



Step up anti-terror ops, ensure safety of Yatris: LG Sinha to security top brass

Chairs high-level security review meeting with Army, Police, Civil Admin, CAPFs, key agencies; calls for strengthening flood protection measures, clearing debris from nallahs along pilgrimage tracks

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jul 23: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday directed officials to step up anti-terror operations and ensure safety of all Amarnath pilgrims.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), LG Sinha chaired a high-level security review meeting with senior officials from the Army, J&K Police, Civil Administration, CAPFs, and key security agencies.

He directed officials to remain highly vigilant, step-up intelligence-led anti-terror operations and proactively neutralize emerging security threats.

The meeting was attended by Lieutenant General Pratik Sharma, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-C), Northern Command; Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Nalin Prabhat, DGP; S.J.M.Gillani, Special DG Coordination PHQ; Lt Gen Balbir Singh, GOC 15 Corps; Lt Gen P K Mishra, GOC 16 Corps; Chandarker Bharti, Principal Secretary, Home; Pankaj Thakur, Additional Director, Intelligence Bureau; Dr Mandeep K. Bhandari, Principal



Secretary to Lieutenant Governor and CEO SASB; Nitish Kumar, ADGP, CID; Divisional Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, IGPs, senior officials of Civil Administration, Police, Army, Security forces, Intelligence Agencies and Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board.

The Lieutenant Governor also comprehensively reviewed logistics and safety arrangements for the ongoing Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra in light of the recent inclement weather and heavy rainfall across the region.

The Lieutenant Governor instructed all departments to

maintain seamless coordination and ensure the safety, well-being and convenience of all pilgrims of Baba Barfani.

He directed for comprehensive department-wise review of all amenities including rigorous audits of fire and emergency services, power grids, and water supply infrastructure.

More than 3,91,000 pilgrims have performed darshan at the holy cave in the first 20 days.

The Lieutenant Governor said the resumption of the Yatra is strictly contingent upon weather conditions.

STRENGTHEN FLOOD

PROTECTION MEASURES

In view of recent heavy rains, the Lieutenant Governor directed for strengthening flood protection measures and immediate clearance of debris from all nallahs along the pilgrimage tracks.

He emphasized the need for continuous operational readiness, focusing on round-the-clock disaster response preparedness, ensuring clean tracks and well-maintained sanitation facilities and adequate reserves of rations, LPG, kerosene, and emergency medical supplies. | More on P6

3,500 OGWs detained in major security sweep across Kashmir after cop's killing

High alert across Valley, frisking; naka checking intensified; two terrorists' houses razed in Anantnag

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Jul 23: Security forces have launched a massive Valley-wide crackdown and placed Kashmir on high alert after a policeman was killed in a terror attack in Anantnag, with over 3,500 suspected Over Ground Workers (OGWs) detained for questioning and intensified frisking, naka checking, vehicle inspections and search operations being carried out across all districts, sources said on Thursday.

Sources told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that security has been significantly tightened across the Valley, with forces intensifying surveillance, strengthening checkpoints, increasing vehicle checks and carrying



out widespread search operations in several districts.

In a post on X, the Srinagar sector of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) said security across Kashmir had been put on high alert following the attack.

"Security forces have

intensified surveillance, strengthened checkpoints and launched search operations to maintain law and order. Citizens are urged to remain vigilant and cooperate with security forces," the CRPF said.

The heightened security measures come | More on P6

House demolitions, mass arrests won't end terrorism: Omar

'Such measures will alienate people; SC bars bulldozer actions'

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jul 23: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said demolishing houses linked to terrorists would neither end terrorism nor improve the security situation, warning that such measures and large-scale arrests could alienate

people whose support is crucial in defeating terrorism. He also urged the Centre to engage with protesting job aspirants and Ladakh activist Sonam Wangchuk.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a startup event at SKICC here, Omar, as reported by the news agency— | More on P6

J&K govt to finalise eco-tourism policy within 6 months

Says it is actively involved in formulation of document

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Jul 23: The Government of Jammu and Kashmir is in the process of formulating an Eco-Tourism Policy, which is expected to be finalized and notified within six months.

The Department of Tourism has informed the Assembly Secretariat that it is actively engaged in drafting the policy. "The Department is actively engaged in formulation of the Jammu & Kashmir Eco-Tourism Policy, which aims to establish a comprehensive framework for conservation of natural resources, sustainable utilization of eco-sensitive areas, regulation of tourism activities based on carrying capacity, promotion

of community participation, and creation of sustainable livelihood opportunities for local communities," reads a detailed reply submitted by the Department of Tourism, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

The government further stated that the policy is being finalized after extensive consultations with stakeholders. "The draft Eco-Tourism Policy is being finalized after detailed consultation with all concerned stakeholders including Tourism Development Authorities, line departments, environmental experts, local communities, tourism industry representatives, and other relevant agencies," the reply added.

According to the Government, the policy will be finalized and notified within six months following | More on P6

Innovation can't flourish without taking risks: CM Omar

Pitches J&K as next startup hub

Distributes Rs 5 lakh seed fund to 7 startups

Says govt ready to back risk-taking entrepreneurs

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jul 23: Declaring that innovation cannot flourish without taking risks, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday urged Jammu and Kashmir's young entrepreneurs to embrace failure as a stepping stone to success, while reaffirming his government's commitment to creating a vibrant startup ecosystem, promising continued support for innovators and setting a target to double the number of startups in the Union Territory by ASCEND 2027.

Addressing the ASCEND



J&K 2026 Startup Ecosystem Summit at the SKICC. CM Omar, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the summit is a platform where ideas, innovation, investment, mentorship, government policy and market opportunities converge to help entrepreneurs transform concepts into successful enterprises.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister distributed Rs 5 lakh seed fund cheques to seven

startups to support their entrepreneurial ventures.

He also launched the Junior Level Idea Challenge 2026 for the Under-18 school category, Startup Idea Challenge 2.0 for college and university students, the Compendium of Business Opportunities in J&K, the Himalayan Journal and the Startup Coffee Table Book.

The Chief Minister said the biggest obstacle for any entrepreneur is the fear of failure, asserting | More on P6

J&K land of opportunities: CM to investors

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jul 23: Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah on Thursday interacted with Investors, Entrepreneurs and Venture Capitalists from across the country at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC), here, reiterating the government's commitment to fostering a vibrant

innovation-driven ecosystem and positioning Jammu and Kashmir as one of the country's most promising investment destinations.

The interaction was organised by Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) on the sidelines of the two-day ASCEND J&K-Start-up Ecosystem Summit.

Interacting with the investors | More on P6

Govt forms selection committee for Mental Health Authority appointments

Panel to scrutinise applications, recommend members under rules

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Jul 23: The Government has constituted a Selection Committee for recommending appointments to the Jammu & Kashmir Mental Health Authority in accordance with the provisions of the J&K Mental Healthcare (Mental Health Authority) Rules, 2023.

According to Government Order No. 571-JK(HME) of 2026, dated July 22, 2026, which is in possession of the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) the committee has been constituted under Rule 5 of the Mental Healthcare Rules, 2023, to oversee the selection process

for members of the Mental Health Authority.

As per the order, the Commissioner/Secretary to the Government, Health and Medical Education Department will serve as the Chairperson of the committee. The other members include the Mission Director, Jammu & Kashmir National Health Mission (NHM), the Head of the Department of Psychiatry, Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar, and the Head of the Department of Psychiatry, Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu.

The government has entrusted the committee with scrutinizing | More on P6

Highway closure: Railways runs special Sgr-Katra train

KNO Correspondent

Srinagar, Jul 23: Amid the continued closure of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway due to heavy rainfall, landslides and shooting stones, the Northern Railway on Thursday introduced a special train between Srinagar and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra to facilitate stranded passengers.

According to an official

communication, a copy of which lies with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the special train was introduced following a request from Commercial Control, Jammu, in view of the heavy passenger rush caused by restrictions and slow movement of traffic on the national highway.

The communication said the train will depart Srinagar at 5:00 pm and | More on P6

KU postpones exams for Jul 24, 25

KNO Correspondent

Srinagar, Jul 23: The University of Kashmir on Thursday postponed all examinations scheduled to be held on July 24 and July 25 in view of the prevailing inclement weather conditions.

According to a notice issued by the Assistant Controller of Examinations (Conduct), a copy of which lies with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), all University examinations slated for July 24

and 25 have been postponed.

The University said the revised dates for the postponed examinations will be notified separately in due course.

"In view of the inclement weather conditions, it is hereby notified for the information of all concerned that all University Examinations scheduled to be held on 24/07/2026 and 25/07/2026 are hereby postponed. The revised date(s) for the conduct of the postponed examination(s)/ paper(s) | More on P6

Jhelum crosses flood declaration mark at RM Bagh; response activated

River touches 18.04 ft in Sgr, remains below danger mark; carries 24,000 cusecs against 40,000 capacity; Div Com urges people not to panic; 'level likely to recede'

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jul 23: The water level of River Jhelum at the Ram Munshi Bagh and gauge station in Srinagar crossed the flood declaration mark on Thursday evening, prompting the Irrigation & Flood Control (I&FC) Department to activate flood response measures and direct officers and officials assigned flood duty to report to their respective locations.

According to the flood monitoring data, accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the water level at Ram Munshi Bagh was recorded at 18.04 feet, marginally above the flood declaration level of 18.0 feet. However, it



remained well below the danger level of 21.0 feet and was increasing at a slow pace.

The data further revealed

that the Sangam gauge station recorded a water level of 20.24 feet, remaining below its warning level of 21 feet.

Pampore also crossed the flood declaration level and was placed under the warning category,

Flood threat pushes South Kashmir to edge

Jahangeer Ganaie

Anantnag, Jul 23: Continuous rainfall over the past several days has pushed major rivers and streams across South Kashmir close to flood declaration levels, triggering panic among residents.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) officials are monitoring the situation as the water level in the River Jhelum and its tributaries | More on P6

Cloudburst wreaks havoc in Boniyar, NH-44 stays closed

MeT predicts more showers today, fresh wet spell from Jul 28

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Jul 23: Heavy rainfall continued to lash several parts of Jammu and Kashmir for the fifth consecutive day on Thursday, triggering cloudbursts and flash floods across the region, while as strategic Jammu-Srinagar National Highway remained

closed for the vehicular traffic due to inclement weather conditions.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) the worst-hit area was Boniyar in North Kashmir's Baramulla district, where a cloudburst struck the upper reaches of Mayan village this afternoon, sending torrents of water, mud and boulders downstream.

Officials said flash floods washed away | More on P6

Fast-track AI use cases to enhance public service delivery across J&K: CS Atal Dulloo

MeitY AI CoE to be operational by August 2026

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JULY 23: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Thursday chaired a high-level review meeting to assess the progress made on the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in governance in Jammu and Kashmir and the establishment of the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Artificial Intelligence here

The meeting, as per an official statement, besides the concerned Administrative Secretaries was attended by the Representatives from Indian Institute of Technology Jammu; BISAG and other concerned officers of the Union Territory.

While reviewing the progress, the Chief Secretary observed that Artificial Intelligence has the potential to fundamentally transform governance by improving efficiency, transparency, responsiveness and quality of public services. He maintained that the Government must leverage emerging technologies not merely as digital tools but as strategic enablers for better governance, faster decision-making and enhanced



citizen service delivery.

He emphasised that technological solutions should complement the existing digital ecosystem instead of creating parallel systems, thereby ensuring optimal utilisation of public resources and seamless integration with existing platforms.

The Chief Secretary called upon the Administrative Departments to proactively engage with the Information Technology Department for expeditious implementation of the identified use cases. He directed the departments to nominate dedicated nodal

officers wherever required and ensure timely sharing of quality datasets essential for development, testing and validation of AI solutions.

He further stressed that data quality, interoperability and departmental ownership would remain critical to the successful deployment of AI applications across government.

