

DISASTERS UPDATE

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TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

National

Two medium intensity earthquakes hit Himachal Pradesh

PTI, August 27, 2016 10:04 IST

Two medium intensity earthquakes, epicentred in the Kullu region of Himachal Pradesh jolted the Himalayan State on Saturday in a span of nearly 20 minutes.

According to the National Centre of Seismology, a unit of Ministry of Earth Sciences, the first quake measuring 4.6 on Richter scale occurred at 6.44 a.m. at a depth of 10 km.

The second quake measured 4.3 at Richter scale occurred at 7.05 a.m. at the same depth.

The epicentre of both the quakes was in Kullu, it said.

There were no immediate reports of loss life or damage to property.

The Himalayan belt of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh are earthquake-prone regions.

Two staff killed in Murshidabad hospital fire

The Hindu, August 27, 2016 15:32 IST

Two staff of the Murshidabad Medical College and Hospital in West Bengal were killed in a fire that broke out on the premises on Saturday. The fire triggered panic among hundreds of patients and the hospital staff.

Smoke engulfed the entire hospital and screams of patients rent the air. Panic-stricken patients ran for their safety, creating a near stampede.

Newborns in the Sick Newborn Care Unit (SNCU) were brought out of the hospital premises and kept on the lawns as their parents and hospital staff attended to them.

According to the authorities, the two nursing staff died due to suffocation and asphyxiation.

Initial reports suggested that the main exit gate of emergency was locked and the patients and hospital staff could not come out of the building after the fire broke out.

"No patients have sustained injury. We are trying to bring back the newborns in SNCU," R S Shukla, principal secretary, Health Department, told presspersons.

A team from the department had been sent to the hospital and the situation would soon be brought under control, he said.

Eyewitnesses said there was virtually no disaster management apparatus present in the hospital.

Five of family die in cloudburst, deaf and mute boy survives

The Hindu, August 27, 2016 08:29 IST

Five members of a Nepali family were washed away in a cloudburst at Gawaldi village here in the early hours of Friday, even as a 12-year-old deaf and mute boy from the household miraculously escaped the calamity.

The 'kutchra' house of the family was washed away in the cloudburst that occurred at a hilltop in Bandrali village, Naresh Chauhan, president of the Naren Panchayat, said.

"The bodies of all five victims have been recovered with the help of the local people and one 12-year-old physically challenged boy survived," Deputy Commissioner, Shimla, Rohan Chand Thakur said.

The deceased include Lachhi Ram, his wife and three of their children.

Mr. Chauhan said despite heavy rain and darkness, the locals helped recover the bodies from the debris.

The cloudburst damaged roads leading to Gawaldi village under the Naren Panchayat in Rampur area, about 150 km from Shimla. Apple orchards of some farmers were also washed away or damaged.

SDM Nishant Thakur and the DSP have rushed to the spot.

The bodies of the victims have been sent for post-mortem.

Why rain floods city: 59 of 63 bunds gone


TNN | Aug 27, 2016, 01.10 AM IST

Gurgaon: A week after NGT's August 19 direction, asking for a list of [bunds](#) (check dams) in the Gurgaon area, the authorities found a list of 63 bunds which had been published under a notification of the forest department in the Haryana Government Gazette, Legislative Supplement, 1972 (a copy is with TOI).


The bunds, located in and around the city, were created by the British to control seasonal floods in villages. They include bunds in Gwal Pahari, Ghata, Jharsa, Medawas, Fazilpur, Ghairatpur Bas, Naurangpur Manesar, Kasan, Ghamrauj, Raisina, Sohna, Dahina, Khol, Lakarpur, Badhkal, Dhauj, Ballabgarh, Dhulawat, Taru, Chaudaini, Palla, Khalitpur, Mau, Kotla, Bhond, Damdama, Gurgaon canals, Chakkarpur, Wazirabad, Manesar and Kameda, of lengths between 40ft and 1km.

According to an irrigation department official, of the 63, only four bunds (Ghata bund, Jharsa bund, Damdama canal bund and Gurgaon canal number 1) are in shape. The other 59 are in various stages of disrepair and ruin. Remains of only the ones in Wazirabad, Manesar, Dhauj, Kasan and Medawas can be seen now. All 59 were lost in the last 45 years.


STRATEGY TO STOP WATERLOGGING



Hero Honda Chowk



Badshapur drain



Ghata Bund

Map not to scale

The 63 check dams in the Aravalis were built during the British era. Some of them can be revived to help control the waterlogging problem

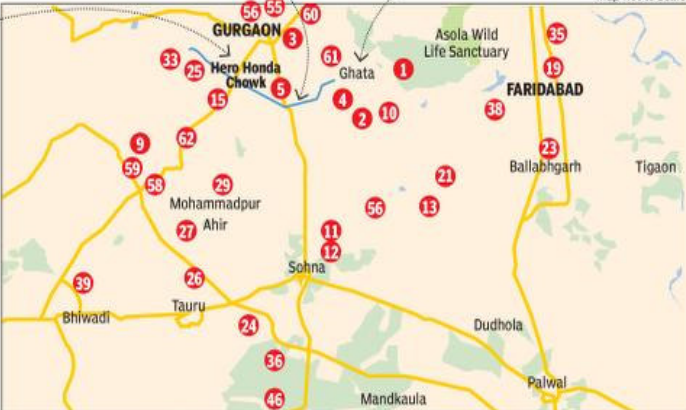
Built at a higher gradient, they will help control the amount of rainwater that flows into the city, with the excess collecting in ponds in the forest, thus also contributing in groundwater recharge

