

CM Omar reviews situation of Poonch, Rajouri after flash floods wreak havoc in twin districts

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS
JAMMU, JULY 19

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today chaired a high-level meeting at the Civil Secretariat, Jammu, to review the situation arising from incessant rainfall leading to flash floods in Poonch & Rajouri. The Chief Minister also assessed the preparedness of the administration to deal with any weather-related eventuality across Jammu & Kashmir.

The meeting comprehensively reviewed the prevailing weather situation, the impact of heavy rainfall, flash floods and landslides reported from different parts of Jammu and Kashmir, and the measures being undertaken by various departments to ensure public safety, restore essential services and provide timely relief to affected families.

At the outset, the Chief Minister expressed deep condolences to the families who lost their loved ones in flash floods and conveyed his sympathies to all those affected by the ongoing inclement weather. He said the Government stands firmly with every affected family and remains committed to providing all possible assistance for relief, rehabilitation and restoration.

Emphasising that protecting human lives remains the Government's foremost priority, the Chief Minister directed the administration to remain on high-alert and ensure swift and effective response to every emergency.

He instructed all Deputy Commissioners and field agencies to closely monitor vulnerable areas, particularly those prone to landslides, flash floods and inundation, while ensuring that rescue teams, machinery and essential services remain fully prepared to respond at short notice.

The Chief Minister was informed that rescue teams have already been kept on alert in rain-affected areas to respond to any eventuality. He stressed that every possible effort should be made to trace and retrieve missing persons so that affected families receive timely support and they are able to reconcile with the reality of unfortunate death of their loved ones.

Reviewing the availability of essential commodities across J&K, the Chief Minister directed the concerned departments to ensure uninterrupted supplies of food grains, medicines, drinking water and other essential items in every district. He also called for the expeditious restoration of roads, power supply, drinking water schemes and communication links wherever these have been disrupted due to heavy rains.

The Chief Minister was also informed that sufficient funds have been kept available to meet relief and rehabilitation requirements wherever necessary. He directed that there should be no delay in extending financial assistance and relief to affected families.

The meeting was informed that adequate stocks of medicines are



available across J&K while surveillance has been intensified to prevent any outbreak of water-borne or communicable diseases in the aftermath of heavy rains.

Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo emphasized the need for immediate rescue & relief measures, effective coordination between departments & agencies and furnishing of updated damage reports. He directed Divisional Commissioners to coordinate with Telecom companies for restoration of telecom services in the affected areas immediately.

Underscoring the importance of seamless coordination, the Chief Minister said that effective inter-departmental coordination is critical during such situations. He directed all departments, district administrations and field agencies to work in close coordination with one another and

maintain constant liaison with the Army, Border Roads Organisation (BRO), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and other agencies engaged in rescue and restoration efforts.

"Coordination cannot be emphasised enough," the Chief Minister said, directing all districts to keep their control rooms functional round the clock, maintain constant vigilance and ensure prompt dissemination of information to facilitate timely decision-making and response.

Reviewing the status of connectivity, the Chief Minister was informed that all major roads remain open, while clearance operations are underway to remove landslides and debris from affected road stretches. He directed the concerned agencies to expedite restoration works, with particular emphasis on restoring

electricity supply in Poonch district at the earliest.

To strengthen monitoring during the ongoing weather situation, the Chief Minister directed that, beginning today and till July 24, every district shall submit situation reports every six hours to the respective Divisional Commissioners, who will consolidate and forward the reports to Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation & Reconstruction (DMRRR). The department will compile the reports and circulate them to the offices of the Lieutenant Governor, the Chief Minister, the Chief Secretary and the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. He expressed hope that the reporting mechanism could be discontinued after July 24 if weather conditions improve.

Regarding educational institu-

tions, the Chief Minister noted that schools have already been closed till July 22. He directed the School Education Department to review the prevailing weather situation on July 22 and take an appropriate decision regarding opening of schools in both the Summer and Winter Zones, The Chief Minister also announced that, subject to the prevailing situation, Ministers will begin field visits from tomorrow to personally assess the ground situation, monitor relief operations and ensure that all necessary assistance reaches affected people without delay.

During the meeting, Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, briefed the Chief Minister on the damage caused by heavy rains in Rajouri and deaths in Poonch districts and outlined the ongoing rescue, relief and rehabilitation measures being undertaken by the administration. Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, apprised the meeting about the prevailing monsoon situation in the Kashmir Division, preparedness for weather-related emergencies, arrangements for the ongoing Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra 2026 and other precautionary measures being taken to tackle any emerging situation.