Calling for a structured implementation framework, the Chief Secretary directed that sector-specific workshops be organised with all departmental nodal officers, technology

partners, domain experts and implementation agencies to comprehensively assess data availability, infrastructure readiness, operational workflows and field-level requirements before commencement of pilot projects.

He observed that such collaborative exercises would facilitate preparation of realistic implementation roadmaps while enabling departments to identify operational challenges at an early stage.

The Chief Secretary also emphasised that progress achieved under each AI initiative shall be monitored on a regular basis through defined milestones and outcome indicators so that implementation bottlenecks are resolved in a time-bound manner. He stressed the need for close coordination among all stakeholder departments to ensure that the identified AI initiatives translate into measurable improvements in governance across the Union Territory.

Earlier, a detailed presentation was made by the Commissioner Secretary IT, Saurabh Bhagat on the organisational framework, implementation strategy, current status and future roadmap of the Centre. The

presentation also highlighted the action taken on the decisions of the Union Territory Level Steering Committee, the progress achieved on the identified AI use cases and the proposed roadmap for pilot implementation across departments.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary was apprised of the progress achieved in establishing the MeitY Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence at IIT Jammu, conceived as a mission-mode national initiative to accelerate AI adoption across governance and public service delivery.

He was informed that the Centre is being readied for operationalisation, with around 10,000 square feet of space already earmarked and infrastructure being prepared for occupancy by August this year.

It was added that the implementation roadmap and key performance indicators have been finalised in consultation with the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, while procurement of high-performance computing infrastructure has been initiated for hosting the AI Digital Public Infrastructure (AI-DPI).

District Admin Bandipora to work with School Ecology Clubs for waste Management

KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, JULY 23: Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, on Thursday chaired a preliminary meeting with Eco Club Incharges of High and Higher Secondary Schools across the district, along with students from NMBHSS and GHSS Bandipora, to discuss the urgent need for effective waste management and environmental conservation.

The Deputy Commissioner highlighted the important role of educational institutions in promoting environmental awareness and called for revitalising Eco Clubs across the district. She stressed the need for regular monitoring of Eco Club activities and urged the Incharges to identify and encourage committed students and teachers to lead environment protection initiatives in their respective institutions.

The meeting also discussed the implementation of the Solid Waste Management Rules and deliberated on the role of Eco Clubs in promoting waste segregation at source, waste reduction and sustainable waste management practices.

To strengthen practical learning and encourage greater awareness, the Deputy Commissioner urged the participants to undertake exposure visits to key district initiatives, including the Knowledge Centre, Jal Shakti Kendra, NRLM Women Self-Help Group-run Cafeteria and Project Insaniyat, to gain first-hand experience of sustainable and community-driven initiatives.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner urged the Eco Club Incharges and students to lead by example by adopting zero-waste practices beginning from their own homes. She said that lasting environmental change begins with individual responsibility and collective action, and called upon everyone to contribute towards preserving the natural beauty and ecology of Bandipora.

Heavy Rainfall: DC Anantnag visits high risk areas, takes stock of situation



KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, JULY 23: Amid continuous inclement weather and heavy rainfall, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, Thursday conducted an extensive tour of various high-risk locations, vulnerable riverside areas, and major streams (Nallahs) across the district to assess the situation on the ground.

The DC toured critical sites including Mehndi Kadal, Dant-er Bridge, Ashajipora Bye Pass, Deva Colony, Rooh, and Aang to observe the ground situation. He was accompanied by ADC, Dr. Muzamil Maqbool Beig; SE Hydraulics, Sareer Ahmad Wani; SE PWD, Syed Ishfaq Ahmad; ACR, Tariq Ahmad Malik; Tehsildar Anantnag, Ex-En Flood Control, CEO and Secretary MCA and officials from other essential services.

During the visit, the DC reviewed the water levels of key water bodies, including the Aripat, Bringi, and Liddar Nallahs, and evaluated the safety and mitigation measures implemented by the Flood Control, Public Works Department (R&B), Revenue, Police, SDRF, and other concerned agencies. He inspected the dewatering station at Mehndi Kadal and asked the concerned officers to closely monitor the water levels and act immediately when required, to avoid water

logging in main town.

The DC was informed that dewatering pumps have been actively deployed at crucial choke points and waterlogging has been cleared at major spots, including KP Road, Janglat Mandi, Ganjiwara, General Bus Stand, town interiors and other roadside areas. He was further informed that a number of nomadic, labor, and vulnerable families have been safely relocated to fully operational evacuation centers at Brakpora, Hiller, Aang, Bijbehara, and other high risk places. Further, strengthening of river embankments by Sand and EC Bags has been carried out at various breach prone places including Batengu, Mehndi Kadal, Deva Colony, GMC Anantnag, Pushwara and Sagam.

Taking stock of the situation, the DC directed that all departments must remain in a high state of alert and readiness to prevent any untoward incident related to life of residents and to minimise property damage. He called for seamless pre-positioning of joint response teams comprising officials of Revenue, Police, SDRF, CRPF, and civil administration at safer and strategic locations to ensure swift rescue operations, if required. He instructed for the prompt evacuation of nomadic groups, and labour communities residing near water bodies to nearby emergency shelters equipped with essential facilities.

Interacting with local residents during his visit, the DC urged citizens to remain calm, avoid venturing near rivers and streams, restrict unnecessary travel until the weather improves, and strictly adhere to official advisories.

While the overall situation in Anantnag district remains under control, the District Administration is continuously monitoring weather patterns as well as water levels and is prepared to handle both emergency mitigation and post-rainfall recovery.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION TANGMARG.

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER (CIVIL WORKS)

NIT No: 35/R&B of 2026-27

Dated:-22-07-2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, UT J&K, e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest money (In Rupees)	Time of completion	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor	Project Authority	Tender call
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Construction of 02 ACR at MS Mulgam, Zone Kunzer.	25.63	1100/-	51260/-	180 days	District Capex Budget 2026-27 (Elementary Education)	A/B	District Development Commissioner Baramulla	1 st
2	Improvement / Up-gradation of School Building at GMS Choker Zone Nehalpora	3.00	200/-	6000/-	30 days	District Capex Budget 2026-27 (Elementary Education)	DEE	District Development Commissioner Baramulla	1 st
3	Additional Accomodation Double Storey Building at MS Bonsharan, Zone Kunzer	37.94	1100/-	75880/-	180 days	District Capex Budget 2026-27 (Elementary Education)	A/B	District Development Commissioner Baramulla	1 st
4	Construction of School building at P.S Kralpora Hariwatnoo.	9.90	600/-	19800/-	45 days	District Capex Budget 2026-27 (SSY)	D/C	District Development Commissioner Baramulla	1 st
5	Improvement/ upgradation of School Building at BMS Uchlipora Zone Nehalpora.	3.87	200/-	7740/-	30 days	District Capex Budget 2026-27 (Elementary Education)	DEE	District Development Commissioner Baramulla	1 ^s

Position Of AAA: Accorded

Position of T.S: Accorded

Position of funds: Assured

1. The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q),Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be viewed/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:-

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	22-07-2026
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	23-07-2026
3	Bid submission Start Date	23-07-2026
4	Bid Submission End Date	30-07-2026 4:00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	31-07-2026 11:00 AM

Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan (Dated between bid submission start date and bid submission end date) with NIT No. , Serial No. and name of work to be deposited in **M.H. 0059 in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Tangmarg (tender inviting authority)**.

1. All the bidders must upload Earnest money /Bid security equal to **2%** of advertised cost in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to **Executive Engineer R&B Division Tangmarg (tender receiving authority)** (The Date of earnest money/Bid security should be between the Bid Submission start date and Bid submission End date, otherwise bids shall be rejected).

2. Specification/Quality Control:-All items of works shall conform to specifications as per IRC/ MORTH/ NBO/ CPWD/ SSRI Any other prescribed specifications.

32. Insurance:- Insurance cover to Labour/ Machinery Work / Plant material / Equipment by the contractor shall be mandatory.

3. Laws Governing the Contract:-The contract shall be governed by Law of the land.

4. Court's Jurisdiction:-In case of a disputes/differences between contractor and Department the jurisdiction shall be J&K.

5. Time Extension:-

i. The work is to be completed within the time limit specified in the NIT and the time of completion will also increase / decrease in proportion with additional / deleted quantum of work depending upon the actual quantum of work.

ii. Request for extension of time shall be made by the contractor in writing not later than fifteen days of happening of the event causing delay. The contractor shall also indicate in such a request the period for which extension is desired.

iii. Abnormal /bad weather or Serious loss or damage by fire or Civil commotion, strike or lockout (other than among the labour engaged by the contractor) affecting any or the trades employed on the work, or Non availability of departmental stores. Any other cause which in the absolute discretion of the accepting authority is beyond the contractor's desire.

iv. On contractor's representation based on the grounds as detailed above the time for completion of the work may be extended by a period considered reasonable by the Department.

v. Extension of time shall be also admissible in the event of temporary suspension of work.

37. The tender / bid is liable rejection if it does not fulfill the requirements as laid down in NIT.

38. All other terms conditions are as per PWD Form 25(Double agreement Form), NIT, GFR 2017 & JK PWD Engineering Manual 2020.

39. Any Typographical error in units or items shall be corrected and paid as per SSR of 2022 or as per Technical sanction.

40. As per the Circular No. 01 (Adm) FD of 2025 Dated: 08-07-2025 issued by Finance Department of UT J&K **"Every participating supplier/contractor to mandatorily disclose the bank account number which is linked with their GSTIN at the time of bid submission. No payments shall be released by the Government Department/Agency to any other bank account except the one linked with the GST registered number of the successful bidder".**

No: R&B / Divn./ Tang/2483-93
Dated:-22 -07-2026

DIPK-3629/26
DATED: 24-07-2026

Sd/-
Technical Officer

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
R&B Division Tangmarg.

DC Kulgam reviews functioning of FCS&CA department

KT News Desk

KULGAM, JULY 23: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, Thursday chaired a review meeting to assess the functioning and performance of the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) Department in the district. The meeting focused on the implementation of various public distribution schemes, availability of essential commodities, ration distribution, Aadhaar seeding, e-KYC progress, grievance redressal, and overall service delivery under the Public Distribution System (PDS).

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the status of ration card management, distribution of food grains, and measures taken to ensure transparency and timely delivery of benefits to eligible beneficiaries. The DC

stressed the importance of maintaining adequate stocks of essential commodities and ensuring uninterrupted supplies across all areas of the district. He focussed on prioritising the timely distribution of essentials along with strengthening the grievance redressal mechanism.

Emphasizing accountability and efficiency, the DC directed the concerned officers to address public grievances promptly, strengthen monitoring mechanisms, and ensure that no eligible beneficiary is deprived of entitlements under government welfare schemes.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner Kulgam, Altaf Ahmad Khan, Additional Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Vikar Ahmad Giri, Assistant Director, FCS&CA Kulgam, Iftikhar Ahmad Khan and Tehsil Supply Officers alongwith other concerned officials.

From The Parliament

J&K road fatalities rise despite fewer crashes in 2025



Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Jul 23: Road accident fatalities in Jammu and Kashmir increased in 2025 despite a decline in the total number of accidents, the Government of India (GoI) informed Parliament on Thursday.

Replying to an unstarred question in the Lok Sabha, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari said that 5,317 road

accidents claiming 983 lives were reported in Jammu and Kashmir during 2025. In comparison, the UT recorded 5,808 accidents and 831 fatalities in 2024, 6,298 accidents and 893 deaths in 2023, and 6,092 accidents with 805 fatalities in 2022.

The minister said road accidents are a multi-causal phenomenon, with the major causes broadly classified as human error, road condition/environment and vehicular

condition.

He said the government has adopted a 4E strategy—Education, Engineering, Enforcement and Emergency Care—to improve road safety and reduce fatalities across the country.

According to the ministry, key measures include mandatory road safety audits on National Highways, identification and rectification of black spots, establishment of driving training institutes, implementation of the electronic Detailed Accident Report (e-DAR) system, stricter vehicle safety standards, electronic traffic enforcement, constitution of the National Road Safety Board, and technology-driven e-challan mechanisms.

