6

Indian Tricolour Hoisted Atop Seattle's Iconic Space Needle In Historic First

NEWYORK/SEATTLE: The Indian tricolour was hoisted at Seattle's iconic 605-feet-tall Space Needle on India's 79th Independence Day, the first time that a foreign nation's flag was raised at the popular American destination.

Consul General of India in Seattle Prakash Gupta along with Mayor of Seattle Bruce Harrell and other select dignitaries from the Seattle city leadership, joined the historic and landmark occasion.

"No greater honour than this! Raising the Tiranga on top of Seattle skyline at Space Needle," Gupta said in a post on X, along with a video of the tricolour flying high atop the iconic Seattle monument with sprawling views of the city below.

Calling the commemoration a "historic first in Seattle", the Consulate General of India in Seattle said the celebration underscored the contributions of the Indian-American diaspora in shaping the city's journey as a tech hub in the US Pacific Northwest.

Later, a community reception was hosted by the Consulate at the scenic Kerry Park, with India's flag on top of the Space Needle in the backdrop.

A large number of Indian-American community members turned up to witness the historic sight, the Consulate said in a press release.

The reception was attended by several digni-

ties including US Congressman Adam Smith, Chief Justice of the Washington Supreme Court Debra Stephens, Seattle Port Commissioner Sam Cho and Superintendent/Director of Seattle

In a special gesture to honour India's Independence Day in the Greater Seattle area, King County, which covers 39 cities, along with Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma and Bellevue, issued official

The Indian flag was also hoisted at the prestigious Tacoma Dome, Tacoma City Hall and at the Headquarters of Tacoma Police and Fire Departments, the Consulate said.

A vibrant cultural extravaganza featuring



Parks and Recreation AP Diaz.

Addressing the gathering, Smith welcomed the historic celebration, noting that the Indian tricolour's hoisting atop the Space Needle is a tribute to the region's diversity and the strong bonds between India and the Pacific Northwest.

proclamations marking August 15 as India Day.

Separately, several iconic buildings across Seattle were also lit up in the Indian tricolours. These included the Lumen Stadium, T-Mobile Stadium, Westin, Seattle Great Wheel and Space Needle.

The reception was attended by several dignitaries including US Congressman Adam Smith, Chief Justice of the Washington Supreme Court Debra Stephens, Seattle Port Commissioner Sam Cho and Superintendent/Director of Seattle Parks and Recreation AP Diaz.

national anthems, along with dance performances showcasing the rich diversity of Indian art forms as well as a poetic recital by renowned artist and actor Piyush Mishra also enthralled those attending the special celebrations. (PTI)

Ukraine's Zelenskyy to meet Trump on Monday after US-Russia summit secured no halt to fighting

KYIV: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said he will meet US President Donald Trump in Washington on Monday after a Russia-US summit ended without an agreement



to stop the fighting in Ukraine after 3 1/2 years.

In a reversal only few hours after meeting Russian President Vladimir Putin, Trump said an overall peace agreement, and not a ceasefire, was the best way to end the war. That statement echoed Putin's view that Russia is not interested in a temporary truce, and instead is seeking a long-term settlement that takes Moscow's interests into account.

Trump and Ukraine's European allies had been calling for a ceasefire ahead of any negotiations.

Zelenskyy, who was not invited to Alaska for the summit, said he held a "long and substantive" conversation with Trump early Saturday. He thanked Trump for an invitation to meet in person in Washington on Monday and said they would "discuss all of the details regarding ending the killing and the war."

It will be Zelenskyy's first visit to the US since Trump berated him publicly for being "disrespectful" during an extraordinary Oval Office meeting on February 28.

Trump, who also held calls with European leaders Saturday, confirmed the White House meeting and said that "if all works out, we will then schedule a meeting with President Putin."

Trump rolled out the red carpet on Friday for Putin, who was in the US for the first time in a decade and since the start of his full-scale invasion of Ukraine. But he gave little concrete detail afterward of what was discussed. On Saturday, he posted on social media that it "went very well."

Trump had warned ahead of the summit of "very severe consequences" for Russia if Putin doesn't agree to end the war. Zelenskyy seeks European involvement

Zelenskyy reiterated the importance of involving European leaders, who also were not at the summit.

"It is important that Europeans are involved at every stage to ensure reliable security guarantees together with America," he said. "We also discussed positive signals from the American side regarding participation in guaranteeing Ukraine's security."

He didn't elaborate, but Zelenskyy previously has said that European partners put on hold a proposal to establish a foreign troop presence in Ukraine to deter future Russian aggression because it lacked an American backdrop.

Zelenskyy said he spoke to Trump one-on-one and then in a call with other European leaders. In total, the conversations lasted over 90 minutes.

Trump puts onus on Zelenskyy and Europe

Trump said in Alaska that "there's no deal until there's a deal," after Putin claimed the two leaders had hammered out an "understanding" on Ukraine and warned Europe not to "torpedo the nascent progress."

During an interview with Fox News Channel before returning to Washington, Trump insisted the onus going forward might be on Zelenskyy "to get it done," but said there would also be some involvement from European nations.

In a statement after speaking to Trump, major European leaders said they were ready to work with Trump and Zelenskyy toward "a trilateral summit with European support."

The statement by French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, Finnish President Alexander Stubb, Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk and the European Union's two top officials said that "Ukraine must have ironclad security guarantees" and welcomed US readiness to provide them.

"It will be up to Ukraine to make decisions on its territory," they said. "International borders must not be changed by force." They did not mention a ceasefire, which they had hoped for ahead of the summit.

EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said "the harsh reality is that Russia has no intention of ending this war anytime soon," noting that Moscow's forces launched new attacks on Ukraine even as the delegations met.

"Putin continues to drag out negotiations and hopes he gets away with it. He left Anchorage without making any commitments to end the killing," she said. (PTI)

Chinese FM Wang Yi to visit India on Monday for border talks: Foreign Ministry

BEIJING: Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi will begin a two-day visit to India on Monday for the next round of border talks with National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, the foreign ministry here announced on Saturday.

During the visit, Wang will attend the 24th meeting of the Special Representatives (SRs) meeting on the China-India boundary issue, the brief announcement said.

Wang, along with NSA Doval, heads the Special Representatives dialogue mechanism aimed at addressing the vexed border dispute spanning the 3,488 km Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Doval travelled to China in December last and held the 23rd round of talks with Wang, weeks after Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping decided to revive various dialogue mechanisms between the two sides at their meeting in the Russian city of Kazan on the sidelines of the BRICS summit.

Wang's visit comes ahead of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit, scheduled for August 31-September 1 in the Chinese city of Tianjin, which Prime Minister Modi is expected to attend. (PTI)

Sanjay Kumar flags off 34 students from India for Sakura Science Programme to Japan

NEW DELHI: The National Education Policy (NEP) - 2020, while emphasizing the importance of Curriculum and Pedagogy in Schools, endorses that "Learning should be Holistic, Integrated, Enjoyable and Engaging in itself. Furthermore, the NEP-2020, states that in all stages, experiential learning will

India participated in the program for the first time in April 2016. So far, 639 students along with 93 supervisors have visited Japan under this programme. The most recent batch visited Japan in June 2025.

For the upcoming Sakura Programme 2025, JST has invited 34 school students and 3

Nigeria, South Africa and Zambia), for the period between August 17th to August 23rd, 2025. These 34 students (13 boys & 21 girls) are from Government Schools of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Lakshadweep, Odisha, Puducherry, West Bengal and Demonstration Multipurpose Schools of RIEs-NCERT at Ajmer (Rajasthan), Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh), Bhubaneswar (Odisha) and Mysore (Karnataka).

The enthusiastic students were flagged off in a ceremony at NCERT, New Delhi, organized by the Department of School Education & Literacy (DoSEL), Ministry of Education (MoE), Government of India. The flagging-off ceremony for the Sakura Science Program was conducted by Sh. Sanjay Kumar, Secretary, Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education, Government of India, Prof. Prakash Chandra Agrawal, Joint Director, NCERT, and Smt. Archana Sharma Awasthi, Joint Secretary, Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education, Government of India.

During the event, Sh. Sanjay Kumar offered inspiring words to the students and the supervisor teachers, emphasizing that the program presents a golden opportunity for them to explore a developed nation like Japan. He conveyed that immersing themselves in Japan's highly advanced system is short of a blessing. He further stressed the imperative for all students and their accompanying teachers to fully appreciate the immense importance of this Sakura Science journey, recognizing its profound impact on shaping future innovators and strengthening bilateral ties.

Mr Sanjay Kumar highlighted the importance of our country's language by saying that Indian students should greet by Namaste as the entire world now knows this Indian greeting thanks to our Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He mentioned that we should know the fact that Japanese are famous for their punctuality and we must learn it from there, as there's a famous saying "time and tide wait for none".

He highlighted that Japan's history and their economic growth is something to study about and we can take Japan as an example and take India forward with the same approach. (PIB)

PM to inaugurate Rs.11,000 Crore Highway Projects in Delhi on 17th August

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate two major National Highway projects worth a combined cost of nearly Rs.11,000 crore on 17th August, 2025 at around 12:30 PM in Rohini, Delhi. Prime Minister will also address the gathering on the occasion.

The projects—the Delhi section of the Dwarka Expressway and the Urban Extension Road-II (UER-II)—have been developed under the Government's comprehensive plan to decongest the capital, with the objective of greatly improving connectivity, cutting travel time, and reducing traffic in Delhi and its surrounding areas. These initiatives reflect Prime Minister Modi's vision of creating world-class infrastructure that enhances ease of living and ensures seamless mobility.