The Badshapur problem

The new sectors and Hero Honda Chowk have been carved out of the catchment area of Badshapur drain, making them the worst affected areas

Hero Honda Chowk has the double trouble of being in the natural alignment of the drain, and being at a lower gradient, because of which it faces flooding with the slightest rain

Authorities hope with the revival of the check dams, the flooding problem in these areas will also be contained



1. Gwal Pahari	9. Ghamrauj	17. Khol	24. Dhulawat	31. Chandaini	38. Akaira bund and escape	45. Ghata Shamsabad	52. Punchana canal number II
2. Ghata	10. Raisina	18. Lakarpur	25. Rehri	32. Chandaini canal	39. Mau	46. Rawa	53. Shamsabad
3. Jharsa	11. Sohna	19. Badkhal	26. Gogjaka	33. Phatka	40. Kotta	47. Gangocha	54. Damdama
4. Medawas	12. Sohna minor	20. Palipakahal	27. Sabras	34. NA*	41. Angina	48. Pinangwan	55. Gurgaon canal no 1
5. Fazilpur	13. Rithouj	21. Dhauj	28. T S Road embankment	35. Palla	42. Balauj	49. Shahchoka	56. Damdama canal
6. Ghairatpur	14. Bhalpa	22. Kule	29. Taru	36. Qutabgarh	43. Bhond	50. Shikrawa	57. Gurgaon
7. Naurangpur	15. Kherli Wala	23. Ballabgarh drain	30. Chandaini	37. Khalitpur	44. Righar	51. Laphuri cut	62. Manesar
8. Kasan	16. Dahjna						63. Kameda

*Prominent bunds have been marked. Place No. 34 not identified

"Most of these bunds now act as linear green belts. Many can't be traced, and those existing in parts don't get enough water due to natural drains getting blocked or concretised during urban development," said the irrigation department official, requesting anonymity.

M D Sinha, the conservator of forest (Gurgaon circle), said, "As per records from before 1958, available with the forest department, there were 118 bunds in Gurgaon, Faridabad, Mewat and surrounding areas. They used to play a major role in protecting the area from floods, and in recharging groundwater. Today, only 20% rainfall flows down to the city from the Aravali hills. The rest — 80% rainwater — falls on concrete surface and causes waterlogging due poor drainage, absence of bunds and blockages in natural drains. We need to protect whatever bunds are left. We should also have water recharge zones in each sector to prevent flooding, as well as to recharge groundwater." He added that on an average, 100mm rainfall on an area of 1sq km can save 10 crore litres of water.

Environmentalists highlighted the immediate need to revive ponds near as many bunds as possible, and declare them as 'zero construction zones'. "Submergence area of bunds on the upstream side should first be zoned as zero construction zone. Then, water holding capacity in ponds — generally located upstream — should be enhanced. Not only will this increase water holding capacity of the ponds, but also bring down load on Badshapur drain, and thus prevent water logging in the city," said Chetan Agarwal, a city-based environmental analyst.

Encephalitis toll crosses 200

TNN | Aug 27, 2016, 01.35 AM IST

Lucknow: Encephalitis, the annual killer of children in the eastern belt of UP, has in this season claimed over 200 lives, mainly of children, according to information from the state health and family welfare department. Of the total 201 deaths, 197 were recorded under Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES) while the remaining were attributed to Japanese Encephalitis (JE). In terms of cases, AES has affected 1,243 patients while JE has affected 53 persons. Experts say that encephalitis refers to inflammation of the brain. P 4 It is a condition and not a disease. While Japanese Encephalitis is mosquito-borne and vaccine-preventable, the other is lodged as AES. The exact cause of AES is not known, but experts at National Institute of Virology's research centre at the medical college associate Enterovirus with it. Health officials fear a higher number of cases and deaths this season. "The disease season has just begun and the number of deaths has crossed the 200 mark when the average for deaths for AES alone is 550. P 7

Encephalitis starts spreading with the onset of the rainy season and continues to affect and kill people till November end. The current trends suggest that the numbers would cross the average this year," an officer associated with monitoring of encephalitis told TOI.

The apprehension gains weight considering the rate with which deaths are being reported. According to government data, total number of encephalitis deaths on July 29 stood at 95. The figure crossed the 200 mark on August 24. This means, 106 deaths were reported in just 26 days. In this way, an average of 6 to 7 encephalitis deaths are being reported in UP.

A glimpse of the wrath can be seen at the Baba Raghav Das medical college which is flooded with encephalitis cases. "As many as six deaths have been reported in the past 48 hours," said a nurse on duty, adding, "more than 90 patients are battling for life in the encephalitis ward."

Health officials, including minister Ravidas Mehrotra, principal secretary (health and family welfare) Arun Kumar Sinha and chief of National Health Mission, Alok Kumar inspected Gorakhpur and adjoining areas to take stock of the encephalitis situation and preparedness last week.

*Compiled by
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