

Uttarakhand rains

7 districts on 'Red alert'; traffic at 107 routes disrupted

HANS NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN

CONTINUOUS rainfall over the past 24 hours across Uttarakhand has raised river water levels and triggered landslides in hilly areas, disrupting traffic on 107 routes across the state. The Meteorological Department has issued a 'Red Alert' for very heavy rainfall in seven districts, including Dehradun, and an 'Orange Alert' for the remaining districts.

Amid warnings of the heavy rainfall, the administration has been instructed

to remain alert and exercise caution. Additionally, schools for Classes 1 to 12 remained closed in four districts, including Dehradun, due to the rain. Heavy to very heavy rainfall was recorded at several locations across both the Garhwal and Kumaon regions of the state over the last 24 hours.

According to official data, Kashipur recorded the highest rainfall at 206 mm, followed by Jaspur 190 mm, Laksar 180 mm, Kotdwar 160 mm, Haridwar 132.9 mm, Roorkee 126.2 mm, Betalghat 118.5 mm, Tehri 115.2 mm,

According to the State Emergency Operation Centre, landslides and rockfalls in several mountainous areas amid rainfall disrupted traffic on 107 routes across the state, including nine state highways and one Border Roads Organisation road

Roshanabad 115 mm, Nainital 107.5 mm, and Narendra Nagar 105 mm. Additionally, Dhanaulti recorded 100 mm of rainfall, Devprayag 98.6 mm, Pauri 93 mm, Rannikhet 92.3 mm, Tehri 79.4 mm, Jolly Grant 76.4 mm, Dehradun 70.8 mm, Mussoorie 70.1 mm, Rishikesh 64.4 mm, Almora 63 mm, and Rudrapur 50.4 mm. Mod-

erate rainfall was recorded in other areas as well. According to the State Emergency Operation Centre (SEOC), landslides and rockfalls in several mountainous areas amid rainfall disrupted traffic on 107 routes across the state, including nine state highways and one Border Roads Organisation (BRO) road. Information from the SEOC

indicates that an old, unoccupied house in the Tehri district's Kaddukhal area was damaged after being struck by a landslide on Wednesday evening. However, the administration had already evacuated two restaurants and some shanties located in the potential danger zone as a precautionary measure. Due to the rains, the River Ganga, Yamuna, and their tributaries are in spate, with water levels rising at several locations.

Data provided by the SEOC, citing the Central Water Commission, shows rising water levels in the Alakan-

da (at Srinagar), Pindar (at Karnaprayag), Ganga (at Devprayag and Rishikesh), Kali (at Dharchula), Saryu (at Pithoragarh), and Gauri (at Jauljibi) rivers.

The rivers are currently flowing below the danger mark.

The Dehradun-based Meteorological Centre has issued a 'Red Alert' for seven districts -- Dehradun, Tehri, Pauri, Haridwar, Udhampur Singh Nagar, Nainital, and Champawat -- predicting heavy to very heavy rainfall at some places and extremely heavy rainfall in isolated areas.



10K Pb drug addicts granted immunity from prosecution

HANS NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH

UNDER the AAP government's 'Yudh Nashean Viruddh' campaign launched in March 2025, 10,656 drug addicts have so far been granted immunity from prosecution under Section 64A of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. Instead of being prosecuted for consuming illegal drugs or possessing small quantities for personal use, they have been admitted to government-run de-addiction and rehabilitation centres for treatment and recovery, an official statement issued here on Thursday said.

The Punjab Police registered 51,516 FIRs under the NDPS Act and arrested 67,519 persons from March 1, 2025, to July 6, 2026. During the same time, over 10,000 people were given immunity from prosecution, reflecting the force's

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dual approach of curbing the supply of drugs in Punjab and connecting people in need of health intervention with the state facilities, it said.

"This compassionate view of the state reflects its understanding that individuals suffering from substance abuse need rehabilitation and treatment rather than punishment. It is, in effect, also a proof that Section 64A of the NDPS Act is being used as intended by the state," the statement said. "The provision grants immunity from prosecution to drug addicts who voluntarily



undergo de-addiction treatment, allowing them to avoid the punishment otherwise prescribed under relevant sections of the Act," it added.

Medical professionals assess each beneficiary and prepare an individualised treatment plan that includes detoxification, psychiatric care, counselling, behavioural therapy,

and relapse prevention, it said. Given the recent success of this programme, in the days to come, the police will continue to connect more victims to de-addiction and rehabilitation centres.

