



ITBP jawans enter a house through the roof to rescue victims from where some locals were trapped in Uttarakashi at Uttarakhand on Wednesday. (UNI)

## Mass cremation begins, 3500 yet to be evacuated

GAUCHAR/GUPTKASHI, June 26:

With the weather clearing a bit and a threat of epidemic looming large, mass cremation of bodies of people killed in the rain fury in Uttarakhand finally began in Kedarnath today, even as 3,500 people waited to be rescued 11 days after the disaster.

As 1,000 more stranded people were evacuated from Badrinath and Harshil sectors by air and road routes in rain and fog, IAF Chief Air Chief Marshal N A K Browne on a morale boosting mission to Uttarakhand after the IAF chopper crash pledged to continue with rescue efforts and hopes to wrap it up in the next few days.

"The cremation of bodies in Kedarnath which was being put off again and again for the past two days due to bad weather was finally taken up this afternoon," IAS officer Ravinath Raman told reporters from Guptkashi. The temple town of Kedarnath was the epicentre of destruction.

However, the number of bodies cremated were not immediately known.

Around 3,500 people are still waiting to be evacuated from Harshil and Badrinath areas, an Army release said. Around one lakh stranded people have been rescued so far since the disaster struck the hill state on June 15.

Browne said if the IAF, which is part of the multi-agency operations that also included the Army, ITBP and NDMA, got three to four days of good weather, it will be able to complete its mission.

"If the weather starts improving by Friday or so, then by Monday, Tuesday we should have all this (task) finished," he said. "We are over the hill", he told reporters in Gauchar, the forward base for the rescue

choppers. "The operations are going to continue. In fact, most of the work has already been done. It is now a question of getting the people out from Badrinath and the Harshil sector," he said, adding, "Our rotors will not stop churning. That means, we will continue with the job till we get the people out."

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Vijay Bahuguna said people stranded in Harshil and Badrinath areas would be rescued in the next two days if the weather remains conducive to flights and all steps were being taken to prevent epidemic outbreak in the flood-affected regions.

Vice Chairman of NDMA M Sashidhar Reddy said there is high possibility of the death toll climbing up. "There are 10 feet high debris in Kedarnath and we fear that several bodies are trapped," he said.

Reddy also said that nearly 350 people continue to remain untraceable, raising fears that all of them are dead.

According to official figures, so far 822 people lost their lives following the natural disaster in Uttarakhand.

DGP Satyavrat Bansal said disposal of all the bodies at Kedarnath was an onerous task with a large number of bodies lying underneath tonnes of debris and extricating them would not be easy as heavy equipment like JCBs will be needed to be transported to the high altitude shrine for the purpose.

State minister Harak Singh Rawat also said clearing the shrine area of the debris and the bodies would not be easy.

Till now, Matli, Bhatwari, Maneri have been fully evacuated. In Badrinath, one MI-17 and three Civil Helicopters are in operation for evacuations. More choppers are being kept on stand

by but due to inclement weather conditions, rescue operations are being hampered.

With an overcast sky and low visibility at places not coming in the way of air rescue operations, Browne said he was in Uttarakhand to pep up the morale of personnel engaged in rescue operations following the rescue chopper's mishap in which all the 20 personnel on board including the five-member air force crew perished.

Guptkashi SDM Laxmi Raj Chauhan said though there was a slight rainfall this afternoon, there was no fresh landslide in the area.

Meanwhile, seeking to provide help to the families of people stranded in Uttarakhand, Army's Central Command today launched a website to give updates on location-wise data of people stranded at various places, helpline numbers and the list of rescued persons in the State.

"The site-- suryahopes.in, gives minute-to-minute update on Army operations across Uttarakhand, location-wise data of people stranded at various places, list of rescued persons, helpline numbers, latest news about flood victims and google sites giving information on flood-affected people," an Army release said here.

The website is being updated as and when the information is available. The data link is also duplicated on www.Indianarmy.gov.in, it said.

Meanwhile, Army Engineers moved swiftly and constructed a steel bridge across Alankanda at Lambagar. The engineers constructed the bridge throughout the night in inclement weather conditions to ensure that it was ready for use by pilgrims evacuating by foot from Badrinath. (PTI)

## JK ITBP Officer killed in rescue operations

Excelsior Correspondent

KATHUA, June 26: The body of Sub Inspector Bhim Singh, son of Padam Singh of Bobiyani village Hiranagar in Kathua district who was among the 20 deceased personnel who were present on board the IAF rescue chopper

which crashed in Kedarnath Ghati on Monday will be brought to his native village tomorrow.

His cremation will also be held tomorrow. Bhim Singh who was serving as Sub Inspector ITBP had been recently sent on deputation to the National Disaster Relief Force and was stationed at Noida when he was rushed to take part in the rescue operations in Uttarakhand.

One of the five brothers who are serving in ITBP Bhim Singh was jovial in nature and always gave preference to his duty over his personnel interests.

One of his elder brother,

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## Various delegations meet PM

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, June 26: Various delegations of political parties and trade bodies met Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh during his visit to the State here since last evening.