The Centre further said emergency response has been strengthened through the Rah-Veer Scheme, under which the reward for Good Samaritans has been increased from Rs 5,000 to Rs 25,000, enhanced compensation for hit-and-run victims, deployment of ambulances at National Highway toll plazas, and implementation of the PM-Rahat Scheme for cashless treatment of road accident victims—(KNO)

98% of Srinagar Smart City projects completed: GoI



Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Jul 23: The Government of India on Thursday said that 157 out of 161 projects (98 per cent) under the Srinagar Smart City Mission have been completed as of March 31, 2026, with works worth Rs 3,530 crore executed out of the total sanctioned cost of Rs 3,633 crore.

Replying to an unstarred question by MP Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi in the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs Tokhan Sahu said the Smart City Proposals (SCPs) are planned at the local level

after consultations with citizens and other stakeholders and are approved by the State High Powered Steering Committee (HPSC).

The minister said the projects have been designed to address local urban requirements across multiple sectors, including smart mobility, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), smart governance, smart energy and environment. As reported by Srinagar Smart City Limited, 157 projects have been completed while the remaining four are yet to be finished.

The query had sought details on whether the Centre had

taken cognisance of the widespread waterlogging and flood-like situation witnessed in Srinagar after recent rainfall despite substantial expenditure under the Smart City Mission, whether the project included works related to storm-water drainage, flood mitigation and urban water management, the reasons for continued waterlogging despite Smart City works, and whether any technical audit or accountability mechanism had been initiated to assess the quality and effectiveness of the drainage infrastructure.

*Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in*

‘81.26% J&K rural households have tap water’

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Jul 23: The Centre on Thursday informed Parliament that 81.26 per cent of rural households in Jammu and Kashmir have been provided Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs) under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), with more than 9.89 lakh new tap water connections added in the Union Territory since the launch of the scheme in August 2019.

Replying to a starred question in the Lok Sabha, Union Jal Shakti Minister C.R. Patil said Jammu and Kashmir has 19.25 lakh rural households, of which 5.75 lakh households (29.90 per cent) had tap water connections when the mission was launched on August 15, 2019. As of July 18, 2026, the number has increased to 15.64 lakh households (81.26 per cent) after providing tap water supply to 9.89 lakh additional rural households.

The minister informed the House that across the country, around 15.89 crore rural households, accounting for 82.09 per cent of the total rural households, have tap water connections as on July 18, 2026, compared to 3.23 crore households (16.71 per cent) at the launch of the mission.

The Centre said the government has approved the extension

of the Jal Jeevan Mission up to December 2028 under JJM 2.0, with the total financial outlay enhanced from Rs 3.60 lakh crore to Rs 8.69 lakh crore. “The central share has been increased from Rs 2.08 lakh crore to Rs 3.59 lakh crore, with the revamped mission focusing on structural reforms in the rural drinking water sector, water quality monitoring and community participation,” it said.

The ministry said an independent third-party functionality assessment conducted in 2024 found that 98.1 per cent of surveyed households had tap water connections, 87 per cent received water during the previous week, 84 per cent received water as per schedule, 80 per cent received at least 55 litres per capita per day (LPCD), while 76 per cent of household tap connections were found to be fully functional after assessing quantity, quality and regularity of supply.

The government said implementation of JJM is being monitored through a multi-level mechanism, including the JJM Integrated Management Information System (IMIS), online dashboards, third-party inspections, geo-tagging of assets, sensor-based monitoring, district dashboards and strengthened community participation to ensure timely and sustainable rural water supply—(KNO)

21 NH projects in J&K miss original deadline: Centre

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Jul 23: The Union Government on Thursday informed Parliament that 21 National Highway (NH) projects in Jammu and Kashmir sanctioned or awarded during the last five financial years have spilled beyond their original completion schedule.

Replying to an unstarred question in the Lok Sabha, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari said the delayed projects exclude those under consideration for termination or foreclosure. The minister said the principal reasons for delays include

*Continued on
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All 1,597 J&K toll grievances settled: Road Ministry

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar, Jul 23: The Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways on Thursday informed Parliament that 1,597 complaints related to staff misbehaviour, physical assault and excessive waiting time at National Highway toll plazas were received from Jammu and Kashmir during

the last three years, and all of them have been resolved with no complaint pending.

Replying to an unstarred question in the Lok Sabha, Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said complaints received through the 1033 helpline, Rajmarg Yatra App, email and other platforms are addressed promptly to ensure

effective grievance redressal.

The Centre also said toll collection on National Highways begins only after the issuance of a Completion or Provisional Completion Certificate, certification that the road is fit for operation, and publication of the user fee notification in the Gazette of India. It added that toll charges are reduced during highway upgradation works in

accordance with the National Highways Fee Rules, 2008.

The ministry further informed the House that regular inspections and compliance audits are carried out at toll plazas to ensure the availability of mandatory facilities, including ambulances, cranes, drinking water,

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Privilege committee asks Para to appear before it today

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jul 23: The Privilege Committee of the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly has directed MLA Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra to appear before it on Friday to discuss and examine a breach of privilege case against him over remarks alleging that the Assembly Secretariat had endorsed the PSA detention of MLA Mehraj Malik.

The committee, headed by Justice (Retd.) Hasnain Masoodi has asked the legislator to appear before it tomorrow. On September 8, 2025, Mehraj Malik was detained under the Public Safety



Act (PSA). Shortly after his detention, the Assembly Secretariat released a bulletin informing MLAs about Malik's detention. Parra, however, accused the

Assembly Secretariat of endorsing Malik's detention. “Shameful surrender. Assembly Secretariat endorsing PSA against an elected MLA is a direct assault on democracy. J&K CM @ OmarAbdullah must act, don't allow the institution of MLA, the last agency of the people, to be silenced. Today it's Mehraj, tomorrow it could be you,” Parra posted.

The Assembly Secretariat termed his claim factually incorrect and misleading, clarifying that the publication of the bulletin was purely a procedural step and that the Assembly had no role in Malik's detention—(KNO)

DC Srinagar visits Ram Munshi Bagh flood control room Assesses situation arising of inclement weather

KT News Desk

Srinagar, July 23: In view of the inclement weather, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, who is also the Chairman of the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) on Thursday visited the Flood Control Room at Ram Munshi Bagh and reviewed the prevailing situation and preparedness measures put in place.

During the visit, the DC chaired a comprehensive review meeting with senior Officers and assessed the current water levels, gauge readings, discharge trends and readiness of the departments to respond effectively to



any emerging situation.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner was briefed about the latest gauge readings, status of River Jhelum and its tributaries and the mechanism established for round-the-clock

monitoring and dissemination of real-time information. He also reviewed the contingency measures being implemented by various departments to tackle any emerging situation.

Stressing the need for constant vigilance, the DC directed the Irrigation & Flood Control Department and other line departments to maintain uninterrupted monitoring of all gauge stations and vulnerable locations. He instructed Officers to closely track the evolving situation, maintain real-time data analysis and ensure timely dissemination of updates to facilitate prompt decision-making.

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EDITORIAL

Friday Brief: Marriage as Sakinah, Mawaddah & Rahmah

The institution of marriage in Islam is not merely a civil contract but a sacred bond founded on divine principles of justice, compassion, and mutual responsibility. The Quran and Hadith provide a comprehensive framework for spousal rights that emphasises balance, equity, and the ultimate goal of creating a tranquil and loving partnership. The foundational principle is that rights are reciprocal. The Quran states, “And they (women) have rights similar to the rights against them,

according to what is equitable” (2:228). This establishes a framework of mutual obligations where neither spouse is elevated to the point of oppressing the other. The purpose of marriage, as described in the Quran, is to create sakinah (tranquillity), mawaddah (love), and rahmah (mercy), forming a partnership that extends beyond individual desires to encompass the greater good of society (Quran 30:21). The husband’s primary responsibility is the financial and physical maintenance of

his family. The Quran designates men as protectors and providers, a role that comes with significant spiritual and social accountability (Quran 4:34). This obligation is not a mark of superiority but a reflection of the distinct and complementary roles within a family unit. The Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) explicitly outlined the husband’s duties, instructing, “Give her food when you eat, clothe her when you clothe yourself”. This is a religious duty, the neglect of which

is considered a major sin. Conversely, a wife’s role is a source of great spiritual reward and is crucial for familial stability. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said, “If a woman performs her five prayers, fasts in Ramadan, protects her chastity, and obeys her husband, she will enter paradise from any gate she wishes”. However, this obedience is not absolute; it is derived from the obedience to God and is therefore restricted. A wife is not to obey a command that contradicts Islamic

teachings, such as abandoning her obligatory prayers. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) also reminded husbands to treat their wives with the utmost kindness, advising, “The best of you is the best to his wife”. By embedding their relationship within the framework of faith and following the Prophet’s example of gentle and wise leadership, couples can navigate life’s challenges together and build a home filled with love, mercy, and lasting happiness.

How To Become A Better Muslim: Lessons From The Qur’an

Islam teaches that true faith is not only shown through worship, but also through kindness, honesty, patience, gratitude, and the way we treat others. Becoming a better Muslim is a continuous journey of strengthening one’s relationship with Allah, improving character, and following the guidance revealed in the Qur’an—through prayer, sincerity, repentance, and service to humanity.

Becoming a better Muslim is a lifelong journey of improving one’s relationship with Allah, developing good character, and following the guidance revealed in the Qur’an. Islam teaches that true faith is not only shown through worship, but also through kindness, honesty, patience, gratitude, and the way we treat others.

1. Strengthen Your Relationship with Allah

The foundation of becoming a better Muslim is building a strong connection with Allah. The Qur’an reminds believers: “Remember Me; I will remember you. And be grateful to Me and do not deny Me.” (Qur’an 2:152) A Muslim can strengthen this relationship through regular prayer (salah), making sincere dua, reading the Qur’an, and remembering Allah throughout daily life.

2. Pray with Sincerity

Prayer is one of the most important acts of worship in Islam. It helps Muslims stay connected to Allah and avoid harmful actions. “Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing.” (Qur’an 29:45) A better Muslim does not only perform prayers physically but tries to understand their meaning and pray with humility and focus.

3. Read and Follow the Qur’an

The Qur’an is a guide for Muslims in every part of life. Reading it regularly helps a person gain wisdom and guidance.



“This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Allah.” (Qur’an 2:2) However, becoming better requires more than reading words. Muslims should try to understand the message and apply its teachings through their actions.

4. Improve Your Character

The Qur’an places great importance on good manners and kindness. A person’s faith is shown through how they treat family,

friends, neighbours, and even strangers. “Indeed, Allah commands justice, good conduct, and giving to relatives...” (Qur’an 16:90) A better Muslim works on removing anger, arrogance, jealousy, and dishonesty while developing patience, forgiveness, and compassion.

5. Be Patient and Trust Allah

Life contains difficulties, but Islam teaches believers to remain patient and trust Allah’s wisdom.

“Indeed, Allah is with the patient.” (Qur’an 2:153) Patience does not mean giving up. It means continuing to do what is right while relying on Allah during challenges.

6. Be Thankful

Gratitude is an important quality of a believer. Muslims should recognize Allah’s blessings and show thanks through words and actions. “If you are grateful, I will surely increase

you [in favour].” (Qur’an 14:7) Being thankful helps a person become happier and more content with what Allah has provided.

7. Help Others

Islam encourages Muslims to care for others, support those in need, and act with mercy. “And do good; indeed, Allah loves the doers of good.” (Qur’an 2:195) Helping others can include charity, supporting family, speaking kindly, and making life easier for people around us.