The 10.1 km long Delhi section of Dwarka Expressway has been developed at a cost of around Rs. 5,360 crore. The section will also provide Multimodal connectivity to Yashobhoomi, DMRC Blue line and Orange line, upcoming Bijwasan railway station and Dwarka cluster Bus Depot.

Prime Minister will also inaugurate the Alipur to Dichaon Kalan stretch of Urban Extension Road-II (UER-II) along with new links to Bahadurgarh and Sonapat, built at a cost of Rs. around 5,580 Crores. It will ease traffic on Delhi's Inner and Outer Ring Roads and busy points like Mukarba Chowk, Dhaula Kuan, and NH-09. The new spurs will give direct access to Bahadurgarh and Sonapat, improve industrial connectivity, cut city traffic, and speed up goods movement in the NCR. (PIB)



be adopted as standard pedagogy within each subject, and with explorations of relationships among different subjects.

In this context, educational trips and excursions to places of historical, cultural, social, scientific and technological importance are of paramount importance. Japan, as a developed and friendly nation known for its technological advancements, is also a preferred destination for educational exposure. Therefore, visiting a country like Japan is always enriching and provides an opportunity for exploration of innovative practices.

To broaden the intellectual horizons and foster scientific exploration among young learners, the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) has been implementing the 'Japan-Asia Youth Exchange Program in Science', also known as the 'Sakura Science Programme', since 2014. India was included in the Sakura Program in 2016. Under this programme, students are invited for short-term visits to Japan, providing them with the opportunity to experience Japan's cutting-edge science and technology as well as its rich culture.

supervisors from India, alongside participants from six other countries (Egypt, Ghana, Kenya,

The opposition party's assertion came a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that GST rates will be lowered by Diwali, bringing down prices of everyday use items, as his government looks to reform the eight-year-old regime that has been plagued by litigation and evasion.

7.5 crore selfies uploaded under 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign: Culture Ministry

NEW DELHI: The Culture Ministry on Saturday said 7.5 crore selfies were uploaded online by people as part of the fourth edition of the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' (HGT) campaign held from August 2-15.

Also, more than nine lakh volunteers signed up during HGT 2025 and helped in spreading the spirit of the tricolour and the celebrations across urban and rural areas of the country, according to officials.

The 'Tiranga Volunteer' is a new component introduced this year to enable greater participation of people who are otherwise constrained by age, limited access to technology or other issues, enabling them to become part of the "world's largest movement of public participation," the ministry said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi celebrated the spirit of the tricolour in his Independence Day address from the ramparts of the Red Fort.

"Today, 140 crore Indians are adorned in the colours of the tricolour. 'Har Ghar Tiranga'... fluttering, whether from the deserts to the Himalayan peaks, and from the seashores to densely populated regions, everywhere there is one echo, one cheer—the praise of our motherland, dearer to us than life itself," he said in his speech.

The fourth edition of a nationwide move-

ment encouraged every Indian to bring home the national flag and "deepen our personal con-

of the Tiranga," it said.

This year, the campaign started from August 2 and unfolded in three phases till August 15, engaging citizens through various outreach and

"More than 1.8 crore Swachh Sujal Gaon Pledges were taken as part of 'Har Ghar Tiranga, Har Ghar Swachhta' sub-campaign, marking collaboration between the department of drink-



participatory programmes, the ministry said.

This year's theme included a strong focus on voluntary actions, civic pride, cleanliness drives and gratitude to our armed forces and police personnel.

ing water and sanitation of the Ministry of Jal Shakti and the Ministry of Culture, reinforcing values of civic responsibility, environmental stewardship, and national pride," the statement said. (PTI)

Budgam youth electrocuted to death during picnic in Bandipora

FE NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: A 22-year-old youth from Central Kashmir's Budgam district lost his life due to electrocution while on a picnic in Athwato area of north Kashmir's Bandipora district on Saturday, officials said.

The deceased has been identified as Syed Muneeb, son of Syed Imtiyaz, a resident of Mirgund in Budgam. Muneeb was part of a group of five friends, who had gone to the scenic Athwato area for a day-long picnic.

According to initial reports, the incident occurred while the group was collecting firewood near their campsite.



Eyewitnesses claimed that Muneeb came into contact with an electric pole that may have been live due to an alleged fault in the local power supply line. The contact resulted in severe burn injuries, and the youth died on the spot.

His body was later shifted to the District Hospital Bandipora, where doctors declared him "brought dead." Hospital officials confirmed the presence of burn injuries, though the exact cause of death will be determined through medico-legal procedures.

Rana conducts extensive tour of landslide-affected areas of Surankote, Mendhar

Reviews public infrastructure restoration efforts



FE News Network

POONCH: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, undertook a comprehensive tour of landslide-affected areas of Surankote and Mendhar subdivisions of Poonch district.

The visit was held with an aim to assess on-ground damage, oversee restoration efforts and ensure immediate relief and rehabilitation measures for affected communities.

Accompanied by senior officials of the District Administration and engineers from line departments, the Minister conducted site visits

along the Surankote-Jharanwali-Mendhar Road, inspecting landslide-impacted areas in Jarranwali Gali, Phambranarh, and Narh.

The Minister also held a detailed review at major landslide sites of Surhoti as well as near Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV), Surankote, where infrastructure and public connectivity has been severely disrupted.

He directed all concerned departments, including PWD, RDD and Disaster Management authorities, to initiate immediate damage assessment and undertake swift restoration of public infrastructure.

He emphasized upon the officers to adopt

coordinated inter-departmental approach to ensure relief reaches every affected soul without any delay.

"The Government stands firmly with the people in this hour of need,"

the Minister said, assuring affected families that the Omar Abdullah-led Government will provide all necessary assistance to help them recover and rebuild their lives.

Earlier Rana also visited Jogger Park, located near the Sher-e-Kashmir Bridge in Poonch town and directed the Irrigation & Flood Control (I&FC) Department to prepare a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the upgradation and extension of the jogging track up to the Police Lines.

He instructed for installation of a synthetic surface to provide residents with a modern fitness facility set against the picturesque riverfront, aiming to promote a healthier lifestyle for all age groups.

The Minister also visited Miran Public School in Janyar Dingla, where he engaged with students, teaching faculty and the school management.

Interacting with the young learners, Rana highlighted the transformative power of education and its role in shaping a progressive and equitable society.

"Education is the strongest tool for empowerment," he stated, reaffirming the Government's unwavering commitment to ensuring quality education is accessible to all, particularly in remote and rural regions.

DC Kathua inspects projects and amenities during Basohli tour



FE News Network

KATHUA: Deputy Commissioner Kathua, Rajesh Sharma, conducted an extensive tour of Basohli to review developmental works, civic infrastructure and tourism-related projects.

He was accompanied by ADC Basohli Pankaj Bhgotra, ADC Kathua Vishavjeet Singh, CPO Ranjit Thakur, XEN PWD Basohli Rajesh Kumar and other district officers.

During the tour, the Deputy Commissioner visited the historic Mint site near Bus Stand Basohli and directed the Executive Engineer PWD to immediately commence development work sanctioned by the Archaeology Department at

a cost of 82.34 lakh. The project includes construction of a protection wall and development of a park to preserve and showcase the heritage site.

He later visited Ward No. 11, a landslide-affected area, and instructed the Executive Engineer PWD and ADC Kathua to prepare a convergence plan for initiating protection measures.

At Kulthi Morh, Rehan Panchayat, he inspected the Solid Waste Treatment Plant where compost pits have been completed. He directed PWD to expedite approach road and chain-link fencing works and stressed on community participation in maintaining cleanliness.

Tarigami Seeks people's participation in environmental policy, stronger early warning systems

FE News Network

SRINAGAR: Chairman of the Committee on Environment and CPI(M) leader M Y Tarigami has expressed deep concern over the deadly cloudburst at Chisoti in Padder, Kishtwar, which



has claimed several lives, left many missing, and caused widespread devastation.

Terming the incident a grim reminder of the Himalayan region's vulnerability to extreme weather events such as flash floods, landslides and avalanches, Tarigami said the tragedy underscored the existential threat posed by climate change to Jammu and Kashmir's fragile ecosystem. He asked whether any comprehensive survey or assessment had ever been undertaken by the environment department or related agencies to safeguard areas that host shrines and yatras, which attract thousands of devotees every year.

While paying tribute to the volunteers, youth, and local communities who displayed solidarity and communal harmony during the rescue operations, Tarigami lauded their "heroic role" in the face of tragedy. At the same time, he demanded a time-bound probe into the disaster,

questioning why precautionary measures were not taken despite prior alerts from the Meteorological Department about heavy rainfall and possible cloudbursts. Ignoring these warnings, he said, amounted to criminal negligence, and bureaucratic inertia and lack of concern must be accounted for.

Tarigami noted that such disasters were not merely natural but were worsened by reckless exploitation of resources, deforestation, unregulated stone crushing, and unchecked commercialization of land. He added that it was the marginalized communities of Jammu and Kashmir who continued to pay the price for environmental degradation while profit-driven forces remained unchecked.

Citing the alarming frequency of cloudbursts and extreme weather events in Pahalgam, Bandipora, Shangus, Ladakh and elsewhere, he observed that nature itself was crying out for justice as hills mourned, rivers wept and winds warned of more to come.

