

# Infant twins, children among 6 of family killed in Meerut house fire

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
MEERUT

A devastating accident shook Meerut after a suspected short circuit triggered a massive blaze inside a house in the Lisadi Gate area, killing six members of an extended family, including two four-month-old twin sisters, and three children aged 4 and 12. According to officials, the blaze at Iqbal Ahmad's residence on Monday night spread rapidly when most male members of the family were out to offer Ramzan namaz, leaving

**Police say the family was into tailoring and online garment business, for which a large quantity of cloth was stored on the ground floor of the three-storey house, causing the fire to spread rapidly**

little time for the others to escape.

Police said the family was into tailoring and online garment business, for which a large quantity of cloth was stored on the ground floor of the three-storey house, causing the fire to spread rapidly. Mohammad Farooq, a family member, said he had

gone to offer namaz when he received a call about the fire. "By the time I came back, a huge crowd had gathered outside the house.

The blaze killed my daughter, my son, my younger brother's twin daughters and his son. My elderly mother survived the fire, though her blood pressure shot up due

to the shock," Farooq said. The deceased have been identified as Rukhsar (25), Mahbish (12), Hammad (4), Akdas (4), Nabia (4 months) and Inayat (4 months), all residents of Gali No. 3 near the Surahi Wali Masjid in Kidwai Nagar, police said.

One injured woman, Ameer Bano (55), is un-



dergoing treatment at a hospital, they said. The victims were laid to rest at the Bale Miyan cemetery at Nauchandi on Tuesday afternoon. Heart-wrenching

scenes were witnessed when the coffins were carried out of the house, where a large number of people gathered to mourn the family's loss.

Officials said the family

members had given in writing that they didn't want a post-mortem of the bodies. The incident occurred at Kidwai Nagar around 8 pm on Monday. Seven people were admitted to the hospital with burn injuries, of which six died, Meerut SSP Avinash Pandey told reporters. Police confirmed the deaths after midnight.

A Dial 112 response vehicle was rushed to the spot within three minutes of receiving information about the blaze, followed by fire tenders, Pandey said. The narrow lanes in the locality

posed a major challenge for the firefighters, prompting them to deploy motorcycles and later access the house from the adjoining rooftops, officials said.

The firemen had to break a wall to gain entry into the building. A local also assisted in the rescue efforts by placing a ladder to help evacuate those trapped on the first floor of the house, the SSP said.

While five people were rescued from the first floor, those trapped on the second floor were engulfed by dense smoke and flames.

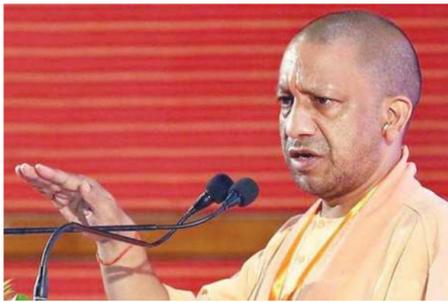
## UP receives Rs 1L cr investment proposals

**MoUs worth Rs 60,000 crore have already been signed; AISATS to invest Rs 4,458 cr in Jewar airport projects; MoU signed during Yogi's Singapore visit**

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
SINGAPORE/LUCKNOW

UTTAR Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday said the state has received investment proposals worth Rs 1 lakh crore during his ongoing visit to Singapore, adding that memoranda of understanding (MoUs) worth Rs 60,000 crore have already been signed. Speaking on the second day of his visit, Adityanath said he held "positive and productive" discussions with Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister, Home Minister and Energy Minister on expanding economic cooperation and investment opportunities in Uttar Pradesh.

"Since Monday, UP re-



ceived investment proposals worth Rs 1 lakh crore during the Singapore visit.

Till now MoUs worth Rs 60,000 crore have been signed," he said. The chief minister also met top executives and chairpersons of major global fintech and

investment firms, including GIC and Blackstone, and described the meetings as encouraging for future partnerships.

"People's perception about Uttar Pradesh has undergone a 360-degree transformation," Adityanath said, highlighting improvements in infrastructure, governance and investment climate in the state.

The agreement was signed during Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's ongoing visit to Singapore, marking a key investment outcome on the second day of the tour aimed at attracting global capital to Uttar Pradesh.

## All money lost in IDFC First Bank fraud recovered: CM

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
CHANDIGARH

HARYANA Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Tuesday informed the State Assembly that the state government had recovered nearly Rs 556 crore owed to it in the IDFC First Bank case. "Nearly Rs 556 crore, including nearly Rs 22 crore in interest, came back within 24 hours," Saini said in the House.