8. Repent and Keep Improving

Everyone makes mistakes. Islam teaches that Allah’s mercy is always available to those who sincerely turn back to Him. “Do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins.” (Qur’an 39:53) A better Muslim is not someone who never makes mistakes, but someone who recognizes mistakes, seeks forgiveness, and tries to improve. Becoming a better Muslim is a continuous journey of faith, learning, and self-improvement. The Qur’an teaches Muslims to worship Allah sincerely, develop good character, show kindness, remain patient, and live with justice and compassion. Small consistent efforts, done with sincerity, can bring a person closer to Allah. “Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you.” (Qur’an 49:13)

Courtesy: IslamiCity

Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission – India’s Digital Health Backbone

More than 104 crore health records have been linked with ABHA through the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM), creating an ecosystem that connects patients, doctors, hospitals, labs, and insurers on one network. From Aarogya Setu 2.0 and QR-based registration to AI initiatives and insurance claims through NHCX, India is moving away from traditional paper records and making healthcare more accessible for citizens.

More than 104 crore health records so far have been linked with ABHA, through the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM), which the government calls one of the largest health programmes in the world. The agenda behind this health account is to connect a “patient’s health history with doctors, hospitals, and insurers on one network”. Considering the advancing global standards of healthcare infrastructure, India is also moving away from traditional paper records and making it easier for citizens to reach healthcare. Ever since the ABDM started across the country, in 2021, it has grown as an “ecosystem that links patients, hospitals, labs, and insurers together”. One part of this system is Aarogya Setu 2.0. The app that began during COVID-19 as a contact tracing tool, which has now become a health app under ABDM. Launched in June 2026, by Union Health Minister Jagat Prakash Nadda. By virtue of this app, citizens are creating their ABHA ID, managing their health records, and registering at hospitals by scanning a code. It also has a feature called Smart Reports, which uses OCR technology to read documents. Patients using this app are checking their insurance details through NHCX, it has an option to find nearby hospitals, and even see



blood availability through e-RaktKosh. The app also allows individuals to book doctor visits and track health data from wearable devices. Another service under ABDM is National Health Authority’s “Scan and Share”, which started in 2022. A study conducted by the Indian Institute of Health Management Research found that this mobile service has “significantly streamlined outpatient registration by leveraging mobile technology and QR codes”. The study further stated the patients are simply scanning a QR code at a hospital, and their details are pulled from their ABHA

account. This creates a digital token in the queue. Henceforth, the waiting time dropped from around one hour to just 2 to 5 minutes, the study added. Official estimates are suggesting that more than 23.21 crore tokens have been issued as of June 2026. While the government is facilitating more and more hospitals as well as private clinics to join in this mission through the Digital Health Incentive Scheme. However, the hook is that any facility that wants to join will get money reimbursed for digitising their records, and they also get cash incentives for each record they link.

The latest reports mention that as much as INR 107 crore has been given to different hospitals for digitizing. Similarly, labs and pharmacies have received INR 2.95 crore, and digital solution companies have been offered about INR 26 crore. Like many others Dr Praveen Sikka, who runs a pharmacy in Gurugram became a beneficiary of this scheme recently. Sikka registered on ABDM in about 2 hours. Now his patients are storing and viewing their records through the ABHA app, and his pharmacy earns money for every record it links. For smaller clinics, to reap benefits out of this mission, the government has built a tool called eSushrut@Clinic. Made for Development of Advanced Computing and launched last month. It helps clinics handle patient registration, billing, and reports. Only verified doctors and facilities can use it, checked through the Healthcare Professionals Registry and Health Facility Registry. As the statistics show that more than 2200 facilities have joined and created over 1633 health records. These records also connect with the National Health Claims Exchange, or NHCX, which handles insurance claims. This should make claims move faster, cut hospital paperwork, and let patients see their benefits and medical history in one place.

Doctors can also see a patient’s past treatment, with the patient’s consent, which can cut down on repeated tests. The Unified Health Interface (UHI), lets any patient using a UHI app connect with any verified hospital or doctor, even if they use different platforms. Right now, it covers five services: (1) finding blood banks, (2) searching hospitals under PM Jan Arogya Yojana, (3) finding Jan Aushadhi Kendra stores for cheaper medicines, (4) booking ambulances, and (5) booking doctor visits. On privacy note, the data imported stays with whoever creates it, such as the hospital or lab. There is no single government server holding everything. Records move only when the patient agrees. New apps must pass tests in a sandbox and go through a security check before they can connect. In February 2026, the government started two programmes for AI in health: SAHI and BODH, at the India AI Impact Summit. SAHI sets rules for how AI should be used in healthcare. BODH lets developers train AI models without seeing raw patient data. As a large percentage of records are getting linked to ABHA accounts with each passing day, ABDM is destined to achieve the goal of a digital health record for every person across the country.

Courtesy: PIB Srinagar

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

Deputy CM reviews flash flood restoration in Nowshera

Lauds dedication, commitment displayed by officers, officials in carrying out rescue, relief, restoration operations

KT News Desk

RAJOURI, JULY 23: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary on Thursday chaired a comprehensive review meeting at Nowshera to assess the progress on restoration works and emergency response measures being undertaken in the aftermath of the recent flash floods. He reviewed the preparedness and response of all concerned departments and directed the officers to ensure speedy restoration of essential services and effective relief measures for the affected population.

The Deputy Chief Minister, as per an official statement, conducted a department-wise review of the restoration works and stressed the need for expediting the restoration of roads, drinking water supply, electricity and other essential public services. He directed all the departments to complete a comprehensive assessment of losses at the earliest so that



appropriate relief and restoration measures can be taken up without delay.

Emphasising the importance of long-term disaster mitigation, the Deputy Chief Minister directed the Irrigation and Flood Control Department to prepare and submit a comprehensive plan within five days suggesting both immediate and permanent measures to minimise the impact of flash floods and prevent similar damage in the future. He

underscored the need for scientific planning, strengthening vulnerable areas and adopting sustainable flood management strategies.

The Deputy Chief Minister also instructed the officers to maintain close coordination among the departments, closely monitor the progress of restoration works and ensure that all affected families receive timely assistance. He reiterated that the government is committed to extend every

possible support for rehabilitation of flood-affected people and restoring normalcy at the earliest.

Appreciating the prompt and coordinated response of the district administration and all line departments during the flash flood situation, the Deputy Chief Minister lauded the dedication and commitment displayed by the officers and officials in carrying out rescue, relief and restoration operations under challenging circumstances. He urged them to maintain the same momentum and continue working with unwavering commitment to ensure the early restoration of normalcy and timely assistance to every affected family.

Earlier, Additional Deputy Commissioner Nowshera, Pritam Lal Thapa, presented a detailed briefing on the damage caused by the flash floods. He informed about the loss to life and property and the damage caused to schools, roads,

houses, standing crops, dug wells and other public infrastructure. He also highlighted the impact on PMGSY roads, health institutions and infrastructure under the Agriculture, Animal and Sheep Husbandry and Jal Shakti Departments.

The ADC further informed that dry ration has been distributed among all affected families and that the administration, in coordination with the concerned departments, is ensuring that relief and rehabilitation measures reach every affected household in a timely manner.

The meeting was attended by Chief Engineer, PWD (R&B); Parshotam Kumar; Additional Deputy Commissioner Nowshera, Dr. Pritam Lal Thapa; Divisional Forest Officer Nowshera, Shweta Deona; Superintending Engineer, PWD (R&B), Manzoor Ahmed; Executive Engineer, PWD (R&B) Nowshera, Sarwar Mehmood besides officers from the concerned departments.

FDA conducts 148 inspections, lifts 99 food samples across all districts of UT



KT NEWS DESK

SRINAGAR, JULY 23: The Food & Drugs Administration (FDA), J&K conducted inspections and sampling across the Union Territory to check compliance with food safety requirements. During the drive, 148 food business establishments were inspected and 75 enforcement samples were lifted.

Further, six Improvement Notices, as per an official statement, were issued to Food Business Operators (FBOs) for deviations from hygiene and sanitary requirements.

Six FBOs were compounded under Section 69 of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and a fine of 6,000 was imposed.

In view of the prevailing rainy season, consumers were advised to use boiled drinking water, avoid pre-cut fruits and food kept in unhygienic conditions, and ensure proper storage of food items.

FDA has requested consumers to report any suspected unsafe or adulterated food product through Toll-Free Helpline No. 104 or email at cfsjandk.fnd@jk.gov.in.

3 medical shops closed in surprise inspections in Shopian

During enforcement drive, several violations of licence conditions were detected, including the absence of qualified persons at licensed establishments



KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, JULY 23: Acting on the directions issued during the NCORD review meetings, Drugs Control Department, Shopian Thursday conducted surprise inspections of pharmacies in Keegam and Keller to ensure strict compliance with the provisions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and the Rules framed thereunder.

During the inspection drive, officials verified the functioning of Computerized Billing Systems (CBS) and CCTV cameras besides examining purchase and sale records of scheduled formulations, stock registers, invoices and the availability of qualified persons at licensed premises.

The inspection, as per an official statement, also assessed adherence to licence conditions and statutory requirements.

During the enforcement drive, several violations of licence conditions were

detected, including the absence of qualified persons at licensed establishments. Consequently, three medical shops were ordered to be closed on the spot under the relevant provisions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and the Rules framed thereunder.

The department also initiated further regulatory action against the defaulting establishments in accordance with the provisions of the Act and Rules.

The enforcement drive was aimed at strengthening regulatory oversight, preventing the misuse and diversion of scheduled drugs and ensuring strict compliance with drug control laws.

The Drugs Control Department reiterated that similar inspection drives will continue across the district on a regular basis to safeguard public health and ensure accountability among licensed pharmacies.

SWM Rules 2026

MC Bandipora launches sticker drive to enforce four-bin waste segregation

KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, JULY 23: Under the directions of the Housing and Urban Development Department and as part of Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0, the Municipal Committee Bandipora launched a mass distribution and pasting drive of instructional waste segregation stickers across the town to promote compliance with the Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules 2026.

The drive, as per an official statement, is being carried out on the ground by dedicated Community Mobilisers and Swachhata Executives, who are visiting door-to-door, interacting with residents and pasting colour-coded instructional stickers at prominent collection points to establish a four-bin segregation system at the source. The initiative aims to streamline municipal waste processing, protect sanitation workers and significantly reduce the volume of waste sent to dumping grounds.

Under the four-bin system, the blue sticker designates dry recyclable waste such as paper,

plastic, glass, metal cans, cardboard boxes and Tetra Paks, with an instruction that all materials must be clean and dry. The green sticker covers biodegradable wet waste, including food scraps, vegetable and fruit peels, leftover meals, tea leaves, coffee grounds and garden waste like leaves and grass.

For specialised waste, the red sticker guides the safe disposal of hygiene items including sanitary pads, diapers, cotton, tissues, wet wipes and menstrual cups. The black sticker addresses special care household hazardous waste, providing explicit guidelines for items like used batteries, expired medicines, thermometers, tube lights, bulbs, chemicals and nail polish or removers.

Community Mobilisers and Swachhata Executives are continuing their outreach across all municipal wards in Bandipora. The Municipal Committee Bandipora has appealed to all citizens, shop owners and institutions to cooperate with the field staff and actively follow the four-bin rule to support a cleaner and healthier town.

Strengthening Emergency Care Services

Advanced trauma training held at GMC Anantnag

KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, JULY 23: Government Medical College (GMC) Anantnag, in collaboration with the Emergency Medicine Academy, Manchester (UK), on Thursday conducted a full-day Advanced Trauma Training programme at the college to strengthen trauma management and emergency care services.

The programme, as per an official statement, accredited with four credit hours by the J&K Medical Council, was organised under the supervision of Principal, GMC Anantnag, Prof. (Dr.) Junaid S. Wani, and coordinated by the Department of Pediatrics.

The training programme was aimed at supporting GMC Anantnag in establishing a full-fledged Emergency Medicine Department and enhancing the capacity of healthcare professionals in advanced trauma management.

Speaking on the occasion, Principal GMC Anantnag, reiterated the institution's commitment to promoting academic excellence and improving patient care through such



capacity-building initiatives. He said GMC Anantnag will continue to support academic programmes that enhance clinical skills and expressed confidence that the college would soon realise its vision of establishing a dedicated Emergency Medicine Department.