Deputy Commissioners of Poonch, Rajouri and Kishtwar also briefed the Chief Minister on the damage reported in their respective districts and the actions initiated by the district administrations to address the situation.

Commissioners of the Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC)

and Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) informed the meeting that men, machinery and emergency response equipment have been kept on standby to deal with any exigency arising from the ongoing spell of inclement weather.

The meeting was attended online from the Resident Commissioner's Office, New Delhi, by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, Ministers Sakina Itoo, Javed Ahmad Rana and Satish Kumar Sharma, besides Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani. The meeting was also attended by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Financial Commissioners, Administrative Secretaries of key departments, Additional Chief Secretary to the CM, ADGP Civil Defence & SDRF, Divisional Commissioners of Jammu and Kashmir, Inspector General of Police (Traffic), Deputy Commissioners, Chief Engineers of Irrigation and Flood Control, senior officials of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), JKPCCL, JAKEDA, NBCC, telecom service providers including Jio and Airtel who attended the meeting online along with senior officers from all concerned departments and agencies.

The Chief Minister reiterated that the Government is closely monitoring the evolving situation and will continue to take all necessary measures to safeguard lives, minimise damage and ensure timely relief and rehabilitation for all those affected by flash floods and the ongoing spell of adverse weather across J&K.

Iran says missile attack targets outskirts of Abadan, reports no casualties

TEHRAN [IRAN], JULY 19: Iranian authorities said an area on the outskirts of Abadan in Khuzestan province was hit in a missile attack on Sunday, according to Iranian state broadcaster IRIB.<

Valiullah Hayati, Deputy Security and Police Officer of the Khuzestan Governorate, said, "A few minutes ago, an area outside the city limits and on the outskirts of Abadan was attacked with missiles by the terrorist enemy of America."

He said the attack "did not result in any casualties." Hayati added that further information would be announced later.

The allegations of strikes come as Iran on Sunday claimed that the "terrorist and criminal regime" of the US has attacked the under-construction Darkhovin nuclear power plant in Khuzestan province, according to the state broadcaster IRIB.

In a statement carried out by IRIB, the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran (AEOI) alleged that the strike took place at around 3:39 am (local time) on Sunday. GeographicReference

The terrorist and criminal regime of the US, which has no nature other than bullying and lawlessness, in an aggressive and brutal act contrary to international law, attacked the Darkhovin power plant site under construction - one of the symbols of the dignity and scientific self-sufficiency of the Iranian nation - with a number of projectiles," AEOI said.

The strike comes as US President Donald Trump said that he "couldn't care less" about Iran's decision to stop abiding by the US-



Iran memorandum of understanding (MoU), reiterating that Washington's priority remains preventing Tehran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, Al Jazeera reported.

Speaking in a brief phone interview with US cable network NewsNation, Trump was asked about Tehran's announcement that it would no longer adhere to the interim agreement signed with the United States last month.

"I couldn't care less," Trump said.

He added that the war's primary objective is "never allowing Iran to have a nuclear weapon."

The MoU was signed between Washington and Tehran in mid-June to end the war launched by the US and Israel in February.

The latest exchange of deadly strikes began amid disagreements over the management of the Strait of Hormuz.

According to the latest updates, Iran's Islamic

Revolutionary Guard Corps says it has intercepted and destroyed a US MQ-9 drone in Ahvaz, a city in the Khuzestan region that borders Iraq, state-run Press TV reported.

Earlier on Sunday, Iran's Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei called the United States "Great Satan" and said it was no longer capable of maintaining a "trouble-free, domineering presence" across West Asia.

In a written communication addressed to the citizens of Iraq on Sunday, Khamenei, who was selected in March to succeed his father, Ali Khamenei, following his killing on February 28 in the US-Israel strikes, stated, "The Great Satan--the criminal US--has now realised that the continuation of its trouble-free, domineering presence in the region is nothing but a naive fantasy." GeographicReference Pointing to the large crowds of mourners who

gathered across Iran and Iraq for the funeral of his father, Khamenei remarked that the events had "opened a new chapter of awakening and active engagement to alter the equations that had been designed by the Arrogant Powers."

He further remarked, "Undoubtedly, the leaders of Global Arrogance witnessed the magnificent scenes of this massive gathering in Iraq with trepidation, seeing how the vast resources they've invested to undermine relations between the two nations have proved entirely futile and ineffective."

The development comes amid a sharp escalation in regional hostilities, with US Central Command (CENTCOM) carrying out a series of military operations targeting Iranian assets. The strikes mark an "eight consecutive night" of kinetic actions against Tehran-backed facilities in the region.

TEHRAN, JULY 19 : Iranian Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei "is not in Iran," an Israeli security source cited by Saudi news outlet al-Hadath stated pm on Sunday.