On Sunday, the bank disclosed a Rs 590-crore fraud committed by its employees and others in accounts held by the Haryana government. "I want to clarify before the House that the money concerning Haryana government departments, (the) entire amount has been deposited back into our accounts...The recovery has been made within 24 hours," Saini said.

He said the bank had apprised the government that the incident primarily



involved a particular branch of the bank in Chandigarh, involving four to five bank employees of middle and lower rung who colluded in the whole thing.

The government will ensure that anybody who is involved be it a bank employee, private individual or even a government employee -- will not be spared," he said.

On Monday, Saini said the state's Anti-Corruption

Bureau would conduct an in-depth probe into the fraud. "We have formed a committee headed by the Finance Secretary in this entire matter," Saini said on Monday. Taking a dig at Congress, Saini said during the party's time, scams used to be hushed up and no one used to be held accountable, whereas the BJP government is working with zero tolerance towards corruption.

## RSS chief advocates implementation of UCC

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
DEHRADUN

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat has advocated for the nationwide implementation of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC), modelled after the one in Uttarakhand. At a former secretary's dialogue seminar held here to mark the RSS's 100th anniversary, Bhagwat said, "It would be a very good thing if the UCC is implemented...It would be good if it happens across the country, but I believe it should be implemented in this way (like Uttarakhand)."

Uttarakhand was the first state in the country to implement the UCC on January 27 last year. The RSS chief praised the UCC, saying it is essential for unifying society. He said that after drafting a proposal in Uttarakhand, it was put up for public discussion, and then suggestions from 3 lakh people were received, which were considered and accepted.

Refusing to comment on the University Grants Commission (UGC) issue, Bhagwat said the matter is currently before the Supreme Court.



## Father, daughter die after jumping before goods train

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
UNNAO

A 45-year-old man and his teenage daughter allegedly died by suicide after jumping in front of a goods train on the Kanpur-Lucknow rail route in Uttar Pradesh's Unnao district, police said on Tuesday. The incident occurred around 8:45 pm on Monday on the down track near Sahajani crossing in the Shuklaganj area, ahead of Gangaghat railway station, Inspector in-charge of Gangaghat police station said.

According to preliminary information, Yash Gupta (45) and his 14-year-old daughter jumped onto the track as a goods train approached, resulting in their death on the spot, he said. On receiving information,

Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel and local police rushed to the scene. For safety reasons, movement on the down track was halted for some time, briefly disrupting rail traffic.

The Lucknow-bound Tejas Express and Gomti Express were impacted for a short period due to the incident, officials said. Police said a white car bearing a Kanpur registration number was found parked about 200 metres from the spot towards Dewarakala village.

Documents and a mobile phone recovered from the vehicle confirmed that it belonged to Yash Gupta.

Based on the vehicle registration details, the family members were informed and an investigation was initiated, police said.

## BJP slams Omar's pitch for artificial snow in Gulmarg

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
SRINAGAR

THE state unit of the BJP on Tuesday slammed Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah over his artificial snow pitch for Gulmarg, saying the government has "failed" to protect the environment.

BJP spokesperson Abhijeet Jasrotia attacked the government over what he termed "complete inaction" on environmental protection, and said Kashmir is witnessing warming at an alarming pace. "At a time when we need extensive greenery and forest protection, the chief minister talks about fake snow and artificial cooling. These are cosmetic measures and potentially dangerous for sports lovers and the fragile Himalayan ecosystem," Jasrotia said.

Abdullah on Monday advocated introducing artificial snow at Gulmarg

for a fillip to tourism and to promote the destination as a winter sports hub. However, the BJP alleged that during the past one-and-a-half years, the Omar Abdullah government has "failed" to safeguard the region's green cover. "Trees are being cut in the name of development, but there is no serious effort to restore what is being lost. We are gradually losing our natural cooling shield," he said. He accused the government of lacking a clear climate action strategy and prioritising "public relations exercises over environmental protection".

The BJP spokesperson said unregulated urban expansion, road widening projects and shrinking orchards were contributing to ecological imbalance. "Instead of taking decisive steps to protect Kashmir's forests and wetlands, the government appears content enjoying the hot seat," he added.