The senior leader stressed that the way forward lay in involving local communities, activists and NGOs in decision-making on climate adaptation and mitigation policies.

He pressed for institutional mechanisms to provide climate compensation and justice to affected families, alongside a mass campaign for ecological restoration, reforestation and stricter regulation of unsustainable construction.

He further urged the government to deploy modern weather-tracking technologies like Doppler radars and satellites to strengthen early warning systems, ensuring timely alerts to vulnerable populations through mobile networks, local broadcasters and even loudspeakers.

LG Kavinder Gupta Vows To Regulate Airfare, Accelerate Tourism In Ladakh



FE News Network

LEH: Ladakh Lieutenant Governor Kavinder Gupta on Saturday vowed to regulate airfare and accelerate tourism in the Union territory.

"The administration will take concrete steps to regulate airfare so that airlines do not burden passengers with exorbitant charges, particularly during the harsh winter months," the L-G said.

Interacting with Ladakh MP Mohammad Haneefa Jan and representatives of the All Ladakh Tour Operators Association (ALTOA) here, Gupta reiterated the administration's firm resolve to promote tourism in Ladakh. "No stone will be left unturned in boosting tourism and strengthening connectivity," he said.

Underlining the urgent need to expand tourism opportunities in Kargil, Gupta stressed on organising cultural events such as the Suru Festival, and facilitating the introduction of private aircraft services in the district to enhance connectivity, thereby ensuring greater convenience for tourists.

Dr Jitendra Visits GMC To Inquire About Kishtwar Victims, Announces MP's Help Desk

FE News Network

JAMMU: Soon after his arrival from Kishtwar after overnight journey from the site of the cloudburst at Chositi in Kishtwar, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh directly headed for the Government Medical College, Jammu to enquire about the well being of the injured persons admitted over there and to arrange the necessary help required.

The Minister, who is also the MP representing Kishtwar, announced the setting up of the MP's Help-Desk in the Government Medical College Hospital, who would be attending to the requirements of the needy injured persons, providing them all the required items, including medicine, food, etc., and are arranging even for their transport. The Help Desk will be directly in touch with the offices of Principal GMC, Jammu.

Dr. Jitendra Singh, who is also an eminent medical professional, went around the patients one by one, inquired about their health and being a professional medical person himself, he was also seen time to time providing some advice and suggestions to the treating doctors.

During the visit, the team of Dr. Jitendra Singh also handed over the pre-prepared kits maintaining fruit, eating items, and other necessary requirements for the injured patients admitted.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said, all arrangements have been made not only to fully provide required treatment to each of the patients, but even to arrange for their referral outside Jammu, if required. However, he said, luckily, there is no such patient who requires to be shifted outside.

Later on, while addressing the media, flanked by Principal Government Medical College, Dr. Ashutosh Gupta, and local MLA Arvind Gupta, Dr. Jitendra Singh said, in total, there have been 67 patients admitted but after he took the round and had a discussion with the Principal and the treating doctors, it was decided that at least 15 out of these could be discharged today itself, which means that the remaining number of injured patients from the Kishtwar cloud disaster tragedy

will now be limited to 52.

The Minister said, he has however also advised the treating doctors that most of the patients who have very minor injuries or soft tissue injuries, which do not require any intervention or surgery could be discharged sooner than later so that they could go home and have a feeling of well-being. He said, some of the patients do not have much injury, but they are still under the panic and the shock resulting from the sudden catastrophic that struck them and caused injuries to them.

When asked about the condition of the injured patient, Dr. Jitendra Singh said, most of the patients were quite settled and luckily none of them had any head injury or any vital organ injury because



most of the injury was caused by the debris or the material, which was mostly muddy and soily. Some of the injuries were also caused because they tried to flee from the site and had a fall and injured themselves resulting in either soft tissue muscle injuries or the bone injury. As a result, he said, it could be reasonably and confidently concluded that none of the patients had any life threatening injury.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said, since Prime Minister Narendra Modi is personally monitoring the situation, all the government machinery has been mobilised. He appreciated the efforts of Principal Dr. Ashutosh Gupta, the various departments of the Jammu Medical College including the Orthopaedic and the Neurology department as well as the administration for their prompt action.

Doctor suspended in Bandipora for absence from duty, skipping Independence Day function

FE News Network

Bandipora: The Medical Superintendent of District Hospital Bandipora on Saturday ordered the suspension of Dr. Sabia Salam, Medical Officer, for remain-

ing absent from duty and failing to attend the official Independence Day function despite clear directions.

According to the suspension order, Dr. Sabia Salam did not report for duty on August 14, 2025, which, the hospital administration said, adversely affected patient care at the District Hospital. The order further states that on August 15, she skipped the Independence Day celebrations without seeking permission or authorization, despite written instructions to participate.

The Medical Superintendent observed that such conduct amounts to "disrespect and disregard for a

national event and reflects indiscipline unbecoming of a government servant."

In exercise of powers under Rule 31 of the J&K Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1956, read with Article 128 of the J&K Civil Service Regulations, Dr. Sabia Salam has been placed under suspension with immediate effect, pending a formal enquiry.

During the suspension period, she has been attached to the Head of Department, Ophthalmology, District Hospital Bandipora, and will be entitled to subsistence allowance as per rules. (CNS)

Inter-department & inter-college cricket tournaments conclude at KU

FE News Network

SRINAGAR: The Department of Physical Education & Sports (DPES), University of Kashmir (KU) on Saturday hosted the valedictory function of its Inter-Department and Inter-College Cricket (Men & Women) Tournaments, marked by massive student participation and spirited competition. The prize distribution ceremony was held at the University Ground "A".

As part of the University's Annual Sports Calendar 2025, three major events were held – Men's Inter-Department Cricket, Women's Inter-Department Cricket and Women's Inter-Collegiate Cricket – which together witnessed the participation of more than 1,300 students from departments, satellite campuses and affiliated colleges.

The Men's Inter-Department Cricket Tournament showcased remarkable enthusiasm, with 49 teams representing various departments and satellite campuses. Over 750 students participated, making it one of the largest cricket events in recent years. The final match was played between the Institute



of Technology, Zakura Campus and the Department of Physical Education & Sports (MPed). Batting

first, IOT Zakura set a target of 123/7 in 20 overs. Despite a phenomenal bowling spell by Sakib, who scalped 6 wickets for just 14 runs, MPed fell short and were bowled out for 112 runs in 19.2 overs, thereby giving IOT Zakura victory by 11 runs.

The Women's Inter-College Cricket Tournament saw overwhelming participation with 25 colleges and nearly 400 girl students taking part. The final clash between GDC Pulwama and the Postgraduate (PG) team witnessed GDC Pulwama's dominance as they posted 110/7 in 20 overs, led by stellar knocks from Tania (40) and Asma (30). PG's spirited chase was anchored by Sumi Jan with 45 runs and 4 wickets, but they were eventually restricted to 80 runs, giving Pulwama an emphatic victory by 29 runs.

The Women's Inter-Department Cricket Tournament featured 14 teams and 224 girl students. The final was played between the Department of Tourism and the Department of Physical Education & Sports. Tourism managed 90 all out in 18 overs, with Sumi Jan again shining by taking 6 wickets. The Department of Physical Education & Sports

comfortably chased the target in 14 overs, winning by 8 wickets.

The valedictory ceremony was attended by Prof. Fayaz Ahmad, Director Admissions and Competitive Examinations KU; Prof. Pervez Ahmad, Dean Students Welfare KU; Prof. Musavir Ahmad, Head Department of Linguistics and Media Advisor KU; and Prof. Imtiyaz Ahmad Khan, Chief Proctor KU, as guests of honour.

They congratulated the winners and lauded the overwhelming participation of students, particularly women athletes, emphasising that sports not only sharpen minds and enhance academic productivity but also promote teamwork, leadership, discipline, and character building.

Dr. Surjeet Singh, Coordinator, DPES KU, said that such events promote teamwork, leadership and nation-building among youth.

The proceedings of the event were conducted by Assistant Director DPES KU, Tausif Bhat and Football Coach DPES KU, Sajid Yousuf, while Assistant Director DPES KU, Dr. Basharat Ali delivered the formal vote of thanks.

Editorial

Kishtwar Tragedy

The devastating cloudburst in Kishtwar, has left whole country in mourning, with lives lost, families shattered, and a pilgrimage turned into a nightmare. Yet, amidst the rubble and despair, the miraculous survival of a few serves as a poignant reminder of resilience and hope.

The larger tragedy cannot be ignored. With 60 confirmed deaths and 82 still missing, the scale of loss is staggering. The relentless efforts of rescue teams, Army, NDRF, SDRF, and local volunteers deserve commendation. Their persistence, even in the face of diminishing odds, reflects humanity's unwavering spirit in times of crisis.

However, this disaster also demands introspection. Cloudbursts and flash floods are becoming alarmingly frequent in the Himalayas, exacerbated by climate change and unchecked development. While immediate relief is crucial, long-term strategies, better early warning systems, responsible tourism policies, and infrastructure resilient to extreme weather, must be prioritized.

The Machail Yatra's suspension is a necessary pause, but when it resumes, safety must not be compromised for tradition. Let this tragedy be a wake-up call, not just to rebuild what was lost, but to reimagine a future where such calamities claim fewer lives.

For now, Chasoti grieves. But, there is a lesson, even in the darkest hours, hope persists. It is up to us to ensure that hope is met with action.