CPI (M) State Secretary and MLA Kulgam Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami during his meeting with the Prime Minister urged upon him to take serious measures for broadening of

Prime Minister and presented a memorandum of demands to him.

A statement of the hotel body said the Prime Minister listened to demands of the delegation with keen interest and enquired about the difficulties faced by the tourism industry. Singh assured that he will examine the issues raised by the delegation in the memorandum.

Besides, KHAROF president Faiz Bakshi, former president, G.M. Dug, senior vice president, Mirza Manzoor Ali, junior vice president, Javed Burza and secretary general, Manzoor Sidiq were part of the delegation.

Sanjay Saraf, national president of Lok Janashakti Party also met the Prime Minister and presented a memorandum of demands to him. He raised several issues with the PM including revocation of AFSPA and Temple Bill.

President of Janta Dal United J&K Chapter, Gulam Qadir Wani with eight delegates of the party met with Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh and handed over to him a memorandum with five points demand of the State and urged him to look personally into the matter.

The delegation also apprised the PM that the deserving people are not getting the benefit of Centrally sponsored schemes.

They requested Dr Singh to return power projects of Bagliar and Reasi back to the State, which have the potential to change the economic condition of the State.

Assistance to people of earthquake hit Doda, Baderwah and Kishtwar was also demanded by the delegation.

The issue of unemployment which has created a mess of terrorism in the State, also came up in the discussion.

Singh assured the delegates that all the issues will be taken care of to help the common masses get rid of unemployment, terrorism and corruption.

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political process in Kashmir.

"The leadership cannot afford to put the political issues on the back burner," the statement quoting him said.

He asked the PM for seizing the latest opportunities and carry forward the stalled Indo-Pak dialogue regarding improvement in the relations, people to people contact, cross LoC trade and relaxation in visa regulations, the statement added.

Tarigami demanded handing over of some JK-based power projects to the state so that the energy crisis detrimental to the development of the state could be overcome. He also expressed his concern over governance and said that vast improvement is required to make it effective, transparent and accountable, the statement further said.

Another delegation comprising members of Kashmir Hotel and Restaurant Owners Federation (KHAROF) led by its president Faiz Bakshi met the



Minister for Law, Mir Saifullah chairing a committee meeting at Srinagar on Wednesday.

## Mir discusses list of amendments to LA Bill for management of Hindu Shrines

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, June 26: A meeting of Select Committee of Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly was held under the chairmanship of Minister for Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs, Mir Saifullah here today.

Threadbare discussion was held on the list of amendments to "A Bill to provide for the better management, protection, administration and governance of Kashmiri Hindu Shrines and Religious places in the

State and for matters connected therewith and incidental thereto (L.A. Bill 11 of 2009)".

Legislators, Prof Chaman Lal Gupta, Dr. Mustafa Kamaal, Hakim Mohammad Yasin, M. Y. Tarigami and Abdul Rehman Veeri gave their valuable suggestions in this regard.

Among others, Secretary Assembly M. Ramzan, Secretary Revenue, Vinod Koul, Secretary Law, Farhat Tasneem and other senior officers were present in the meeting.

## JKNPP organizes protest dharna

Excelsior Correspondent

KISHTWAR, June 26: Demanding re-organization of the State and constitution of Delimitation Commission, Jammu and Kashmir National Panthers Party organized protest dharna in front of DC office Kishtwar.

The protest dharna was held under the leadership of JKNPP State president and MLA Balwant Singh Mankotia and joined by a number of Panther activists from different part of district Kishtwar.

While addressing the gathering, Mankotia accused the Congress of making false commitment with people of the State and alleged that the party did not

implement the election manifesto despite coming to power in Jammu and Kashmir. He said that earthquake victim of Kishtwar were having high hopes from Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh who failed to announce even single penny for them.

The JKNPP leader also demanded CBI inquiry in false encounter cases of Shiv Kumar Sharma alias Sonu who is presently lodged in Kishtwar Jail.

Anil Parihar, provincial general secretary of JKNPP, Rajinder Wazir, Ram Krishan Sharma, Shahid Hussain, Advocate Underjeet Charak, Sunil Proach, Sanjay Sharma and others also spoke on the occasion.



Army officers paying tributes to eight martyred soldiers at Chinar Corps Headquarters Srinagar on Wednesday.

## Chinar Corps pays tributes to martyrs

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, June 26: Wreath laying ceremony was held at Chinar Corps, Badami Bagh Cantonment here to pay tributes to the martyred soldiers who laid down their lives during the recent terrorist attack.

Lt Gen Gurmit Singh, Chinar Corps Commander and all ranks of Chinar Corps laid wreath as a mark of honour for the brave soldiers. As a special gesture Ashok Prasad, IPS, DGP J&K also attended the ceremony and laid wreath on behalf of the J&K Police.

On June 24, in a terrorist attack on the convoy of Army, eight soldiers had attained martyrdom. Among the martyrs were Hav Lalrohla from Aizwal Dist (Mizoram), LNK Z Lalringheta from Mamit Dist (Mizoram), Sep Pravin Das from Udalguri (Assam), Sep John Lalumi Vajphei from Churachandpur Dist (Manipur), Sep Moanung Sang from Mokokchung Dist (Nagaland), Signalman Yadaiah M from Mahbubnagar Dist (AP), Signalman Girdhari Prajapati from Balia Dist (UP) and Sep Adwaita Nandi from Bankura Dist.