## 152 dead, nearly 21K structures damaged in 2025 J&K rain fury

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
JAMMU

THE rain fury in Jammu and Kashmir last year claimed 152 lives, injured 179 people, damaged nearly 21,000 structures -- mostly residential houses -- while 1515 livestock perished, official data revealed. Of the total fatalities, 151 were reported from the worst-hit Jammu division and one from Kashmir valley, the data compiled by the Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction

Department (DMRRRD) said.

Official sources said the dead included about 100 pilgrims who lost their lives in a cloudburst and a landslide enroute to Machail Mata shrine in Kishtwar district and Vaishno Devi shrine in Reasi district in August. A devastating cloudburst struck Chisoti village, the gateway to Machail Mata shrine in Kishtwar on August 14, killing 63 people and injuring scores of others, while 30 went missing. The incident was followed by

a landslide triggered by relentless rains on Vaishno Devi route on August 26 that left 32 dead and 20 others injured.

The government said compensation for loss of lives, injuries and house damages has been disbursed as per norms under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF).

The DMRRRD said that Rs 289.39 crore has been released under SDRF during FY 2025-26, including Rs 200.39 crore for Jammu division and Rs 89 crore for Kashmir division to sup-

port relief and restoration measures.

The Jammu division bore the brunt, with 3,304 houses fully damaged, 1,818 severely damaged and 11,622 partially damaged, besides destruction of 3,531 huts and cattle sheds, death of 1,461 livestock and loss of 1,035 tin sheds. In Kashmir division, 12 houses were fully damaged, 44 severely and 597 partially damaged, besides damage to 71 huts and cattle sheds and loss of 54 livestock, the government said.

## Sambhal temple-mosque row: Court sets March 24 for hearing

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
SAMBHAL

A court in Chandausi on Tuesday fixed March 24 as the next date of hearing in the ongoing Shahi Jama Masjid-Harihar Temple dispute. The matter came up before Civil Judge (Senior Division) Aditya Singh. However, the hearing was deferred in view of a stay order issued by the Supreme Court. Speaking to reporters, Shahi

Jama Masjid counsel Shakeel Ahmed Warsi said the case was listed for hearing on Tuesday but was postponed due to the apex court's stay. "Now the hearing will be held on March 24," he said.

The Muslim side has challenged the maintainability of the case in the Allahabad High Court. On May 19, the high court upheld the trial court's order permitting a court-monitored survey of



the site and directed that proceedings continue. Hindu side counsel Shri Gopal Sharma told reporters that since there is a stay order from the Supreme Court in this matter, the trial court cannot issue any orders, due to which the next date was given.

The dispute dates back to November 19 last year, when Hindu petitioners, including advocates Hari Shankar Jain and Vishnu Shankar Jain, filed a suit in the Sambhal district court claiming the mosque was built over a pre-existing temple.

## Foreign forces aiding Pak to push drugs, arms into Punjab: Guv

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HOSHIARPUR

PUNJAB Governor Gulab Chand Kataria on Tuesday alleged that certain foreign forces were helping Pakistan to smuggle drugs and weapons into Punjab across the border via drones, to destabilise the state and harm the youth.

Talking to media persons here, Kataria claimed Pakistan alone did not have the capacity to continuously push large consignments of drugs and arms across the

border, indicating possible involvement of larger foreign forces. He said drones were being used to smuggle narcotics and weapons to disturb peace in the state. "Our security forces are intercepting and destroying such consignments.

Anti-drone systems and other strict measures are being strengthened," he said. Kataria led the "People's Walk Against Drugs" from DAV College of Education in Hoshiarpur on Tuesday, and said Punjab could be made drug-free only if the campaign

**Vice-chancellors, heads of institutions, NGOs, religious and social organisations, students and citizens took part in large numbers and pledged support for a drug-free Punjab. Students presented cultural programmes and street plays highlighting the ill effects of drug abuse**

against narcotics turned into a mass movement. The padyatra passed through city markets and ended at the college premises.

Vice-chancellors, heads of institutions, NGOs, religious

and social organisations, students and citizens took part in large numbers and pledged support for a drug-free Punjab. Students presented cultural programmes and street plays highlighting

the ill effects of drug abuse. Kataria said the anti-drug campaign was not political but a people's movement. He stressed that educational institutions must be made drug-free on priority as the



future of the state depended on its youth.

Referring to the Punjab government's campaign titled 'War Against Drugs', he said its success required collective efforts by educational institutions, religious and social bodies, panchayats and citizens. On the recent deaths of two police personnel at a checkpoint in Gurdaspur district, the governor said the matter was under investigation and it would be premature to draw conclusions, though drug trafficking could not be ruled out.