Khamenei, who assumed the position of Iran's Supreme leader shortly after his father was killed in joint US-Israeli military strikes on February 28, has not made any public appearances and has communicated exclusively through written statements since taking office.

According to the source cited by al-Hadath, Khamenei's official messages are authored by the newly appointed Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) chief Ahmad Vahidi alongside other high-ranking members of the IRGC.

"Iran's internal divisions are deep and threaten the existence of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps," the Israeli security source was quoted as saying.

Furthermore, the Israeli source stated that the United States does not want Israel to participate in retaliatory strikes against Iran, even in the event that Tehran launches an attack on Israeli territory.

These severe internal fractures are concurrently playing out on the streets of Tehran.

Amidst ongoing military escalations between the United States and Iran, reports indicate that a major internal power struggle has broken out in Tehran, separating ultra-hardline factions from the country's more moderate public administration.

According to a CNN report, radical elements within the West Asian nation are charging the gov-



erning leadership with executing a "soft coup" following the conclusion of a 14-point diplomatic agreement with the US.

This political volatility directly erupted into public hostility during the funeral of Iran's former Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, the country's top diplomat who spearheaded the ceasefire negotiations with the Trump administration, was forced to flee the procession alongside his team after being targeted with rocks by an angry mob.

Crowds of mourners took over the site, shouting "death to the compromiser" and branding officials "traitorous sellouts" to express their rejection of the diplomatic pact.

The explicit hostility directed at high-ranking state figures exposed deep fractures within Iran's political core, with CNN reporting that the hardline factions believe the government effectively surrendered by signing an accord that violates the explicit

mandates of the current Supreme Leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, rather than launching strikes to avenge the late leader's killing.

Fuelled by this discontent, radical elements further charged the visible leadership, who are managing state affairs while the supreme leader remains out of public view, with conspiring to centralise administrative power by sidelining parliament.

"Warning to the people of Iran: Is a coup on the way?" Mahmoud Nabavian, an outspoken hardline lawmaker, questioned on X days prior to the funeral.

Following the ceremonies, he posted, "In these moments of farewell to the martyred Imam (Khamenei), we raise the banner of vengeance for his blood and stand firm against the coup."

Consequently, in the wake of Mojtaba Khamenei's prolonged absence, chief negotiator Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, President Masoud Pezeshkian, and Araghchi have become the most

prominent figures steering post-war Iran, leaving hardliners increasingly isolated and resentful of the administration.

"Mojtaba's continued absence means that they don't have access to him and also that Ghalibaf and allies are effectively in charge of the country... the ultra-hardliners have thus accused Ghalibaf and Pezeshkian of plotting a 'coup' against Mojtaba," Arash Azizi, a US-based Iran researcher, stated to CNN.

Bypassed by this shifting power dynamic, the ultra-conservative elements utilised the multi-day funeral to broadcast demands for military retaliation against Washington and to openly declare their refusal to accept any agreement brokered with the Trump administration.

Following recent cross-border military strikes between the two nations those demands appear to be materialising.

Concurrently, hardliners accuse the visible leadership of systematically undermining traditional state bodies to sustain their control.

"They are trying to elevate the role of the Supreme Council for National Security while diminishing the role of the supreme leader and parliament," hardline parliamentarian Kamran Ghazanfari asserted in a video address earlier this month, referencing the body currently overseeing sensitive wartime operations.

"This is the political coup they have designed and are carrying out step by step."

Ultimately, as external hostilities with the United States persist, Iran continues to face severe challenges in maintaining internal domestic cohesion.

"Republicans should add Iran to Russian Sanctions Bill": Donald Trump

WASHINGTON, JULY 19: US President Donald Trump on Sunday backed adding Iran to a proposed Russia sanctions bill, saying Republicans should ex-

pand the legislation to include Tehran.

"Republicans should add Iran to the Russian Sanctions Bill. That's what Lindsey wanted to

do, and it was going to happen. Important!!!" Trump said in a post on Truth Social.

Earlier he had said that he "couldn't care less" about Iran's

decision to stop abiding by the US-Iran memorandum of understanding (MoU), reiterating that Washington's priority remains preventing Tehran from

acquiring a nuclear weapon, Al Jazeera reported.

Trump's Truth Social Post referred to the 'Sanctioning Russia Act', a legislation championed

by the late US Senator Lindsey Graham. A bipartisan group of more than 60 US senators on Thursday (local time) introduced revised legislation to im-

pose sweeping sanctions on Russia and its supporters, replacing the earlier proposal for blanket tariffs with targeted measures aimed at the world's