VIJAY GARG

Microplastics have been found in the placentas of unborn babies, the depths of the Mariana Trench, the summit of Everest and the organs of Antarctic penguins. But



how do they travel through the world, and what do they do to the creatures that carry them? Here is the story of how plastic contaminates entire ecosystems – and even the food we eat.

The story starts with a single thread of polyester, dislodged from the weave of a cheap, pink acrylic jumper as it spins around a washing machine. This load of washing will shed hundreds of thousands of tiny plastic fragments and threads – up to 700,000 in this one washing machine cycle.

Along with billions of other microscopic, synthetic fibres, our thread travels through household wastewater pipes. Often, it ends up as sewage sludge, being spread on a farmer's field to help crops grow. Sludge is used as organic fertiliser across the US and Europe, inadvertently turning the soil into a huge global reservoir of microplastics. One wastewater treatment plant in Wales found 1% of the weight of sewage sludge was plastic.

From here, it works its way up the food chain through insects, birds, mammals and even humans. Perhaps our jumper's life as a garment will end soon, lasting only a few outings before it emerges from the wash shrunken and bobbling, to be discarded. But our thread's life will be long. It might have only been part of a jumper for a few weeks, but it could voyage around the natural world for centuries.

Spread on the fields as water or sludge, our tiny fibre weaves its way into the fabric of soil ecosystems. A worm living under a

The Life Of Microplastic

wheat field burrows its way through the soil, mistaking the thread for a bit of old leaf or root. The worm consumes it – but cannot process it like ordinary organic matter.

The worm joins nearly one in three earthworms that contain plastic, according to a study published in April, as well as a quarter of slugs and snails that ingest plastic as they graze across soil. Caterpillars of peacock, powder blue and red admiral butterflies all contain plastic too, perhaps from

consuming plastic fibres within them as it goes. One of them is our worm.

A study that looked at the faeces of seven hedgehogs, found four of them contained plastics, one of which contained 12 fibres of polyester, some of which were pink. If hedgehogs don't live in your country, substitute another small, scurrying mammal or bird: the same study found mice, voles and rats were also eating plastic, either directly or via contaminated prey.

Birds that eat insects such as swifts, thrushes and blackbirds are also ingesting plastic via their prey. A study earlier this year found for the first time that birds have microplastics in their lungs because they are inhaling them too. "Microplastics are now ubiquitous at every level of the food web," says Prof Fiona Mathews, environmental biologist at the University of Sussex. The meat, milk and blood of farm animals also contain microplastics.

At the top of the food chain, humans consume at least 50,000 microplastic particles a year. They are in our food, water, and the air we breathe. Fragments of plastic have been found in blood, semen, lungs, breast milk, bone marrow, placenta, testicles and the brain.

Even as it makes its way up the animal food chain, our polyester fibre has not been broken down. At some point, the thread returns to the dirt when the creature that consumed its host dies, and a new adventure starts. The body will decay, but the polyester fibre will endure. Once in the soil, it is ploughed in by the farmer before crops are sown. But it may not stay there for long – strong winds blow the dry, degraded soil into the air, taking with it a pink fragment of plastic. In heavy rain, the fibre could be swept into a river flowing to the sea: a major source of marine contamination is runoff from land.

This process of moving through natural systems over years has been called "plastic spiralling". Scientists have found that microplastics equivalent to 300m plastic water bottles have rained down on the Grand Canyon, Joshua Tree and other US national parks. Even the most remote places are contaminated. One scientist found 12,000 microplastic particles a litre in samples of Arctic sea ice, swept there by ocean currents and blown in by the wind.

With the passage of time, our plastic thread has still not rotted, but has broken into fragments, leaving tiny pieces of itself in the air, water and soil. Over the course of years, it could become so small that it infiltrates the root cell wall of a plant as it sucks up nutrients from the soil. Nanoplastics have been found in the leaves and fruits

of plants and, once inside, they can affect the plant's ability to photosynthesise, research suggests. Here, inside the microscopic systems of the plant, the bits of our pink fibre cause all kinds of havoc – blocking nutrient and water channels, harming cells and releasing toxic chemicals. Staples such as wheat, rice and lettuce have been shown to contain plastic, which is one way they enter the human food chain.

Eight billion tonnes of plastic and counting From its humble beginnings, our fibre may have journeyed around the world, shed-

Plastic pollution in the marine environment has been widely documented, but a UN report found soil contains more microplastic pollution than the oceans. This matters not only for the health of soils, but because creepy crawlies such as beetles, slugs and snails form the building blocks of food chains. Our worm is now enabling this plastic fibre to become an international traveller.

ding bits of itself along the way, and working its way into almost every layer of different ecosystems and the far reaches of the natural world. Extracting it once it begins that journey is extremely difficult. The best way to prevent its spread is to stop it at the outset – before the worm, before the soil, before the washing machine, even before the jumper is made.

Since the 1950s, humans have produced in excess of 8.3bn tonnes of plastic – equivalent to the weight of one billion elephants. It finds its way into packaging, textiles, agricultural materials and consumer goods. Opting to live without it is almost impossible.

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Spark of Change: India's Electric Two-Wheeler Boom



Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit

India's electric two-wheeler market is experiencing significant growth, driven by government incentives, technological advancements,

premium-segment buyers. Mainline brands like Honda are also entering the fray with their much-anticipated electric Activa, featuring swappable battery technology to address charging and downtime concerns. Electric scooters are gaining popularity in India as a sustainable and cost-effective mode of transportation. With rising fuel prices and increasing environmental concerns, more people are turning to electric scooters as a cleaner alternative to traditional petrol-powered vehicles. Electric two-wheeler sales have surged, with over 93,872 units sold in

creasing in India, with more people making the switch to electric vehicles. This is due to the benefits of electric 2-wheelers, that are mentioned above. As more people adopt electric 2-wheelers, the infrastructure for electric mobility will improve, making it even more convenient for consumers.

Manufacturers are using premium materials and offering vibrant color choices, making electric scooters not just a mode of transport but also a fashion statement. This evolution in design reflects changing consumer preferences, as more

Many electric scooters now support fast-charging capabilities, allowing users to charge their vehicles quickly and conveniently at home or public charging stations. The government's push towards electric mobility and the availability of subsidies and incentives have further fueled this trend. Electric scooters offer a convenient and eco-friendly way to commute, especially in congested urban areas. Modern electric scooters come equipped with smart displays that provide real-time information about battery life, range, and performance metrics, allowing users to monitor their ride more efficiently. The electric scooter market in India is expected to continue growing rapidly, driven by increasing consumer awareness and government support. Future electric scooters are likely to feature advancements such as longer battery life, faster charging, and improved performance, making them more attractive to consumers. Continued government incentives and regulations favouring electric vehicles are expected to further boost the adoption of electric scooters.

The electric scooter market in India is witnessing significant growth, with several key players driving innovation and competition. Some of the major companies manufacturing electric scooters in India include Ola Electric, TVS Motor, and Ather Energy who are among the top players in the market. Ola Electric dominates the market with a 34.2% share, followed by TVS Motor with an 18.4% share.

The rise of electric scooters in India represents a significant shift towards sustainable and eco-friendly transportation solutions. With increasing government support, technological advancements, and changing consumer preferences, electric scooters are becoming a popular choice among commuters. Overall, India's electric two-wheeler market is poised for significant growth, driven by a combination of government support, technological advancements, and increasing consumer demand.

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and increasing consumer demand for eco-friendly and cost-effective transportation solutions. Electric 2-wheelers are witnessing a growth in popularity in India. The Indian two-wheeler market is undergoing a transformation like never before, and at the centre of this change is the rise of electric scooters.

The Indian e-scooter market is buzzing with innovation as manufacturers roll out 15-20 new models catering to both budget-conscious and

June 2025, representing a 35% year-on-year growth. In May 2025, sales reached 1,00,266 units, up 30% year-on-year.

The rise of electric scooters in India isn't just a trend—it's a revolution in how the country moves. The history of electric scooters in India reveals a significant shift in recent years. Today's electric scooters feature sleek, aerodynamic designs with an emphasis on comfort and style. The adoption rate of electric 2-wheelers is in-

people seek stylish and eco-friendly transportation options. Innovation is a key driver in the Evolution of Electric Scooters in India, especially in battery technology. Modern electric scooters come with improved batteries that address range concerns, allowing longer trips on a single charge. Advancements in charging infrastructure and faster charging technology enhance convenience and address user concerns about battery life.

The Indian e-scooter market is buzzing with innovation as manufacturers roll out 15-20 new models catering to both budget-conscious and premium-segment buyers. Mainline brands like Honda are also entering the fray with their much-anticipated electric Activa, featuring swappable battery technology to address charging and downtime concerns.

Rana praises Maulana Ghulam Qadir's role in socio-educational reforms across Pir Panjal

POONCH: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana praised and acknowledged the services of Maulana Ghulam Qadir Bandy, a towering figure of Pir Panjal region who contributed immensely in socio-educational reforms.

Addressing a distinguished gathering of civil society members, educationists and religious scholars at the Jamia Zia Ul Uloom Group of Institutions in Poonch, the Minister described Maulana Bandy as a visionary reformer and spiritual guide whose transformative contributions to education have left an indelible mark on generations.

"Maulana Ghulam Qadir Bandy Sahib is not just a religious scholar; he is the

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan of Pir Panjal," said

Bandy foresaw the need for harmonizing



Rana, invoking the revered 19th-century Indian reformer. Rana said that Maulana

Islamic learning with modern education. He added that his initiatives lit the lamp

of knowledge in a region once gripped by isolation and educational backwardness.