Course Director, Dr. Mehdi Hassan and Deputy Course Director Dr. Hamid Zafar of the Emergency Medicine Academy, Manchester, assured continued academic and technical support to GMC Anantnag in strengthening emergency and trauma care services in the region. They said the academy remains committed to assisting the institution at every level to establish emergency medicine services in line with

international standards.

Around 60 participants, including Medical Officers, Consultants, Faculty Members and Resident Doctors from various departments, attended the training programme.

The programme focused on the A-to-E assessment of trauma patients and a structured, hands-on approach to conducting the complete primary survey.

The event also featured special case discussions and practical demonstrations of advanced emergency procedures, including chest drain insertion using the Seldinger technique, intraosseous (IO) cannulation, open surgical chest drain insertion, eFAST scan and resuscitative thoracotomy, where feasible.

Reviewing Functioning of LADCs

DLSA Ganderbal holds meeting of Monitoring & Mentoring Committee

KT News Desk

GANDERBAL, JULY 23: In pursuance of Regulation 11 of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) (Free & Competent Legal Aid) Regulations, 2010, the Monitoring and Mentoring Committee of the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Ganderbal convened a meeting Thursday at the Conference Hall, District Court Complex, Ganderbal to review the functioning and performance of the Legal Aid Defence Counsels (LADCs) and Panel Lawyers engaged in providing free legal services.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was chaired by Abdul Nasir, Chairman, DLSA (Principal District & Sessions Judge), Ganderbal, in the presence of Sheikh Babar Hussain, Secretary, DLSA Ganderbal, and Adv. Sajad Hyder Salathi, Member, Monitoring and Mentoring Committee.

During the meeting, the Committee undertook a comprehensive review of legal aid cases and expressed satisfaction with the overall functioning of the Legal Aid Defence Counsels. However, it observed that in certain matters, particularly before the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB), some Panel Lawyers are

not appearing personally and instead deputing junior advocates. The Committee directed all Panel Lawyers to ensure their personal appearance in assigned matters henceforth and to discharge their professional responsibilities with sincerity, diligence and commitment.

The Committee further reiterated that legal aid cases shall continue to be assigned by the Secretary, DLSA in a fair, transparent and equitable manner among Panel Lawyers, while maintaining proper records of all assignments. However, Deputy Chief LADC was also directed to ensure equitable distribution of cases among LADCs under strict control of Secretary DLSA Ganderbal.

Emphasizing accountability, all LADCs were directed to maintain a daily work diary and submit consolidated monthly reports to the DLSA through the Deputy LADC. The Committee also stressed punctuality, professional conduct and adherence to the standards prescribed under the Modified Legal Aid Defence Counsel Scheme, 2022.

The Committee expressed concern over the non-updation of case proceedings on the NALSA Portal despite previous directions. All LADCs and Panel

Lawyers were directed to update the proceedings of all assigned legal aid cases on the NALSA Portal regularly and ensure that all pending updates are completed by 31st July, 2026. It was further resolved that failure to comply with these directions within the stipulated time may invite appropriate action under the applicable rules and guidelines, including withholding of honorarium wherever warranted.

The Committee also discussed the importance of regular capacity building and legal awareness activities. It has observed that participation in training programmes and legal awareness initiatives is an integral part of the responsibilities of Panel Lawyers and LADCs. In this regard, all concerned were informed that a Two-Day Training-cum-Orientation Programme has already been scheduled for 29 and 30 July, 2026, and all LADCs and Panel Lawyers were directed to attend the programme without fail.

The Committee further directed all Panel Lawyers and LADCs to ensure timely submission of case updates, reports and other information to the DLSA Office to facilitate effective monitoring of legal aid services.

J&K Judicial Academy organises capacity-building programme on Juvenile Justice

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JULY 23: Under the guidance of Justice Sindhu Sharma, Judge, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh and Chairperson, Committee under the Juvenile Justice Act, the Jammu & Kashmir Judicial Academy Thursday organized a Capacity-Building Programme on Juvenile Justice for the Principal Magistrates of the Juvenile Justice Boards.

The programme, as per an official statement, was conducted in hybrid mode, with the Principal Magistrates from the Kashmir Division participating physically at the Academy's Mominabad Campus, Srinagar, while those from the Jammu Division joined virtually. The programme was also attended by the Newly Selected Civil Judges (Junior Division), Batch-2026, presently undergoing the Pre-Appointment Induction Training Programme.

The programme was organized pursuant to the approval of the Juvenile Justice Committee, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, based on a comprehensive Training Needs Assessment undertaken by the Office of the Member Secretary, Juvenile



Justice Committee. It was also aimed at facilitating implementation of the directions issued by the Supreme Court of India in *Juvenile Delinquent v. State of U.P. & Others* (Criminal Appeal No. 2010 of 2026), along with the Standard Operating Procedure and the communication issued by the Registrar General, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

The programme commenced with a welcome address by Director, Jammu & Kashmir Judicial Academy, Naseer Ahmad Dar who highlighted the significance of the programme in strengthening the implementation of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015. He emphasized the need for a child-centric and reformatory approach

while underscoring the importance of continuous judicial education in enhancing the capacity of judicial officers.

The inaugural session was jointly conducted by Tabassum Wani, Joint Registrar Inspection, High Court Wing, Srinagar, and Dr. Khair-ul-Nisa, Chairperson, Child Welfare Committee.

The resource persons discussed the key provisions of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, including the powers and functions of Juvenile Justice Boards, child-friendly inquiry procedures, preliminary assessment under Section 15, Social Investigation Reports, the role of experts and important judicial precedents. The session featured interactive

discussions and case studies emphasizing a child-centric and reformatory approach.

The second session, conducted by Tabassum Wani, focused on non-custodial measures, diversion and rehabilitation of children in conflict with law. Through practical case studies and discussions, the participants deliberated on bail under Section 12, preliminary assessment under Section 15, claims of juvenility, the distinction between children in conflict with law and children in need of care and protection, and the importance of safeguarding the identity and confidentiality of children.

The post-lunch sessions were jointly conducted by Tabassum Qadri, Secretary, District Legal Services Authority, Srinagar and Dr. Khair-ul-Nisa, who deliberated on restorative justice in juvenile justice administration. They highlighted victim-offender mediation, family group conferencing, accountability, rehabilitation and social reintegration. They emphasized trauma-informed judicial approaches, community participation and coordinated institutional support for the welfare and long-term rehabilitation of children in conflict with law.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Step up anti-terror

The Lieutenant Governor instructed officials to strictly prohibit unregistered service providers along the route and to enforce a mandatory 100% prepaid service system.

He also instructed for the setting up of additional power DG sets, round-the-clock health-care services, adequate availability of manpower, oxygen cylinders, and ambulances.

To ensure a swift response to potential incidents, the Lieutenant Governor instructed officials to maintain active traffic management, conduct regular vehicle inspections, ensure all equipment is functional, and issue timely weather alerts. He also directed that every tent must have a fire extinguisher and specialized wildlife units be stationed along the tracks.

He also commended the hard work and dedication of J&K Police, Indian Army, Civil Administration, Security Forces, Shrine Board, service providers, volunteers, stakeholders, and the citizens for making the holy Yatra of Shri Amarnathji safe and successful.

Additional Chief Secretary, Power Development Department, Ashwani Kumar; Additional Chief Secretary, Public Works (R&B) Department, Anil Kumar Singh; Additional Chief Secretary, Tourism Department, Dr. Ashish Chandra Verma; Commandant General, Home Guard / CD & SDRF, A. G. Mir; Nodal Officer for Pahalgam Axis, Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary; Nodal Officer for Baltal Axis, Rahul Yadav; Administrative Secretaries and senior officials of all the line departments also attended the meeting. (KNO)

3,500 OGWs detained

a day after Head Constable Ashiq Hussain Qureshi was shot dead by terrorists at point-blank range in the busy Lal Chowk area of Anantnag on Wednesday afternoon.

Official sources said security agencies launched one of the largest counter-terror operations in recent months, detaining more than 3,500 suspected Over Ground Workers (OGWs) and terror sympathisers for questioning across Kashmir. OGWs is a term used for individuals accused of assisting or facilitating terrorist activities.

Intensive frisking, naka checking, vehicle inspections and cordon-and-search operations have been carried out across all districts of Kashmir as part of the security sweep, sources said.

As part of the ongoing crackdown, authorities on Thursday demolished the houses of two Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists in south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

Officials told KNO that the demolished houses belonged to families of Aadil Ahmad Thokar of Guree village in Bijbehara and Haroon Ganai of Hassanpora.

The action came a day after the killing of the policeman in Anantnag, with officials describing the demolitions as part of efforts to dismantle terror networks and their support infrastructure.

"The demolition was part of the ongoing crackdown against terrorists and their support infrastructure in the district," officials said. (KNO)

House demolitions,

Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said he understood the anger within the police following the recent killing of a head constable in Anantnag, but maintained that actions such as demolishing houses were neither legally sustainable nor strategically effective.

"I understand the anger of the police, but there is a Supreme Court order that such actions should not be taken," he said.

Referring to the aftermath of the Pahalgam terror attack, the Chief Minister said similar demolitions had taken place then but were stopped after he intervened with the Central government.

"We saw exactly the same situation after the Pahalgam attack, when some houses were bulldozed. I had to take up the matter with the Central government to stop the process. Later, investigations found that none of the local people was involved in that attack and all the attackers had come from outside," he said.

He said demolishing houses or carrying out mass arrests would only aggravate the situation rather than improve it. "We will not be able to improve the situation by demolishing houses or arresting thousands of people. Instead, it will make the situation worse," he said.

Abdullah said security forces alone cannot eliminate terrorism without the cooperation of the people.

"When I was heading the government and the police were under our command, we knew that this fight could not be won without public support. The police, Army and CRPF can achieve success to a certain extent, but the real victory comes when ordinary people stand up against terrorism," he said.

The CM said people had strongly condemned both the Pahalgam attack and the recent killing of the police head constable, but cautioned against measures that could divert public anger.

"People are angry over the brutal killing of the policeman. But when thousands of people are arrested, or such actions are taken, that anger gets diverted. I hope we take our people along in this fight. Only then will we be successful," he added.

On the ongoing protests by job aspirants over alleged recruitment irregularities, Omar said the Centre should engage with the youth instead of ignoring their concerns.

Referring to Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda's remarks on examination paper leaks, he said investigations into previous recruitment scams were already underway.

"Yes, papers were leaked. Enquiries were conducted, and the matter is with the CBI. Many blacklisted companies were allowed to conduct recruitment, but I cannot comment on the investigation," he said.

Welcoming Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remarks that the country's youth are important, the Chief Minister said the statement

should be followed by meaningful engagement with the protesters.

"It is a good thing that the Prime Minister has acknowledged the importance of the youth. They should now sit with them and discuss their concerns. Earlier, some people mocked the protests, saying only social media users were supporting them. Today, large parts of New Delhi are affected by these demonstrations. The anger among the youth has been ignored for too long," he said.

Commenting on climate-related disasters, Omar said the government was closely monitoring the situation following heavy rains across Jammu and Kashmir.

He said the administration had feared a rise in river water levels, but the situation remained largely under control, although several areas had suffered losses.

"In Beerwah, around 37 shops were washed away after collapsing into the river. I have directed the Deputy Commissioner to ensure compensation is provided to the affected shopkeepers," he said.

Abdullah said the increasing frequency of cloudbursts and extreme weather events demanded a long-term strategy.

"We cannot stop the rain, but we must prepare ourselves better. During my childhood, cloudbursts would occur once or twice a year, mostly in mountainous areas such as Pahalgam. Now they are being reported almost every month. We need a comprehensive plan to protect our infrastructure and minimise losses," he said.

On Ladakh activist Sonam Wangchuk's hunger strike, the CM welcomed reports that Wangchuk was willing to end the fast if there was no retaliatory action against protesters.