Earlier, Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, UPA Chairperson Sonia Gandhi, Jammu and Kashmir Governor NN Vohra, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Union Health Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad had visited the Base Hospital at Badami Bagh Cantt, Srinagar to honour the martyrs personally. The PM had expressed that the country

is proud of what Army is doing in the service of the nation. Names of these martyrs will be engraved at the Chinar Corps Memorial and their contribution towards peace in the Kashmir Valley will become part of the history. Lt Gen Gurmit Singh while lauding

the brave soldiers said "My heart goes out to the families and relatives of the martyrs. May God bestow strength to bear the loss. Chinar Corps salutes them and their martyrdom will only strengthen our resolve to bring peace in Kashmir".

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## Murder over gambling Court awards life-imprisonment to three

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 26: Additional Sessions Judge Kikar Singh Parihar awarded life-imprisonment to Bhushan Kumar, Shanker Singh and Rakesh Kumar for murder of one Satish Kumar on the issue that Satish Kumar had won in the gambling.

According to the police case the father of the deceased had lodged a complaint in the Police Station that his son was missing. On this police lodged a missing report. While investigating the case, police interrogated one Ranjeet Singh who told that for the last 7-8 days during night deceased Satish Kumar, Shanker Singh and Bhushan Kumar gambled in one hired room along with 8 others and Satish Kumar often won the stake money. That on August 25, 2005 they again started gambling and Satish Kumar was continuously winning the stake money and Bhushan Kumar and Shanker Kumar were losing. That thereafter both the accused sent deceased to bring more liquor from a shop and in his absence Bhushan Kumar and Shanker Singh hatched a conspiracy and resolved to kill the deceased in

case the deceased continued his winning spree. That thereafter Satish Kumar came back and started gambling again. That when the Satish Kumar won the stake money, the accused Bhushan Kumar and Shanker Singh started quarrelling with the deceased and there was heated exchange also and in the meantime Bhushan Kumar caught Satish Kumar from his neck whereas Shankar Singh caught hold him from his legs and strangled the deceased to death and thereafter his dead body was packed in an empty bag and took the deceased to River Chenab. On this police registered a case u/s 302 RPC and after completion of investigation challan was presented in the Court.

In the 75 pages judgment, Additional Sessions Judge Kikar Singh Parihar after hearing Additional Public Prosecutor SR Manhas for the State whereas Advocates Intiaz Hussain Mir and Ajay Thakur for the accused persons and referred various judgments of the Supreme Court and High Court, held that prosecution has proved its case and awarded rigorous life-imprisonment and fine of Rs 10,000 to each.

## HC directs Sr AAG to file objection in bail application filed by SI, PSO

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 26: In a petition filed by Shiv Kumar Sharma alias Sonu Encounter Specialist and his PSO Mohd Ayub who was arrested by the police in FIR No 33/2013 P/S Thathri u/s 307 RPC, 3/4 Explosive Substance Act, 3/25/7/27 Arms Act, 3 Prevention and Suppression of Sabotages Act 1965 and also seeking direction to the respondents to pay the petitioner damages to the tune of Rs 50 lakh for their illegal detention without there being any legal remand.

When this bail application was taken up for hearing, senior Advocate Sunil Sethi submitted that for the purpose of adjudication of the matter in terms of Prevention and Suppression of Sabotages Act 1965, Justice Mansoor Ahmed Mir stands designated.

On this Justice Ali Mohd Magrey after hearing Sr. Adv Sunil Sethi with Adv Parimoksh Seth for the petitioners whereas Sr. AAG Gagan Basotra for the State and also going through the status report, directed Sr. AAG Gagan Basotra that he will file objections by tomorrow and directed Registry to list this matter before Justice Mansoor Ahmed Mir on June 29, 2013. The status report which was filed before the Court was resealed.

The workshop was attended by high ranking bureaucrats as well as industrialists of the State.

Robin Singh Mehta, Additional Commissioner in the Divisional Commissioner's Office Jammu, said that bureaucrats must know more about cross LoC trade. He said that in case of cross LoC tourism we first have to ensure peace and stability in the region and subsequently rest of the things would follow.

Anil Suri, president of the Bari

## Cross LoC investment: Roundtable workshop held in JU

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 26: To create awareness amongst industrialists regarding the investment opportunities available across LoC and identify such strategies which can help in creating confidence amongst industrialists and masses, a day-long roundtable workshop was held at Jammu University, here today.

The event was organized by the School of Hospitality & Tourism Management & Department of Economics, JU in collaboration with Conciliation Resources UK.

Dr Parikshat Singh Manhas Associate Professor, School of Hospitality and Tourism Management was the Coordinator of the workshop. Prof Deepak Raj Gupta, Director, SHTM and Dr Dipankar Sen Gupta from Department of Economics played a vital role in conducting this workshop.

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