"His commitment to girls' education, at a time when it was often neglected, demonstrated his progressive ideals and a deep understanding of societal reform. His efforts empowered not just individuals, but families and communities," Rana stated.

Minister further said that the Jamia Zia Ul Uloom, founded by Maulana Bandy, has over the years emerged as a beacon of learning in the Pir Panjal region. He added that under his guidance, the institute produced scholars, civil servants, teachers and professionals who continue to contribute meaningfully in diverse spheres across Jammu & Kashmir and beyond

IGP Birdi appreciates district police chiefs for preventing crime

Chairs security review meeting in Srinagar; underscores need to improve conviction rates, quality of investigation

Srinagar: Appreciating the efforts of the district police chiefs in preventing crime, Inspector General of Police (Kashmir) V K Birdi on Saturday emphasized on the need to improve the quality of investigation.

Chairing a high-level security review meeting at Police Control Room (PCR) here, the IGP Kashmir underscored the need to improve the conviction rates by way of establishing a robust follow-up system for securing convictions in narco and terror related cases.

While assessing the security measures, IGP Birdi urged officers to intensify area domination exercises and night patrolling in vulnerable areas to strengthen the security grid.

The IGP Kashmir reiterated the commitment of the J&K Police in maintaining safety and security in the region.

He urged the officers to

work for ensuring transparency, accountability and swift

efforts in crime prevention and maintenance of law & order in



resolution of cases to safeguard the rights and safety of citizens.

The meeting was attended by all the range DIsG, district SSSP and other senior officers.

The IGP Kashmir took an overall assessment of the security situation of the Kashmir Zone. This was followed by the presentations of district SSSP highlighting their

their respective districts. The deliberations, according to the officials, centered around the resolution of general crime cases, as well as matters related to NDPS, UAPA, absconders and other offenses. Actions taken under preventive laws and pending inquest proceedings were also discussed—(KNO)

Explosives Used To Blast Giant Boulders To Speed Up Rescue Efforts In Cloudburst-Hit J&K Village

Kishtwar/Jammu: Explosives were used to blast giant boulders hampering the ongoing rescue and relief operations in the disaster-hit Chisoti village in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district on the third day on Saturday, officials said.



Army has also deployed additional troops to intensify the efforts, they said.

A total of 60 persons, including three CISF personnel and a Special Police Officer, have died and 82 people were reported missing in the cloudburst and the resultant flash floods that struck the remote village in Padder subdivision on Thursday afternoon. Around 167 people have been rescued so far, some critically injured.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah visited Chisoti village on Saturday morning and announced an ex-gratia assistance from the chief minister's relief fund to the affected families as a "measure of solidarity and immediate relief". He also assured them long-term support.

Union Minister Jitendra Singh, accompanied by Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police Nalin Prabhakar, also visited the devastated village late on Friday night and reviewed the ongoing rescue and relief efforts jointly carried out by the Police, Army, National Disaster Response Force, State Disaster Response Force, Border Roads Organisation, civil administration, and local volunteers.

So far, 50 bodies have been identified and handed over to their next of kin after completion

of legal formalities.

The disaster struck Chisoti — the last motorable village en route to the Machail Mata temple — at around 12.25 pm on August 14. It flattened a makeshift market, a langar (community kitchen) site prepared for the yatra, and

consecutive day on Saturday. The 8.5-kilometre trek to the 9,500-foot-high shrine starts from Chisoti, located about 90 kilometres from Kishtwar town.

Rescue efforts were intensified with the deployment of nearly a dozen earth-movers by the civil administration and the use of specialised equipment and dog squads by the National Disaster Relief Force.

The chief minister, after taking first-hand stock of the devastation, announced that the families of those who lost their lives would receive financial support of Rs 2 lakh each, while those who sustained severe injuries would be given Rs 1 lakh and those with minor injuries Rs 50,000.

For structural damages, he announced Rs 1 lakh for fully damaged houses, Rs 50,000 for severely damaged ones, and Rs 25,000 for partially damaged structures.

The chief minister also met the bereaved families of the deceased and those affected by the tragedy. He prayed for the departed souls, and assured people that his government will extend not only immediate assistance but also long-term rehabilitation to help them rebuild their lives.

Several people in Chisoti village welcomed Abdullah's visit and expressed hope that he will personally oversee their rehabilitation.

"We feel relieved after the visit of the chief minister, who went door-to-door to meet victims' families and heard our genuine demands," said Rangeel Singh, a local resident.

Singh also expressed disappointment over the Union minister, who visited at "the dead of the night and returned without listening to us". "We are hopeful that the chief minister will fulfil all our genuine demands, including compensation for the loss, relocation to safer places, and jobs to the next of kin of those killed in the calamity," he added. (PTI)

a security outpost.

At least 16 residential houses and government buildings, three temples, four water mills, a 30-metre-long bridge, and over a dozen villages were damaged in the flash floods which dumped giant boulders at various spots, especially around the worst-hit langar site.

Racing against time since the chances of digging out the survivors alive fade with every passing hour, the rescuers expedited the operation in the evening by using explosive substances to blast the oversized boulders that could not be shifted with earth-movers or other equipment.

Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, General Officer Commanding of Army's Delta Force Major General APS Bal, and CISF Deputy Inspector General MK Yadav also visited the village, while Jammu Divisional Commissioner Ramesh Kumar, Jammu Inspector General of Police Bhim Sen Tuti, Kishtwar Deputy Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Sharma and Kishtwar Senior Superintendent of Police Naresh Singh are camping in the area to supervise the operation.

The annual Machail Mata yatra, which began on July 25 and was scheduled to conclude on September 5, remained suspended for the third

Janmashtami celebrated with religious fervour in Poonch



POONCH: Krishna Janmashtami, marking the birth of Lord Krishna, was celebrated with devotion in Poonch today.

The celebrations were attended by Deputy Commissioner Poonch Ashok Kumar Sharma and Senior Superintendent of Police Shafket Hussain Bhat, along with senior district officials.

Addressing the gathering at Geeta Bhavan, the Deputy Commissioner extended greetings to the people of Poonch. He praised the spirit of harmony and brotherhood among the devotees and emphasised the importance of unity during culturally significant events.

Prominent citizens, religious leaders and SSP Poonch Shafket Hussain Bhat also addressed the gathering, appreciating the peaceful and joyous environment of the celebrations.

A Shobha Yatra was taken out from Shree Geeta Bhavan, featuring tableaux and traditional performances reflecting cultural heritage and devotion to Lord Krishna. The Deputy Commissioner, SSP and other officials joined the procession, expressing solidarity with the community.

The day's festivities began with a sacred pooja followed by an Akhand Kirtan, where devotional hymns echoed throughout the temple premises. The Shobha Yatra passed through the main streets of Poonch city, drawing large crowds. Local residents lined the route, offering refreshments to participants.

Thousands of devotees from across the district and neighbouring areas joined the celebrations, making the occasion spiritually significant for the community.

CS visits Chisoti, assures comprehensive relief and rehabilitation measures

PADDAR (KISHTWAR): Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, visited Chisoti village of Padder in

of damage to habitations and infrastructure, besides interacting with affected families, local



Kishtwar district to take stock of the situation in the aftermath of the recent cloudburst.

Senior officers including the Divisional Commissioner, Jammu; IGP, Jammu; DC, Kishtwar; SSP, Kishtwar and other concerned officers accompanied the Chief Secretary during this visit.

During the visit, the Chief Secretary reviewed the extent

officials, and rescue teams engaged in relief and restoration efforts.

He held intense deliberations with the rescue teams of NDRF, SDRF, local police and security forces there about the kind of measures taken so far. He also took this occasion to talk to local people about the relief operations, health facilities and

others being extended to them post this disaster.

The Chief Secretary issued instant instructions for ensuring immediate relief measures, proper rehabilitation of affected families, and early restoration of essential services in the area. He called upon all line departments to work in close coordination to ensure timely response and minimize inconvenience to the public. He impressed upon the Divisional and district administrations to closely monitor the progress and simultaneously inform him about the same on daily basis.

Reassuring the local population, the Chief Secretary affirmed that the government is fully committed to extending every possible support for relief and recovery operations. He directed the concerned authorities to remain vigilant and proactive in addressing the needs of the affected communities.

J&K procures nearly 40-50% electricity from power markets during lean season

Srinagar: With the minimal power generation availability, Jammu and Kashmir is procuring approximately 40-50 percent of electricity from the imported power markets during lean season.

The official documents reveal, "From the total imported power, it is seen that the power procurement by Jammu and Kashmir from the market is approximately 40-50 percent during lean season."

The documents further said that due to non-availability of internal generation during winter months, Jammu and Kashmir imports power from the interstate network.

"This over-dependence on day ahead and intraday market for purchase of power is indicating that measures for ensuring resource adequacy are required

at Jammu and Kashmir end," it reads. The Northern Regional Power

necessary measures for improvement in transmission and distribution system



Committee (NRPC) has accordingly urged Jammu and Kashmir to take

so that power shortages Jammu and Kashmir grid can be avoided and also

take measures for resource adequacy minimising dependence on day ahead market and real-time market purchases.

Pertinently KNO has already reported that Jammu and Kashmir temporarily reduces electricity demand by disconnecting power to certain areas or customers if unavailability of additional quantum under unallocated quantum from Ministry of Power (MoP).