"This is a peaceful protest. If Sonam Wangchuk is ready to end his hunger strike, it is a good thing. There should be no retaliatory action against the children or the protesters. We should engage with them and listen to their demands," he said.

Earlier, addressing the startup event, CM Abdullah said the government was committed to strengthening Jammu and Kashmir's startup ecosystem through seed capital, incubators and mentoring initiatives, with the aim of doubling the number of startups by 2027 under the ASCEND programme. (KNO)

Govt forms selection

all professional nominations and applications received for appointment to the Jammu & Kashmir Mental Health Authority. After evaluating the applications, the committee will recommend suitable candidates to the government for appointment to the statutory body.

The order further states that the Jammu & Kashmir National Health Mission (NHM) will provide secretarial assistance and logistical support to the Selection Committee to facilitate the effective discharge of its functions. (KNO)

Highway closure:

reach Katra at 8:15 pm via Banihal. On the return journey on July 24, it will depart Katra at 8:45 am and arrive in Srinagar at 11:50 am.

It said the special train will run non-stop between Banihal and Katra in both directions and will be operated with an eight-coach MEMU rake.

The additional service comes as the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway has remained closed for the second consecutive day due to multiple landslides, shooting stones and road erosion at several locations, leaving hundreds of vehicles and passengers stranded. (KNO)

J&K land of

and venture capitalists, the Chief Minister described Jammu and Kashmir as a land of opportunities endowed with immense natural, human and entrepreneurial potential. "Future growth of Jammu and Kashmir lies in encouraging innovation, nurturing local talent and creating an enabling environment where start-ups and businesses can thrive," he said.

The Chief Minister underlined that the government is committed to creating a business-friendly ecosystem backed by transparent governance, improved infrastructure, policy support and ease of doing business. "Sustained investments in innovation and entrepreneurship will not only accelerate economic growth but also generate meaningful employment opportunities for the youth," he said.

Calling for greater support to Jammu and Kashmir-based start-ups, the Chief Minister urged investors, venture capitalists and industry leaders to partner with local entrepreneurs and help transform their innovative ideas into successful enterprises. "Youth of Jammu and Kashmir possess exceptional talent, creativity and determination, with the right mentorship, financial support and market access, they can build globally competitive ventures", he observed.

The Chief Minister highlighted that start-ups are emerging as key drivers of economic transformation and innovation, adding that the government is making sustained efforts to strengthen the start-up ecosystem through institutional support, incubation facilities, skill development initiatives and improved access to finance.

"Jammu and Kashmir offers immense opportunities across diverse sectors including tourism, information technology, agriculture, horticulture, food processing, handicrafts, renewable energy, healthcare, education and creative industries", he said.

Omar Abdullah encouraged investors to explore these sectors and become partners in J&K's journey towards inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

The Chief Minister assured the participants that the government would continue to engage with entrepreneurs and investors, address their concerns through regular dialogue and further strengthen policy interventions to promote innovation-led development.

He reiterated that empowering local entrepreneurs and creating opportunities for young innovators remains one of the government's

key priorities. "With collaborative efforts between the government, industry and investors, Jammu and Kashmir would emerge as a leading destination for entrepreneurship, innovation and sustainable investment", he said.

The Chief Minister also expressed gratitude to investors for participating in the interaction, highlighting that these discussions are very rewarding for the future growth of Jammu and Kashmir. He also lauded JKEDI for organising such summits and interactions.

During the interactive session, the investors spoke about their innovative ventures and shared their experiences, achievements and future expansion plans. Investors and entrepreneurs also discussed opportunities for collaboration, investment, technology adoption and market linkages aimed at strengthening the start-up ecosystem in Jammu and Kashmir.

Additional Chief Secretary to Chief Minister, Dheeraj Gupta; Commissioner Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Vikramjit Singh; Director JKEDI, Mohammad Younis Malik; other senior officers of the Industries and Commerce Department, investors and Start-up founders from across the country were present during the interaction.

Innovation can't

that every unsuccessful attempt offers valuable lessons.

Drawing inspiration from inventor Thomas Edison, Omar said Edison never considered himself to have failed while inventing the light bulb but instead believed he had discovered thousands of ways that did not work.

"We should never be afraid to fail. The only thing we should be afraid of is not trying. Every failure is a lesson that takes us one step closer to success," he said.

He said not every idea would become a successful business and not every startup would survive in the market, but every attempt would contribute to learning, innovation and future success.

Calling upon aspiring entrepreneurs to make the most of the summit, Omar said ASCEND 2026 has been conceptualised to nurture ideas from the back of a napkin into products capable of reaching consumers across Jammu and Kashmir, the country and even global markets.

He said the summit has been designed to connect startups with investors, venture capitalists, mentors, policymakers and industry experts over the next three days.

The Chief Minister said every interaction with young innovators leaves him optimistic about Jammu and Kashmir's future, as many startups are focused on solving real-life problems faced by people in the region.

Highlighting innovations displayed during the exhibition, CM Omar referred to a sensor-based system that automatically drains water from pipes to prevent freezing during harsh winters, smart digital water meters aimed at reducing wastage of drinking water, hailstorm protection nets for farmers, carbon monoxide detection systems and automatic gas regulator safety devices to prevent winter accidents.

"These are practical solutions developed by youngsters who have identified real problems and are trying to innovate meaningful solutions. No idea is a bad idea. Every idea has potential and it only needs refinement, mentoring and the right support," he said.

Referring to a local solar energy innovator, Bilal, the Chief Minister said timely institutional support can transform talented innovators from Jammu and Kashmir into globally recognised entrepreneurs, expressing confidence that ASCEND 2026 would become the launchpad for many future success stories from the region.

The Chief Minister acknowledged that governments are traditionally risk-averse and prefer investments with guaranteed outcomes, but said startups require a fundamentally different mindset.

"If we fund ten startups, perhaps eight may not succeed. But the two that succeed can create enough value to compensate for those failures. We are not afraid to fail. The only thing we are afraid of is not providing enough support to all of you," he said.

Reaffirming the government's commitment to strengthening the entrepreneurial ecosystem, Omar said Jammu and Kashmir currently has around 1,300-1,400 startups, expressing confidence that the number would double by the time ASCEND 2027 is held.

He said the government wants future generations to look back at the present summit as the moment when Jammu and Kashmir's start-up movement truly gained momentum.

Inviting investors, venture capitalists and industry leaders to partner with emerging entrepreneurs from the region, CM Omar said their support could help convert promising ideas into successful enterprises capable of generating employment, promoting innovation and strengthening the Union Territory's economy. (KNO)

J&K govt to finalise

completion of the consultation process and approval of the competent authority.

In the reply, the Department maintained that it is committed to promoting sustainable, responsible, and environment-friendly tourism, while maintaining a balance between tourism development and preservation of the fragile ecological resources of the Union Territory.

"Pending formal notification of the policy, the Department and its subordinate Tourism Development Authorities are already implementing sustainable tourism practices under existing environmental laws, statutory guidelines, and government directions," reads documents submitted by the Tourism department. (KNO)

KU postpones

shall be notified separately in due course," the notice reads. (KNO)

Jhelum crosses

while Asham and Wular continued to remain below warning levels.

Among the tributaries, Vishow Nallah at Khudwani, Rambiyara Nallah at Wachi, Lidder Nallah at Batkoot, Doodhganga at Barzulla and Sindh Nallah at Doderhama were all flowing below their respective warning levels, indicating that the rise in water levels was largely confined to the main river.

Earlier, anticipating a further increase in the river level, the Chief Engineer, I&FC Kashmir, directed all officers and officials of departments assigned flood duty in South and Central Kashmir to immediately report to their designated duty stations.

The department also advised the general public to remain cautious and avoid venturing near rivers, streams and other water bodies.

NO NEED TO PANIC: DIV COM KASHMIR

Meanwhile, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, on Thursday said that the rising water level in the River Jhelum is being monitored closely by field teams and that all preventive and remedial measures are being coordinated round the clock.

In a post shared on X, Garg as per KNO said Control Rooms at both the divisional and district levels are functioning round the clock to monitor the situation and coordinate the response.

He appealed to people residing near the embankments not to panic, but to remain vigilant and strictly follow the advisories being issued by the local administration.

He also asked the public to contact the Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC), Srinagar, at 0194-2740003 for any assistance or support, if required.

SITUATION UNDER CONTROL: CHIEF ENGINEER I&FC

Speaking to KNO, Chief Engineer, Irrigation & Flood Control (I&FC) Kashmir, Showkat Hussain, appealed to people not to panic, saying the situation is under control and the river was expected to start receding in the coming hours.

He said the water level at the Sangam gauge station had risen by around half a foot and was expected to start receding after 11 PM. "The water level at Ram Munshi Bagh may continue to rise slightly by around half to one foot till nearly 12 midnight, after which it is expected to start receding," he said.

Hussain said nearly 24,000 cusecs of water was currently flowing through the Jhelum against its carrying capacity of around 40,000 cusecs, leaving sufficient room for the river to accommodate the flow.

"There is absolutely no need to panic. The situation is under control and people can remain relaxed while continuing to follow advisories issued by the administration," he added. (KNO)

Flood threat

continues to rise. Low-lying areas are on high alert amid fears of further inundation if the rainfall persists.

Several low-lying areas of South Kashmir are witnessing waterlogging. Orchards, paddy fields and residential localities have been inundated in many places, causing concern among farming families whose livelihoods depend on agriculture and horticulture.

A flood-like situation has emerged in Sakhras, where flood waters have entered residential areas, leaving families worried as the situation continues to deteriorate.

In Avoora, Pahalgam, the swollen Lidder River washed away a temporary diversion that had been constructed after the recent cloudburst to restore road connectivity.

The incident has once again disrupted movement in the area and highlighted the intensity of the river's flow following continuous rainfall.

Authorities also closed the Sakdas Bridge for vehicular movement after the water level rose dangerously, saying the precautionary measure was necessary to ensure public safety.

Local residents expressed growing anxiety, recalling the devastating floods of previous years and urging the administration to remain fully prepared.

"We have not seen the rain stopping for days. Water has already entered our orchards and paddy fields. If it continues to rain through the night, the situation could become much worse," said Ghulam Mohammad, a resident of Khudwani.

Another resident, Abdul Rashid from Anantnag, said people living near the river are spending sleepless nights. "The river is rising every hour. Families are constantly monitoring the water level. We request the administration to remain alert and ensure that rescue teams are kept ready," he said.

Apple growers said prolonged waterlogging could severely affect orchards at a crucial stage of fruit development.

"Our orchards are already submerged at several places. Excess water can damage the roots and affect this year's crop. We hope the rains stop soon," said Mohammad Yousuf, an orchardist from south Kashmir.

Officials said field staff have been deployed to monitor vulnerable locations and appealed to people residing near rivers, streams and flood-prone areas to remain vigilant. They advised the public to avoid unnecessary travel near overflowing water bodies and strictly follow official advisories.

With the Meteorological Department predicting the possibility of more rainfall over the coming hours, anxiety continues to grow across south Kashmir as residents hope the weather improves before rivers and streams cross critical flood levels.

HORTICULTURE DEPARTMENT ISSUES ADVISORY

In view of the ongoing spell of rainfall across Kashmir the Department of Horticulture has issued a detailed advisory asking orchardists to take immediate precautionary measures to protect fruit orchards from weather-related damage and minimise potential crop losses.

The department has advised growers to ensure proper drainage in orchards to prevent waterlogging, particularly around the root zone of fruit trees, warning that prolonged

stagnation of water can severely affect root health and overall plant growth.

Orchardists have also been urged to remove excess water from their orchards without delay to avoid damage to the root system and maintain the health of the trees.

Keeping in view the possibility of strong winds accompanying rainfall, the advisory asks farmers to provide adequate support to young fruit trees and high-density plantation orchards to prevent uprooting, bending, or other structural damage.

The department has further advised growers not to spray pesticides, fungicides, or foliar nutrients during rainfall, stating that such applications are ineffective under wet conditions and may result in unnecessary losses.