Director General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav said, "The fight against drugs is not only about arresting peddlers

but also about giving every person trapped in addiction a fair chance to recover.

"We as a police force remain committed to supporting every effort that combines strict enforcement with compassion to ensure the state gets rid of drug addiction as early as possible for the better future of our youth," he said.

Sukhu: New industrial policy to promote ease of doing business

HANS NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA

THE Himachal Pradesh government is in the final stages of formulating a new industrial policy which will be notified shortly, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said.

Chairing a review meeting of the Industries Department on Wednesday evening, he said that the new policy would play a significant role in attracting investment to the state, creating employment opportunities for youth and further improving the ease of doing business in Himachal Pradesh, a statement issued here on Thursday said.

He added that consultations with all stakeholders are being held to ensure the policy is comprehensive and industry-friendly. The state government is also strengthening the single-window clearance system to facilitate investments,



he added. Sukhu said the government is simplifying rules and procedures under the ease of doing business initiative so that industrialists can establish and operate their enterprises with greater ease. Several policy initiatives and legal reforms have already been undertaken in this direction during the last three and a half years.

The Chief Minister also

reviewed the progress of the Bulk Drug Park at Una and the Unity Mall being constructed at Dharamshala and directed officers to expedite both projects. He said reputed companies from across the country should be invited to invest in the Bulk Drug Park. He added that the Rs 2,071 crore project would generate substantial employment opportunities for the youth.

Opposition 'fond of graveyards': Yogi

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BANDA

UTTAR Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday accused the SP and the Congress of insulting Sanatan traditions and opposing the development of major Hindu religious sites like the Ayodhya Ram temple, saying they were "fond of graveyards". Some political parties have made it their "sole objective" to demean Hindu traditions and Sanatan Dharma and don't want India to emerge as a prosperous and developed nation, he said addressing a public gathering here after inaugurating and laying foundation stone of 229 development projects costing Rs 710 crore in Banda and Baberu assembly constituencies and distribution of appointment letters. Targeting the previous SP government, Adityanath alleged that funds meant for heritage conservation were utilised differently during its tenure. "The difference is that after the BJP came to power, the money is being spent on the development and beautification of temples. During the



Samajwadi Party government, the same funds were spent on building boundary walls of graveyards," he claimed. The chief minister further alleged that the opposition SP and Congress opposed the development of religious sites because of their political approach. "They are fond of graveyards, and that is why they oppose the development of the Ram Temple, Kashi Vishwanath Dham, Vindhyavasini Dham, Naimisharanya and Chitrakoot Dham. They also oppose the efforts of public representatives towards the development of these places," he said. "There are people who insult our heritage. Some have made it the sole purpose of their lives to insult Hindu traditions and Sanatan Dharma. They do not want to see India become prosperous and developed," the chief minister said.

Action will be taken in Ram temple donation theft case: UP BJP chief

HANS NEWS SERVICE
MIRZAPUR

UTTAR Pradesh BJP president Pankaj Chaudhary on Thursday described the alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ram temple in Ayodhya as a "very unfortunate" incident, and said strict action would be taken against all those found involved. Talking to reporters during his one-day visit to Mirzapur, Chaudhary said both state and central governments are ensuring that the matter is investigated thoroughly.

"We consider this a very unfortunate incident and are deeply saddened by it. Whoever is found involved will face strict action," he said. Taking a swipe at Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi and Samajwa-



di Party president Akhilesh Yadav over their criticism, Chaudhary said, "What Rahul Gandhi or Akhilesh Yadav say is their concern. Those who never cared for Lord Ram and those under whose rule Ram devotees were fired upon are now talking about Lord Ram. The people of the country understand them well."

Responding to questions over the Opposition raising doubts about the Special In-

vestigation Team (SIT) probe, the BJP leader said the Opposition has a habit of questioning constitutional institutions. "They even question the Election Commission and courts. The SIT investigation is underway and nobody involved will be spared," he said.

Earlier in the day, Chaudhary offered prayers at the Vindhyavasini temple in Vindhyachal before proceeding to the BJP office for a press conference. Asked whether the BJP, which had taken credit for the construction of the Ram temple, should also accept the responsibility for the alleged embezzlement of donations at the temple, Chaudhary said a trust had been constituted after the temple's construction and it was responsible for overseeing its affairs.