Authorities from Jammu and Kashmir has informed CERC that, "J&K SLDC submitted that J&K manages the shortage through Term Ahead Market (TAM), Day Ahead Market (DAM) and Real-Time Market (RTM) banking. Un-Requisitioned Surplus (URS) and additional quantum under unallocated quantum from MoP. If the power is not available they resort to load shedding."—(KNO)

J&K: 12,000 kgs of unsafe meat seized in week-long crackdown

Srinagar: In the ongoing crackdown against unsafe food practices, authorities have seized and destroyed nearly 12,000 kilograms of unsafe and decomposed frozen meat across Jammu and Kashmir over the past few weeks.

According to officials of the Food Safety Department said, that the seized stock included



over 8,000 kgs in Kashmir and more than 3,000 kgs in Jammu, much of it found unbranded, improperly stored or dumped on roadsides.

"The consignments were declared unfit for human consumption and subsequently destroyed," the officials said.

As per the officials, the operation has also led to the sealing of two establishments and the registration of cases against the offenders. "Wherever we found unsafe or decomposed meat, it was seized and destroyed. Two establishments have already been locked by police and cases have been registered against them," a senior official said.

Notably, the seizures have highlighted gaps in the valley's storage infrastructure. Officials said that Srinagar lacked proper cold storage facilities, required to preserve frozen meat at -18°C. "Here, storage units can maintain temperatures only up to -4°C, which is inadequate for frozen consignments. At present, there may be four to five such units, but none are up to standard," the official said.

Authorities said the ongoing crackdown was a part of a routine monitoring exercise that gained urgency after large dumps of decomposed meat surfaced in recent weeks. While some consignments were traced to offenders, others were found abandoned along roadsides, making it difficult to establish their source.

The officials at the Food Safety Department said that they have written to the Commissioner for Food Safety to further probe the supply chain and identify points of origin.

Officials stressed that ensuring food safety is a joint responsibility.

"Suppliers, hoteliers and purchasers must verify proper branding, expiry dates and licenses before buying meat," the official said.

Meanwhile, the Hotel and Restaurant Association of Kashmir on Saturday also urged the government to establish strict testing facilities at Lakhnupur the gateway to Jammu and Kashmir and to impose a ban on unbranded frozen meat entering J&K—(KNO)

Dr. Farooq Abdullah extends greetings on Janmashtami Zaram-e-Satam



Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference President Dr. Farooq Abdullah extended heartfelt greetings to the people on the auspicious occasion of Janmashtami, also known locally as Zaram-e-Satam.

In his message, Dr. Farooq said that Janmashtami, which marks the birth of Shri Krishna, is a celebration of love, devotion, and righteousness. He expressed hope that the festival would continue to inspire peace, spiritual reflection, and communal harmony across the region.

"This occasion reminds us of the timeless values of truth, love, compassion, and justice principles that Shri Krishna upheld," Dr. Abdullah said. "May this festival strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and bring prosperity to all."

He also lauded the rich pluralistic culture of Jammu and Kashmir, where festivals of all faiths are celebrated with mutual respect and unity.

Marking the onset of the autumn season, Zaram-e-Satam also holds cultural significance in Kashmir. Dr. Abdullah encouraged fellow citizens from across the country to visit the Valley during this vibrant time of year, when the sun shines gently and the landscapes come alive in hues of gold and amber.

Secretary H&ME, DHS Jammu mobilise emergency medical response after cloudburst in Chashoti, Kishtwar

JAMMU: In the wake of the cloudburst that struck the Chashoti area of District Kishtwar and under the supervision of Secretary Health and Medical Education, Dr. Sayed Abid Rasheed Shah, the Directorate of Health Services Jammu (DHS Jammu) has initiated emergency medical response measures to assist those affected.

Director Health Services Jammu Dr. Abdul Hamid Zargar reached Padder, Kishtwar on AUGUST 14 and launched a coordinated response to provide urgent medical care and support to the victims. Administrative Secretary H&ME also reached Padder on AUGUST 15 to oversee the medical aid facilities being provided.

Multiple medical teams comprising doctors, paramedical staff and emergency health personnel were deployed to the affected areas. These teams

are working around the clock to provide medical aid to the injured and affected families.

A fleet of fully equipped

working in close coordination with the Kishtwar District Administration and SDRF/NDRF teams for the last three days to



ambulances has been deployed to ensure timely transfer of critical patients to nearby health institutions for advanced treatment.

Emergency medical camps have also been established near the affected zone with essential medicines, first aid and trauma care facilities.

DHS Jammu has been

ensure seamless healthcare support during rescue and relief operations. Chief Medical Officer Kishtwar Dr. Rajinder has been assisting in providing medical aid to those in need.

Attendants of the victims and several NGOs have appreciated the swift action taken by the health department, which has helped reduce mortality.

GMC Jammu takes lead in providing World Class treatment to victims of Kishtwar Tragedy

JAMMU: On the night of 14th August, when every Indian was preparing for the celebration of 79th Independence day, a team of medical professionals in GMC was eagerly waiting to receive a horde of ambulances arriving from Kishtwar carrying unfortunate victims who suffered not only physical but mental injuries following a natural disaster of paramount proportions. As soon as the ambulance sirens starting sounding in GMC Jammu emergency, the teams became active. Without losing even a minute, the porters and helpers took the patient trolleys to the triage room where the medical teams immediately started providing medical support and treatment. There was no time to lose, split second decisions were taken. The very sick were put on ventilators. Those requiring emergency surgeries were shifted to operation theatres. Those with superficial injuries were given suitable treatment. Their wounds cleaned and sutured carefully by trained staff. The nursing staff not only provided excellent nursing care but also were sisters, mothers, friends of those who suffered mental and physical trauma. Not only the patients were looked after, their accompanying family members were too given tender care and emotional sup-



port by trained staff. Needless to say everything was being closely monitored and done under the expert vision of Heads of departments, Heads of units, Senior professors, GMC administration. The

combined teamwork of all including administration, doctors, nursing staff, technical staff, security staff, sanitation staff, operation theatre staff ensured no life was lost due to any laxity. The core



treating departments like Orthopaedics, Anaesthesia, Surgery were ably supported by others like Neurosurgery, ENT, Dental, Ophthalmology, Medicine, Blood bank, Lab services and others. Not to mention

ated the work done by GMC Jammu's medical team in handling such mass crises. The Director PGI Chandigarh has applauded Principal GMC Jammu after seeing such spectacular performance.

here, the medical engineering departments (mechanical, electrical, civil) ensured seamless civic facilities despite challenges like incessant rains. The clock like precision shown by GMC Jammu staff in providing medical management to the patients is an example of highest professionalism.

There is no doubt that GMC Jammu has proven itself again and again as the leading health provider of the region be it during Operation Sindoor, mass accidents, tragedies etc. GMC Jammu's expertise to handle such mass medical crises has set a shining example for one and all in medical circles. The leading medical institutes of the region like PGI Chandigarh has appreciated

On 14th fateful night, GMC Jammu received 66 critical patients. On the same night, around 25 major surgeries were performed thus saving precious lives. The medical care continued on the following day too when more surgeries were performed. The un-tiring efforts of GMC's team has been applauded by all sections of society. The GMC team ensured that there was no need to refer even a single patient to any other higher institute for want of medical expertise. The GMC administration not only ensured highest quality medical care, but also ensured clean and hygienic and friendly environment for patients and their accompanying family members. There were many patients who were loaded with dust, mud in addition to their injuries. The nursing staff did commendable efforts clean them up, gave clean clothes, nursed their wounds and also gave them emotional support. There were many who were brought alone, there were scared children, there were those who had lost their dear ones. The nursing staff adopted them like their own. One could see a staff nursing personally feeding a scared injured child, sponging a boy who was all covered in debris. GMC Jammu salutes its real Heroes be it doctors, nurses, technicians, engineers, security, sanitation staff. They are the real role models of the society who deserve all respect and adulations. (DIPR)

Kishtwar cloudburst

At least 16 houses and government buildings, three temples, four water mills, a 30-metre bridge and over a dozen vehicles were also damaged. Giant rocks carried by the water remain scattered across the village.

With chances of survival narrowing by the hour, police, Army, NDRF, SDRF, BRO, civil administration and local volunteers have intensified the search. Nearly a dozen earth-movers have been deployed, and specialised NDRF teams with dog squads are working on the ground.

Officials said blasting was unavoidable to clear oversized boulders that machinery could not move.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who visited Chasoti on Saturday, announced an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh each to families of those killed, Rs 1 lakh for the grievously injured and Rs 50,000 for those with minor injuries. For structural losses, he announced Rs 1 lakh for fully damaged houses, Rs 50,000 for severely damaged and Rs 25,000 for partially damaged ones.

"This is only a measure of solidarity and immediate relief. The government will extend all possible help both immediate and long-term to the affected families," Omar said, after meeting the bereaved and walking through the devastated village. Several residents welcomed his visit, saying it gave them "some relief" amid despair.

Across districts, grief deepened as relatives waited for news. In Benagarh village near Jammu, seven residents including four children are missing; only one body has been recovered so far. In Samba district, a woman and her two daughters are among eight missing from Sarai village, while six members of a family from Vijaipur are also untraced.

From Madhya Pradesh and Haryana, at least eight pilgrims have not been heard from since Thursday; one from Himachal Pradesh is also missing.

The tragedy has cast a shadow on the annual Machail Mata yatra, which was suspended for the third consecutive day on Saturday.