The advisory states that once the rainfall ceases and weather conditions improve, orchardists should undertake need-based plant protection measures strictly in accordance with the recommendations issued by SKUAST-Kashmir to safeguard orchards against pest and disease outbreaks.

To reduce the spread of diseases, growers have also been directed to maintain proper orchard sanitation by removing broken branches, fallen debris, and other damaged plant material from orchards.

The Horticulture Department has further requested orchardists to immediately report any significant damage caused by adverse weather to the concerned Horticulture Development Officer so that timely assessment, technical guidance, and necessary assistance can be provided.

The department also advised growers to remain in close contact with their respective Horticulture Development Officers for immediate field assistance, inspections, and expert guidance during the prevailing weather conditions. (KNO)

Cloudburst wrecks

four culverts, snapped electricity and drinking water supply, and disrupted road connectivity in the area.

The cloudburst also damaged the Neela Nag water source and raw water transmission pipelines, leaving around a dozen villages—including Mayan, Kathal, Muqam Peeran, Braripora, Bijhama, Niloosa, Noorkhah, Gingle, Lachipora A and B, and Chandanwari—without drinking water.

Authorities advised residents to use water sparingly, boil drinking water before consumption and cooperate with restoration teams.

Tehsildar Boniyar Najibullah Shah said restoration work has been launched on a war footing and electricity and water supply were expected to be restored by Friday, subject to improvement in weather conditions.

Rescue teams comprising police and civil administration also evacuated a woman who was trapped inside her house after floodwaters entered the locality following the cloudburst.

Officials said the situation in the area was being monitored closely amid apprehensions of further rainfall.

Elsewhere in the Union Territory, the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and police carried out multiple rescue operations as rivers and streams swelled following incessant rain.

In Jammu district, SDRF and police rescued two men who were trapped in the swollen River Tawi at Phallian Mandal. Both were shifted to safety and were stated to be stable.

In South Kashmir's Anantnag district, an SDRF team evacuated a tribal family stranded in the River Lidder near Aang Matipora after the water level rose suddenly.

In Doda district, SDRF personnel were deployed along the banks of the Chenab River in Pul Doda as water levels increased. Authorities issued an advisory asking people to stay away from rivers and other vulnerable locations.

In Rajouri district, SDRF personnel facilitated the safe crossing of Power Development Department staff across a swollen river to restore electricity supply in affected areas.

An SDRF team also removed a fallen tree near Manda on the Jammu National Highway, restoring traffic movement on the stretch.

Officials said another SDRF team had been stationed in Akhnoor's Pragwal area to monitor the rising Chenab River, spread public awareness and respond swiftly to any flood-like situation.

CHENAB CROSSES FLOOD ALERT MARK IN AKHNOOR

The water level in the Chenab at Akhnoor crossed the flood alert mark once again during the evening, touching 33 feet against the alert level of 32 feet. The danger level has been fixed at 35 feet, officials said.

In Kathua district, Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma visited flood-affected areas along with officials from the Flood Control Department and reviewed the situation. He directed officers to take all necessary measures to safeguard lives and property.

In Kishtwar district, heavy rainfall led to the collapse of a mud house in Chatroo Famber area. While all family members escaped unhurt, 25 sheep were killed in the incident, officials said.

JAMMU-SRINAGAR HIGHWAY REMAINS SHUT

Meanwhile, the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway (NH-44) remained closed due to fresh landslides and shooting stones at multiple locations in Ramban district.

Traffic authorities said only stranded and local vehicles were allowed to move after limited clearance operations, while road restoration work was continuing.

Commuters have been advised to avoid travelling on the highway until it is declared safe, as intermittent rainfall continues and there is a possibility of fresh landslides and shooting stones.

The Meteorological Department has forecast another spell of rain and thundershowers at many places on Friday, followed by scattered showers between July 25 and 27. A fresh wet spell is expected to affect Jammu and Kashmir from July 28 onwards. (KNO)

PM's outreach to protesters: Welfare of youth govt's top priority

PTI

New Delhi, Jul 23: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said the welfare of the country's youth is the top priority of his government and asserted that anyone trying to harm their future will not be spared.

Modi's outreach to the youth came three days after thousands of students led by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) took part in the 'Sansad Chalo' march against irregularities in the NEET exam and to demand the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.

During the march, police resorted to lathi-charge and lobbed tear gas shells, injuring scores of students. Over 100 policemen were also injured while trying to stop the protest march.

In his message on X, Modi also said that the government has decided to set up fast-track courts to ensure swift and stringent punishment for those involved in paper leaks.

"Nothing is more important than the welfare and future of our youth! This is our top priority. Those who try to harm the future of our youth will not be spared," he said in a post on X.

The prime minister also said that he has directed the



concerned authorities and officials to take all necessary steps on the issue of paper leaks.

"This is an important step in the series of decisions being taken by the government to safeguard the interests of students," he said.

Modi's first public message on the NEET paper leaks came on Tuesday, when he spoke about the issue at a meeting of the NDA Parliamentary Party.

There was no live telecast of this speech, nor was there any statement. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju and some MPs shared what Modi said at that meeting.

According to them, the PM said that strong action was taken

against those involved in the "grave sin" of the paper leaks so that no one plays with the future of the youth.

Modi said all state governments and the Centre must join hands on the issue as it is "not a matter of party politics but a matter of national interest".

He also told NDA MPs that they should remain closely connected with the people with "warmth and affection" and that the "trust of the youth" needed to be won.

Rijiju said Modi told the MPs that the government acted immediately after reports of the paper leak surfaced, and 13 people were arrested.

"At the same time, the prime

minister noted that to ensure that students' future was not affected, the NEET re-examination was given priority, conducted successfully, and the results were declared without delay," Rijiju said.

The prime minister termed the NEET paper leak "ghor paap (grave sin)", the MPs who attended the meeting said. The exam is conducted for admission to undergraduate courses in medical colleges.

The prime minister pointed out that while the NEET re-examination created inconvenience for children, not only did the re-test take place without delay, but the government also engaged renowned lawyers to ensure strict punishment for those involved.

Modi, the MPs said, conveyed clearly that there should be no injustice to students and suggested that it was easy to misguide them but difficult to show them the right path.

Modi had also stressed the need to punish the guilty and collaboratively establish a fool-proof system.

The CJP, which has been spearheading protests over alleged examination irregularities since June, has demanded that Pradhan be immediately sacked and Rs 1 crore compensation be

given to the families of those who committed suicide after the NEET paper leak.

Activist Sonam Wangchuk has been on an indefinite hunger strike since June 28 after he joined the CJP's agitation.

He was earlier forcibly shifted to Safdarjung Hospital by police, and was later moved to Medanta Hospital in Gurugram following a Delhi High Court order.

Two Union ministers -- J P Nadda and Jitendra Singh -- met Wangchuk at the hospital on Wednesday.

Nadda also met some of the injured protesters at Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital here, besides holding a meeting with two representatives of the CJP, in a bid to resolve the issue.

The government has also announced that it was ready for an intensive discussion on the NEET paper leaks on the floor of Parliament.

Both Houses of Parliament have failed to transact any business for the first three days of the Monsoon session, which commenced on July 20, due to disruptions caused by the opposition.

A government functionary on Wednesday ruled out Pradhan's resignation, saying he could not be blamed for the paper leak as he was in no way involved in it.

Come forward for dialogue with govt: Jitendra Singh's 'humble appeal' to CJP

PTI

New Delhi, Jul 23: Union minister Jitendra Singh on Thursday appealed to the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) to come forward for another round of talks with the government, saying issues can be resolved and a way forward can be found only through dialogue.

Speaking to PTI Videos, Singh said that in the last 24 hours, the government has invited the CJP for talks "at least four times".

"I would like to appeal to the

students and young friends participating in this protest to come forward for a dialogue. Our doors are open," he said, adding this is a "humble appeal" on behalf of the government.

Singh said the discussion with the protesting students' representatives will be held under the leadership of Union Health Minister and senior BJP leader J P Nadda.

"The meeting can take place either at Nadda ji's official residence or at his office. The choice

is yours (students' representatives). I will also be present," he said. Singh said the discussion can be held on the "NEET issue" and all "related matters".

"We are prepared to devote as much time as necessary, be it one, two, three or four hours, according to your convenience. However, please do come forward for a dialogue, because there is no solution without discussion, and without a solution, we cannot chart the way forward," he said.



Gold falls Rs 400 per 10 grams amid surging oil prices



PTI

New Delhi, Jul 23: Gold prices fell Rs 400 to Rs 1,49,200 per 10 grams in the national capital on Thursday, tracking weak trends in global markets amid surging crude oil rates.

The yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 1,49,600 per 10 grams in the preceding session.

Silver also pared gains, falling Rs 300 to Rs 2,29,700 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) from Wednesday's closing level of Rs 2,30,000 per kg, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

Traders said bullion witnessed profit-taking amid rising oil prices and concerns that persistent inflation could delay monetary policy easing by major central banks.

"Bullion came under pressure as escalating tensions in the Middle East pushed crude oil prices higher, fuelling inflation concerns and

reinforced expectations that the US Fed could maintain a restrictive monetary policy for longer or potentially raise interest rates later this year," said Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities.

In the international markets, spot gold fell USD 38.92, or 1 per cent, to USD 4,091.17 per ounce and silver dropped nearly 2 per cent to USD 58.65 per ounce.

Spot gold slipped to around USD 4,093 per ounce as a sharp rally in crude oil dented investors' sentiment after Yemen's Houthis targeted a ship in the Red Sea in their first such attack in months, Praveen Singh, Head of Commodities at Mirae Asset ShareKhan, said. Brent oil, the global oil benchmark, rose USD 5.44, or nearly 6 per cent, to USD 99.51 per barrel after US President Donald Trump said he will hold Iran responsible for attacks launched by Yemen's Houthis.

52 civilians rescued, 2,206 evacuated during past week amid rain havoc across states: NDRF



PTI

New Delhi, Jul 23: The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) has rescued 52 civilians and evacuated 2,206 people to safety during the past week as heavy rains and floods caused havoc in several states, officials said Friday.

Heavy rains and landslides in Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Assam, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman, and Jammu and Kashmir wrought widespread damage in July, they said.

"The Ministry of Home Affairs Integrated Control Room (ICR-ER) is working in close coordination with other central agencies including India Meteorological Department (IMD), Central Water Commission (CWC) and Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) for raising timely alerts to State Emergency Operation Centres and District Emergency Operation Centres," an official statement said.

Besides disseminating early warnings up to states/Union territories and districts, the control room is monitoring all

the rescue activities round-the-clock, it added.

The NDRF is working in close coordination with state agencies, police and disaster response units in all these places for rescue and relief operations.

Anticipating floods and landslides in vulnerable areas, the NDRF has pre-positioned teams at these locations to reduce response time, the statement said.

"During the last one week, 52 civilians have been rescued by NDRF teams whereas 2,206 civilians were evacuated to safer places across all the affected States/UTs," it said.

Inter-ministerial central teams have visited affected areas in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam from July 07 to July 10 for assessing the extent of damage and to provide necessary financial assistance to these states from NDRF, the statement said.

"Another Inter-Ministerial Central Team is scheduled to visit the affected area of Assam from 25.07.2026 for assessing loss and damage caused due to incessant rains and floods," it said.

No. of space start-ups rose from one in 2014 to over 400 in 2026: Govt to RS

PTI

New Delhi, Jul 23: India's space sector has witnessed measurable gains since June 2020, when space was opened to private players, with the number of space start-ups increasing from one in 2014 to more than 400 at present, and cumulative private investment crossing USD 600 million, the government informed Parliament on Thursday.

In a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha, Union Minister Jitendra Singh said in 2026 so far, private investment worth USD 187 million has been reported and 105 authorisations have been issued to non-government entities (NGEs) as on July 7.

"The investor base driving India's space ecosystem has expanded far beyond early angels, with sovereign wealth funds, global asset managers, and strategic corporates now sitting side-by-side on cap tables," the minister said.