U'khand is now country's sixth fully literate state

HANS NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN

UTTARAKHAND on Wednesday became the country's sixth fully literate state under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the 'ULLAS' (Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society) programme, officials said.

The state achieved the significant milestone after meeting the prescribed adult literacy benchmarks set by the Department of School Education and Literacy under the Union Ministry of Education, they said. Following this, Uttarakhand Governor Lieutenant General (Retd.) Gurmeet Singh approved the proposal declaring the state fully literate. Before Uttarakhand, five other states - Mizoram, Goa, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh, and Sikkim - had already achieved full literacy status. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami described the achievement as a "milestone" for the state. He said the active participation of the people, along with the government's sustained ef-



orts, played a key role in achieving this feat. Congratulating the people of the state, Dhami said, "Such collective efforts will help in realizing the goal of a 'Viksit Bharat' (Developed India) by 2047. Furthermore, the government will continue to work with full commitment to ensure that digital literacy, financial literacy, continuing education, and life skills reach every citizen." The state cabinet had approved the proposal to declare Uttarakhand fully literate on June 19. According to officials, Uttarakhand's literacy rate currently stands at over 98 percent.

2 die after family of 4 consumes poison over monetary dispute

HANS NEWS SERVICE
PATIALA

TWO members of a family died while two others are battling for their life as they allegedly consumed poison

due to a domestic dispute linked to financial matters, police said on Thursday.

The deceased were identified as Vikas Batish (45), a private bank employee, and his daughter Khushi Batish

(13). His wife Tamanna Batish (43) and son Kanav Batish (11) remain admitted in hospital and are said to be in critical condition.

According to police, the incident took place at the

family's residence in Officers Colony on Wednesday night. Soon after allegedly consuming the poisonous substance, all four family members fell ill and were rushed to Rajindra Hospi-

tal for treatment by Vikas's in-laws. Despite medical efforts, Vikas Batish and his daughter Khushi Batish succumbed during treatment, while doctors continue to monitor the condition of

Tamanna Batish and Kanav Batish. Deputy SP City-1 Sanjeev Singla said that preliminary investigations suggest a domestic dispute over financial transactions may have led to the incident.

Punjab Congress buzz

Will meet Baghel, present our views: Pargat Singh

HANS NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH

SENIOR Congress leader Pargat Singh on Thursday said he and other party leaders would meet Punjab in-charge Bhupesh Baghel to present their views, days after the latter began his five-day visit to the state, even as several leaders considered close to former chief minister Charanjit Singh Channi are yet to meet him.

Pargat Singh and senior leader and MP Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa asserted that the Congress was "united and strong", saying the party's larger objective was to return to power after the 2027 Assembly polls.

Pargat Singh, however, acknowledged that some "differences of opinion" existed and said these would be conveyed to Baghel. "One or two (leaders) have been authorised to talk. Baghel is our in-charge and the meet-

Pargat Singh and senior leader and MP Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa asserted that the Congress was united and strong, saying the party's larger objective was to return to power after the 2027 Assembly polls

ing will take place with him. Sukhjinder Randhawa ji will fix the meeting time with him," he said. Earlier in the day, senior Congress leader and MLA Rana Gurjit Singh dismissed reports of factionalism, asserting that no one was above the party high command. "No one is

above the high command," Singh told reporters here when asked about Channi and senior leaders, including himself, Randhawa, Bharat Bhushan Ashu, and some others, who are yet to meet Baghel. On Thursday, Channi, Randhawa, Pargat Singh, Ashu, and Gurkirat

Singh met at MLA Rana Gurjit's residence here. However, Rana said they had all come to meet him on a civic poll-related issue in Kapurthala.

Later, Pargat, Randhawa, and Rana briefly interacted with the media. Baghel has been holding a series of meetings here with party leaders in the run-up to the 2027 polls after his arrival here on Monday on a five-day visit. On July 1, the Congress announced

that Amrinder Singh Raja Warring would continue as the Punjab unit president and appointed Channi as chairperson of the campaign committee. Several senior leaders held a meeting in Mohali in Channi's presence on Monday, days after several incumbent and former MLAs threw their weight behind him to be reconsidered for the state unit chief's post. Replying to a question, Rana Gurjit tried to portray that "All is



Well" in Punjab Congress. When asked whether the perceived deadlock in

the party would end, he replied, "Where is the deadlock? All is well."