The trek, which began on July 25 and was to conclude on September 5, starts from Chisoti, the last motorable point before the 9,500-foot shrine, 90 km from Kishtwar town.

With the search continued into the night, senior officials including Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Army's Delta Force GOC Major General A P S Bal, and CISF DIG M K Yadav were present in Chisoti, while Divisional Commissioner Ramesh Kumar, IGP Jammu Bhim Sen Tuti, DC Pankaj Kumar Sharma and SSP Naresh Singh camped on site to oversee operations.

For relatives like the parents of Vanshika and Disha from Jammu, however, official assurances bring little comfort. "I saw my world crashing before my eyes. My daughters have gone away from me," their mother said through tears. Her husband, who has searched hospitals and mortuaries, added: "I have seen a headless body, but that was not my daughters."—(KNO)

Kishtwar

relief, the Chief Minister announced ex-gratia assistance from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

He said the families of those who lost their lives would receive financial support of Rs 2 lakh each, while those who sustained severe injuries would be given Rs 1 lakh and those with minor injuries Rs 50,000.

Similarly, for structural damages, he announced Rs 1 lakh for fully damaged houses, Rs 50,000 for severely damaged ones and Rs 25,000 for partially damaged structures.

The Chief Minister, who reached Kishtwar on Friday evening, travelled by road to the affected village early Saturday morning. Upon his arrival, he was briefed by Indian Army personnel and used a virtual reality headset to assess the scale of destruction—(KNO)

Intensify

75 persons have been reported missing by their families, although locals and eyewitnesses claim that hundreds may have been swept away by flash floods and buried under giant boulders, logs, and rubble.

The disaster struck Chashoti—the last motorable village en route to the Machail Mata temple—at approximately 12:25 pm on August 14.

At least 16 residential houses and government buildings, three temples, four water mills, a 30-metre-long bridge, and over a dozen vehicles were also damaged in the flash floods.

Rescue efforts were intensified with the deployment of nearly

a dozen earth-movers by the civil administration and the use of specialized equipment and dog squads by the NDRF—(KNO)

Janmashtami

said the celebrations at Lal Chowk are a way of keeping traditions alive. "For us, it is not just a religious occasion but also a cultural festival that promotes harmony," said one of the organisers.

Notably, the authorities had made security and traffic arrangements to ensure the smooth conduct of the celebrations, which concluded peacefully—(KNO)

PM Monitoring

the rest of the bodies have been identified," he said. Praising hospital administration's efforts in giving proper care for the patients, he said, "These patients did not have severe physical injuries but suffered psychological trauma. Sixty-six patients were hospitalised. Currently, 52 injured are still under treatment, while the rest have been discharged."

The minister said that most of the patients have only soft tissue injuries as they were trapped in mud rather than under big rocks. "They were fortunate not to have suffered head injuries and that their condition is mostly psychological. They will be discharged gradually so that they can recover better at home, in a familiar environment."

On the rescue operation, he said it has been going on day and night with full intensity.

"The main problem is the huge amount of debris. One person who was trapped under the debris came out safely today. He was a worker at a community kitchen (langar). Operations are being carried out cautiously. Heavy machinery cannot be used recklessly as anyone trapped underneath could get injured."

Singh said help desks are being set up in the hospital to provide information to people.

On the rush of pilgrims and the village infrastructure during the tragedy, Singh said that before 2014, only local people used to visit the Machail Mata temple.

"After 2014, more people started coming from outside. The credit goes to the government for improving the facilities. Earlier, there was no mobile connectivity, roads, electricity or toilets. The MP fund was used to provide toilets, electricity connections, water points, solar towers and mobile towers. Recently, the road work was completed. Even a new bridge was constructed, which has now been washed away."

He said the number of pilgrims increased due to the improved facilities. "The timing also coincided with Janmashtami, other festivals and a weekend, so a lot of people gathered there. Most of the victims are from Udhampur, Jammu and Reasi districts," he said, adding that pilgrim tourism here had turned into weekend tourism, which increased the numbers further.

On suspension of the Machail Mata yatra, he said it was not stalled beforehand because there was only forecast for rain, not for cloudburst.

"The meteorological department had forecast rainfall, but giving prior warning about a cloudburst is very difficult. This was a natural calamity for which no one was prepared," he said.

"The entire episode lasted barely 15 seconds but caused massive destruction. In future, care will be taken to regulate the pilgrimage in light of such possible situations," he added. (PTI)

MeT predicts

August 20 and 22, the weather will turn generally hot and humid across the region, with brief spells of thundershowers at a few places. A fresh spell of light to moderate rain and thundershowers is likely from August 23 to 25 at many places in both divisions of Jammu and Kashmir. (CNS)

Hakeem Yaseen questions CM's signature campaign

Says statehood needs action, not autographs

Srinagar: People's Democratic Front (PDF) President and former Minister Hakeem Mohammad Yaseen on Saturday expressed scepticism over former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's announcement to launch a massive door-to-door signature campaign for the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing a gathering at Gurwait, Budgam, Yaseen said,

the people of Jammu and Kashmir have complete faith in the Supreme Court, which has granted the Centre eight weeks to respond to the plea seeking restoration of statehood. "We hope and believe that statehood will be restored with full dignity and honour," he said.

However, Yaseen questioned Omar Abdullah's motives, calling the campaign a "belated political gimmick."

"Where was this urgency in the past five years? The people's mandate is not a tool for showmanship. If Omar Abdullah truly cared, he would have launched such initiatives long ago, instead of waiting for the Supreme Court's deadline to make headlines," Yaseen remarked.

He further said, "Instead of wasting time on a signature campaign, Omar Abdullah should bring a proper bill in the Assembly to press for statehood. If you need our assistance in the Opposition, we are ready for it. This signature campaign will be an insult to the people's mandate."

Yaseen emphasised that while the PDF supports any democratic movement for statehood, leadership must come with sincerity, not electoral calculations.

"The people of Jammu and Kashmir do not need symbolic gestures; they need committed political action and united pressure on the Centre," he added.

He appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah to restore statehood without delay, preferring in the ongoing Monsoon Session of Parliament.

"This is not a favour from Delhi; it is our constitutional right," he stressed.

The PDF President also criticised the administration for keeping several tourism destinations in Budgam closed despite repeated pleas from locals.

"By keeping these places shut, you are denying thousands of families their livelihood. If the government can reopen tourist spots in other parts of J&K, why not Budgam?" he asked.

Hakeem also appealed for the immediate revocation of restrictions on major tourist destinations in Budgam, including Doodhpathri, Yousmarg, and Tosamaidan.

He noted that these bans have badly hit the tourism-dependent economy, depriving thousands of families of their livelihoods in sectors like transport, pony services, hotels, handicrafts, and local markets.

"The Lieutenant Governor has assured me during a recent meeting that these restrictions will be lifted soon. We expect this promise to be implemented on a fast-track basis. The revival of tourism will open multiple avenues for self-employment and economic revival," he said.

Yaseen concluded by urging all political parties to set aside differences and work together to restore Jammu and Kashmir's dignity, economy, and democratic rights.

"People deserve governance with honour, not political one-upmanship," he said—(KNO)

Kashmir

worried about sustaining the business and retaining our staff," he added.

The ongoing food safety crisis in Jammu and Kashmir escalated after authorities seized over 12,00 kilograms of decomposed and unlabelled meat from various locations across the region.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner, Smiti Sethi, earlier confirmed to KNO that the operation was initiated following continuous tip-offs, allowing the department to trace the supply chain and conduct targeted raids—(KNO)

61 dengue cases reported in J&K this year so far

Health officials warn of post-monsoon surge, urge people to take preventive measures

SRINAGAR: Dengue cases are on the rise in Jammu & Kashmir, with a total of 61 reported so far this year.

An official informed that these cases include 24 from Jammu, 3 from Samba, 10 from Kathua, 7 from Udhampur, 3 from Reasi, 5 from Rajouri, 2 each from Doda and Poonch, and four cases from other states.

He said dengue cases are projected to surge post-monsoon and advised people to take "preemptive" measures to combat the painful mosquito-borne disease in the absence of any vaccine.

The dengue caused by viruses transmitted by infected mosquitoes has always been a health concern, the official said, adding that people need to take precautions to protect themselves from falling prey to the virus.

Meanwhile, doctors have advised people to use mosquito repellents and wear full sleeves shirts to save themselves from mosquito bites, which they said choose to breed in stagnant water accumulated by waterlogging mainly during the monsoon.

They said the best way to prevent dengue fever is to eliminate pockets of stagnant water that serve as mosquito breeding sites at home, at schools, workplaces and their vicinity, and to avoid mosquito bites.

The mosquitoes that spread dengue are active during the day. "Cover as much of your body as possible and use mosquito nets if sleeping during the day and spray the nets with insect repellents," they said.

The most common symptoms, as per doctors, are fever and headache, eye pain (typically behind the eyes), muscle, joint or bone pain, rash, nausea and vomiting.

If anyone has stomach or belly pain, tenderness, vomiting (at least 3 times in 24 hours), bleeding from the nose or gums, vomiting blood, or blood in the stool and feeling tired, restless, or irritable, they must consult a doctor, the advisory mentions.

The mosquito remains active mostly at dusk and dawn, and people must wear clothes that minimise skin exposure to these mosquitoes, the doctors added.