He highlighted that India's private space sector has demonstrated real launch and orbital capability -- two companies have flown sub-orbital launch vehicles (in November 2022 and May 2024).

NGEs have so far placed more than 30 satellites in orbit and about 45 payloads are in space through platforms, such as the PSLV Orbital Experimental Module (POEM), Singh said.

"The maturing landscape propelled Skyroot Aerospace to become the sector's first unicorn with backing from GIC and BlackRock, while Digantara secured a USD 50 million round drawing in Japan's SBI Investment, and Pixxel gained the backing of global tech giant Alphabet," he added.

BRICS meeting backs setting up centres of excellence for mental wellness



PTI

Chandigarh, Jul 23: Recognising mental health as an integral component of universal health coverage, the 16th BRICS Health Ministers' meeting here on Thursday supported the establishment of centres of excellence for mental wellness, with NIMHANS, Bengaluru, as the coordinating centre.

The member countries also endorsed the creation of a BRICS training hub network to strengthen workforce capacity through training, knowledge exchange and sharing of best practices.

The network will facilitate collaborative research, policy dialogue and the development of evidence-based mental health promotion strategies across BRICS countries.

The 16th BRICS Health Ministers' meeting is being held here under India's chairship from July 22-24.

A major outcome of the meeting of health ministers on Thursday was the unanimous adoption of the 'health ministerial declaration', reflecting the shared commitment of BRICS countries to deepen health cooperation and strengthen resilient, equitable and people-centric health systems, officials said.

The delegates also reaffirmed their support for the BRICS vaccine research and development centre to strengthen collaborative research and improve equitable access to safe and effective vaccines, it said.

The visiting health ministers later visited the various exhibition pavilions set up at the meeting venue, showcasing India's initiatives in digital health, traditional medicine, food safety and healthy lifestyles.

The member countries reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening resilient health systems, advancing universal health coverage, enhancing pandemic preparedness and response, promoting digital health, expanding access to affordable and quality healthcare, and deepening cooperation in research, innovation and capacity building.

BRICS is an intergovernmental organisation that has been expanded to 11 full member countries now -- Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and the UAE.

HCs rarely follow timeline to fill judges' vacancies: Govt in RS



PTI

New Delhi, Jul 23: High courts "rarely" adhere to the timeline of recommending names for judgeship six months before the occurrence of a vacancy, the government told the Rajya Sabha on Thursday in response to a question on the shortfall of judges in the higher courts. Citing the provisions of the memorandum of procedure, Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal said the high courts are required to make recommendations at least six months before the occurrence of a vacancy. "However, this time limit is rarely observed," he said.

Memorandum of procedure is a set of documents which guide the appointment and elevation of high court and Supreme Court judges.

Filling up of vacancies in the higher judiciary is a continuous, integrated and collaborative process between the executive and the judiciary.

Trump vows to punish Iran for Houthi Red Sea attacks

REUTERS

Dubai, Jul 23: US President Donald Trump promised on Thursday “major military punishment” for Iran and its Houthi allies, after the Yemeni fighters struck at least one oil tanker in the Red Sea, extending the Middle East war to a second major shipping chokepoint. The prospect that disruption could widen to a second sea sent global oil prices surging in one of the steepest rises of the war. Brent crude rose more than 6 percent, breaking through \$100 a barrel for the first time since May.

Two weeks since the effective collapse of an interim truce meant to end the war, the US military launched another nightly round of air strikes on Iran, prompting Iran to fire at neighboring Arab countries that house US bases.

Saudi authorities said the tanker Encelia caught fire after



being hit but that all crew members were safely evacuated.

The Houthis also claimed to have targeted a second tanker.

Trump said he would hold Iran accountable for any further attacks by the fighters.

The Houthis, who control northern and western Yemen, said this week they were imposing a naval blockade on

Saudi Arabia, which has diverted millions of barrels of oil per day by pipeline to the Red Sea to get around Iran's blockade of Gulf oil through the Strait of Hormuz.

“If they do this again, the US will hold Iran responsible, in that the Houthis are a Surrogate and/or Proxy of Iran, and major military punishment

will be inflicted upon Iran and, of course, the Houthis, themselves,” Trump wrote on Truth Social.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio told a diplomatic gathering in Southeast Asia the price Iran pays “will get higher every night” until Tehran is ready for a peace deal it would live by.

“Iran is begging (for a deal) every day. The problem with Iran is every time they make a deal ... they either break it or they want to change it,” he said. “And maybe they’ll change their mind here over the next few days as they continue to suffer great losses.”

Houthi attacks could close the strait known as the Bab El-Mandeb or “Gate of Tears” which controls access from the Red Sea to the Indian Ocean, the second most important route for energy shipments after the Strait of Hormuz at the mouth of the Gulf.

UK withdraws remaining diplomats from Iran



AFP

London, Jul 23: Britain said on Thursday it had withdrawn remaining diplomatic staff from Iran as the conflict between Iran and the United States escalates.

“Due to the security situation, UK staff have been temporarily withdrawn from

Iran. Our embassy continues to operate remotely,” the Foreign Office said on its website.

Britain in June withdrew its embassy staff from Iran, following in the footsteps of other European nations as well as Australia and New Zealand. The withdrawals came after Israel launched renewed air strikes on Iran

claiming its arch enemy was on the verge of developing a nuclear weapon.

The Foreign Office (FCDO) declined to say how many staff had been withdrawn, after a similar move in February.

The FCDO “advises against all travel to Iran. If you are a British national already in Iran, either resident or visitor, carefully consider your presence there and the risks you take by staying,” it says on its website. British couple Craig Foreman and his wife Lindsay were detained while traveling in Iran during a round-the-world motorbike trip at the start of 2025.

They are serving a 10-year sentence for spying — charges they both deny. Their family said last week that Craig Foreman had been given an extra two years for talking to the media.

India urges caution for ships entering Black Sea

AFP

New Delhi, Jul 23: India issued a security warning Thursday for ships venturing into the Black Sea that are locally flagged or employ its seafarers.

The advisory follows a Russian attack Sunday on a cargo ship leaving Ukraine's port of Odesa that killed four Indian nationals.

The “highest degree of caution” should be exercised while operating in the Black Sea, India's Directorate General of Maritime Administration said.

“Voyage-specific security risk assessments” should be undertaken before entering the region, it said. The maritime authority said

there had been 10 attacks in the region since April this year involving Indian seafarers aboard foreign-flagged ships.

They included Sunday's fatal attack on the MV Golden Leo, which New Delhi protested by calling in Russia's top envoy to convey its “unequivocal condemnation.”

Others included attacks on foreign-flagged tankers MT Asia, MT Louise-1 and MT Nelsa near Novorossiysk that resulted in damage to vessels and forced Indian seafarers to leave the ships. The security advisory comes a week after the Indian maritime authority asked local and foreign shipowners not to deploy Indian seafarers on vessels transiting the Strait of Hormuz.

Sooryavanshi sizzles as India finally open account in Iyer-era

PTI

Harare, Jul 23: Wonderkid Vaibhav Sooryavanshi smashed an 18-ball half century in his first innings of substance in international cricket as an all-round India outplayed Zimbabwe by seven wickets in the first T20 of the three match series here on Thursday.

Pacer Mayank Yadav made a successful return to international cricket as India restricted Zimbabwe to 125 for seven. India expectedly gunned down the target in 13.2 overs following a typical knock from



Sooryavanshi (50 off 19) that included four boundaries and as many sixes.

It was also India's first win under new captain Shreyas Iyer, who endured a run of six

losses in his first assignment in Ireland and England.

Sooryavanshi's much hyped international debut in England earlier this month did not go as per the script but made his familiarity with the venue count.

In his return to the ground where he made a memorable 80-ball 175 in the U-19 World Cup final earlier this year, the youngest to play for India displayed his rare talent that has been acknowledged by the cricketing world.

While Abhishek Sharma (1 off 8) struggled at the other

end, Sooryavanshi took down the Zimbabwe attack bit by bit.

He began with couple of breathtaking sixes off Richard Ngarava in the second over of the chase. The first one was a one legged pull shot that sailed over deep square leg before he made a slight room to nonchalantly a dispatch a decent length ball over mid-off.

Blessing Muzarabani, who did not allow Sooryavanshi to free his arm initially, was also taken to the cleaners in fifth over when the 15-year-old smoked a 90m six down the ground.

CWG 2026: Inspired by Jhajharia, para-athlete Sagar Thayat looks ahead to Glasgow

IANS

Gandhinagar, July 23: Discus thrower Sagar Thayat started as an able-bodied athlete, but an accident in 2012 left both his ankles seriously damaged and turned his life upside down. Para Discus thrower Thayat will be representing India in the F43/44 categories at the Commonwealth Games 2026, which will be played in Glasgow, Scotland, from Thursday till August 2.

“I was in Dehradun Sports College, adjoining the Army firing ranges, and someone by mistake threw a mortar in the hostel. After that, I was in hospital for two and a half years. I had to undergo more than 20 surgeries during that time; I had to drop out of school and rejoined school in 2015. After that, my recovery took 5-6 years,” the 26-year-old recalled the ordeal he went through due to the freak accident in an interaction with SAI Media. Sagar, who hails from Bageshwar in Uttarakhand, spoke about how he was inspired to take up para-athletics after reading about Devendra Jhajharia, the first Indian to win two gold medals at the Paralympics.

Hundreds hospitalized in Japan heatwave ‘disaster’

AFP

Tokyo, Jul 23: More than 450 people received hospital treatment for heat-related issues in a single day in Tokyo — the highest number since records began 16 years ago, emergency services said Thursday.

The figure was released as Japan sweltered in a heatwave that has killed at least 14 people over the past week.

A total 453 people had hospital treatment for heat-related issues on Wednesday, the most since records began in 2010, the Tokyo Fire Department said. Emergency callouts were also at the highest level since at least 1963. “We are urging people to stay hydrated and use air conditioners,” a fire brigade spokesman told AFP. The number of patients appeared to rise as temperatures climbed, with notable increases on Tuesday and Wednesday, the spokesman said. In Tokyo prefecture — home to around 14 million people — one person had died in the current heatwave with four others in a critical condition and 18 in a serious state, he said.

Nick Estes, 35, an American tourist visiting the Asakusa area of Tokyo with his family, said Thursday the weather was “extremely hot.” “We’ve been planning our trips around trying to make sure we can spend time in the metro to cool off, finding little shops to pop into to maybe buy a little souvenir that has air conditioning, doing everything we can to stay cool,” Estes told AFP.

India crush Zimbabwe by 7 wickets



PTI

Harare, Jul 23: India thrashed Zimbabwe by seven wickets in the first T20 International here on Thursday to take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

Opting to bowl first, India restricted Zimbabwe to 125 for seven. India's 15-year-old batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi then became the youngest player in the world to score a fifty in men's international cricket, reaching the mark in just 18 balls as the visitors chafed down the target of 126 with 40 balls to spare.

Sooryavanshi's knock featured 4 fours and 4 sixes at the Harare

Sports Club.

Earlier, India named concussion substitutes for specific roles ahead of the match for the first time, with Suryansh Shedge (batter/all-rounder), Prabhshimran Singh (wicketkeeper), Harsh Dubey (spinner) and Yash Thakur (pace bowler) included in the list.

Mayank Yadav (2/18) and Prince Yadav (2/19) were the most successful bowlers for India.

Brief Scores: Zimbabwe 125 for 7 in 20 overs (Ryan Burl 26, Wessly Madhevere 39, Tadiwanashe Marumani 27 not out; Mayank Yadav 2/18, Prince Yadav 2/19).

India: 126/3 in 13.2 overs (Vaibhav Sooryavanshi 50).

JAN NETA
Hindi
(A)
05:20 PM

DHAMAAL 4
Hindi
(U/A 13+)
04:35 PM
07:30 PM

THE ODYSSEY
English with English Subtitles
(A)
01:55 PM
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