In 2024, J&K recorded approximately 7,000 dengue cases. The year 2023 saw 6,403 cases, and 2022 recorded the highest ever—8,269 cases with 18 deaths. The earlier years saw lower figures, including just two cases in 2009, zero in 2010, and gradual increases in subsequent years—(KNO)

Trump greets Putin with red carpet, Ukrainians feel betrayed

KYIV: In Kyiv, Ukrainians living under near daily Russian bombardment watched with astonishment as their country's most important ally rolled out a red carpet in Alaska for the man they blame for over three years of war, bloodshed and loss.

Natalya Lypei, 66, a Kyiv resident, did a double-take. But the images flashing on her phone screen were real: US President Donald Trump greeted Russian President Vladimir Putin warmly and clapped as the Russian leader approached him, after having been escorted into the country by four American fighter jets.

Trump also ignored the arrest warrant issued for Putin by the International Criminal Court that has kept him mostly confined at home or in nations that are strong allies.

"How can you welcome a tyrant like that?" she asked, echoing the thoughts of many Kyiv residents.

The red carpet treatment, the lack of concrete decisions for Ukraine and, most significantly, neglecting the significance of sanctions—a policy that could turn the tide in Kyiv's favour—have felt like a betrayal for Ukrainians who have borne enormous suffering in the almost three-and-a-half years since Russia's full-scale invasion.

Tens of thousands of Ukrainian servicemen, the country's bravest and most skilled, have been killed and wounded, thousands of civilians have been killed in Russian strikes, and a fifth of the country is under occupation, severing families, properties and Ukraine's territorial integrity.

On Ukrainian social media, memes of Putin and Trump walking down a red carpet strewn with dead Ukrainian bodies were widely shared.

Zelenskyy had anticipated the meeting would be a boon for Putin and that there would be very little in the way of results. Speaking to reporters in the days leading up to the meeting, he said it would end up being a public relations victory for the Russian leader. Above all else, he was seeking a photo on American soil—Which he got in Friday's meeting.

It was the first time in a decade that Putin had stepped foot in the U.S., ending international isolation spurred by the 2022 Ukraine invasion; in other words, it was a win. For Lypei, whose serviceman son was killed last year, it was like attending another funeral, a fresh loss. This time, her country's hopes for a just peace. (PTI)

Toms Banton and Moores combine to steer Rockets past Brave



Trent Rockets 145 for 6 (Moores 55, Banton 49) beat Southern Brave 140 for 4 (du Plooy 55, Stoinis 2-18) by four wickets

A brilliant innings on his home county ground by Tom Moores saw Trent Rockets to a four-wicket win over Southern Brave in the Hundred men's competition. Moores, making his first appearance in this year's competition having only just arrived as an emergency wicketkeeper replacement, hit 55 in a partnership of 76 with Tom Banton as Rockets got home with four balls to spare.

Rockets chose to bowl first on a slow surface and struck early when James Vince was bowled by one that ran across him from David Willey. Jason Roy and Leus du Plooy began to get to terms with the surface, Roy scooping Marcus Stoinis's first ball for four. Left-hander du Plooy then slogswept Callum Parkinson for six and smashed Lockie Ferguson for a maximum over long-off. Stoinis returned to bowl Roy for 23, but du Plooy kept his own momentum going, switch-hitting Calvin Harrison into the stands and bringing up his half-century with another six off Parkinson.

The game then was forced to pause for a while, the players leaving the field as Adam Hose received medical treatment after a nasty slip on the leg-side boundary. Trent Rockets later confirmed Hose had dislocated his ankle and been taken to hospital for further assessment. When play resumed, Brave looked to accelerate through Michael Bracewell and James Coles. Coles struck Ferguson for two boundaries in the final set to see the Brave reach 140 for 4, a competitive total on this Trent Bridge surface. Trent Rockets came flying out of the blocks - Banton hit the first two balls of the chase for four and then reverse-swept Coles for six from

the fourth. Jordan Thompson picked up Joe Root for 6, before Jofra Archer was pulled for fours by both Banton and Rehan Ahmed as Rockets closed the powerplay on 41 for 1. Rehan then went well caught by Roy off Tymal Mills and Max Holden followed, caught by Archer off Danny Briggs. Bracewell removed Willey with his first ball but was later deposited over midwicket for the first of Moores' five sixes, the left-hander's arrival shifting the momentum of the match. Mills picked up his 50th wicket in the Hundred, but it came too late as Rockets reached their target.

Moores, the Meerkat Match Hero, said: "It was a little bit slow at times but ultimately I felt it was a pretty good wicket. It was a nice win. "It's great to bat with Tom [Banton], he was keeping me nice and calm and we just tried to bat together really and bounce off each other. We score in different areas so we complemented each other well. "The way I play, I'm always trying to take it to the bowler if I can. It's always nice to do it in front of a home crowd and I thought the boys stuck at it really well after a tough thing in the field that happened to Adam [Hose] and we hope he's all right."

SOURCE: ESPN CRICINFO

Tilly Corteen-Coleman four-for sends Brave four from four

Southern Brave 109 for 4 (Bouchier 42, Devine 41*) beat Trent Rockets 106 (Gordon 32, Corteen-Coleman 4-13) by xx runs

A dominant bowling performance followed by a measured if not nervy run chase saw the Southern Brave to a six-wicket win over Trent Rockets in The Hundred women's competition at Trent Bridge. Electing to bowl first, Georgia Adams' decision was justified almost immediately when 17-year-old Tilly Corteen-Coleman struck two huge blows in her opening set, removing Bryony Smith caught off a leading-edge and Nat Sciver-Brunt brilliantly stumped by Rhianna Southby. Despite a 16-ball 25 from captain Ash Gardner, the Rockets top order faltered miserably. From 36 for 2 at the conclusion of the powerplay, it was complete Brave dominance as Rockets collapsed to 55 for 8. Left-arm spinner Corteen-Coleman bowled brilliantly, also dismissing Heather Graham and Emma Jones - the former another stumping by the impressive Southby - on the way to brilliant figures of 4 for 13. Lauren Bell returned to strike twice in three balls, becoming the first woman to take 50 wickets in the Hundred in the process, finishing her 20 balls with 3 for 16. Alana King and Kirstie Gordon then staged a recovery to keep their side in the game. They shared a record tenth-wicket stand of 50 from 44 deliveries to help the Rockets to 106 and give them something to bowl at. In the run chase, Rockets struck early - Danni Wyatt-Hodger run out by King after a miscommunication with Maia Bouchier. Laura Wolvaardt was then caught by Sciver-Brunt off Gordon to see the score 10 for 2 with two in-form batters back in the shed. Bouchier and Sophie Devine played cautiously against

probing bowling from King and Gardner, steadily chipping away at the target as the Brave reached 52 for 2 at halfway with 55 runs still required. Bouchier began to open her shoulders as Brave approached their target, but she targeted King one time too

Brave got home with two balls to spare. Meerkat Match Hero, Corteen-Coleman, said: "It's been fantastic, such a great team performance. Good to get another win on the board. There's a bit of a track record of Trent Bridge being a bit slow and having a bit of turn



many, running past a wide one to be stumped for 43. Devine was joined by Freya Kemp who, after cracking a huge six off Gordon, went caught on the boundary with eight still required from seven balls. But Devine stayed calm, striking a crucial boundary off Graham as the

so I thought I might be in the game. "I can't complain, it's been a great day. We're a great group. We've been working really hard and obviously off the back of last year I feel like we've got a lot to prove and we're on our way to doing that."

SOURCE: ESPN CRICINFO

Magnificent Maxwell sinks South Africa in nail-biting T20I series decider

Glenn Maxwell had scored his first T20I fifty in a year and 11 innings to put Australia on track after they were teetering at 122 for 6, chasing 173, in the 14th. Australia needed 12 runs from 12 balls to complete their highest successful chase at home. Kagiso Rabada was bowled out. What could possibly go wrong from there?

Corbin Bosch took two wickets in two balls in a penultimate over that ended as a double-wicket maiden. Maxwell refused a run off the last ball to keep strike in the final over and Lungi Ngidi was tasked with defending nine runs. His first ball was hit out to deep wide long-on where Bosch flicked the ball back in-field as he leapt over the rope to save four. Then Maxwell beat Lhuan-dre Pretorius at deep cover for four and turned down another opportunity for a single with four runs to get. He reverse-hoicked Ngidi over short third to seal the deal off the second last ball of the match and confirm his status as the big show in a thrilling finale.

Australia are now undefeated in their last seven bilateral T20I series. Of those, this was the first one in that time that went down to a decider and they showed their mettle under pressure. South Africa, on the other hand, have only won one of their last 10 T20I series. They have lost their last three finals in the last over, dating back to last year's T20 World Cup and including last month's tri-series final against New Zealand in Zimbabwe, and questions about their ability to close out close games will continue.

The drama aside, South Africa simply did not have enough runs after a slow start. None of their top three got going and it was thanks to Dewald Brevis and Tristan Stubbs' fourth wicket stand of 61 off 29 balls that they built towards a competitive total, which they made a fist of defending. They had Australia in trouble on 88 for 4 in the 11th over and 122 for 6 in the 14th over but Maxwell was strong square of the wicket, held his nerve and struck at 172.22 to finish with 62 not out off 36 balls and take Australia home.

SOURCE: ESPN CRICINFO



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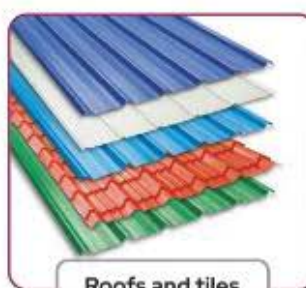
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