



Intermittent showers continued in the city on Saturday. Photos by Ashraf Ali.

# Intermittent light to heavy rains lash city, roads, low-lying areas waterlogged

► Level in Upper Lake rise slightly, major dams remain below capacity

**Bhopal:** The city has experienced a period of heavy rain, beginning late Friday night and continuing into Saturday morning, with light rain persisting. According to the Meteorological Department, 4 cm of rainfall has occurred since Friday night, resulting in an increase in the water level of the Upper Lake.

Following the heavy rainfall, water-logging has occurred from Bharat Talkies on Hamidia Road to Alpna Tiraha, causing vehicles to move slowly. Passengers traveling to and from Bhopal Railway Station have also had to navigate through waterlogged areas.

So far, Bhopal has recorded 50 cm of rainfall, which is approximately 10 cm above the average rainfall of 40 cm for this period. The heavy rain began late Friday night and continued until 8 am on Saturday, after which light rain resumed.

In contrast to previous years, the dams did not overflow in July this year. The water level in the Upper Lake has risen by 0.2 feet, reaching 1660.40 feet. Meanwhile, the Kolar, Kaliasot, and Kerwa dams remain significantly below capacity. Last year, all three dams overflowed in July, and Upper Lake was filled to the brim.

The Meteorological Department said that the activity of the strong rain system in Bhopal has been less this season, resulting in minimal increases in the water levels of the lakes and dams. However, heavy rains have resumed, and it is anticipated that good water levels may be achieved by the first week of August.

Additionally, heavy rainfall in Sehore is expected to cause the Kolans River to overflow, which would contribute to the water levels in Upper Lake. So far, Sehore has recorded an average of 20 inches of rainfall.

## Current Water Levels in Major Water Sources

- **Upper Lake:** Capacity is 1666.80 feet; current level is 1660.40 feet. An additional 6.40 feet of water is needed for full capacity. The gates of Bhadbhada Dam will be opened once Bada Talab is filled.
- **Kolar Dam:** Current level is 1491.53 feet, with a total capacity of 1516.40 feet, indicating it is quite empty. This dam supplies water to 40% of Bhopal.
- **Kerwa Dam:** Total height is 1673 feet, with a current level of 1653.08 feet. Heavy rains are expected to raise the water level.
- **Kaliasot Dam:** Current level is 1649.27 feet, with a total capacity of 1659.02 feet, making it 10 feet short of full capacity. Water from Upper Lake will flow into Kaliasot Dam once its gates are opened.

## True protectors of India's honor

► CM Yadav hails soldiers on Kargil Vijay Diwas



**Bhopal:** Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav declared Indian soldiers as the "true protectors of the nation's pride and honor" on Saturday, during a Kargil Vijay Diwas event at Sainik School, Rewa. He emphasized the armed forces' unwavering readiness to defend India's borders with utmost integrity, highlighting the 1999 Kargil War as an unparalleled

challenge.

Dr. Yadav recounted how the Indian Army, under former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee's leadership, turned the tide against treacherous infiltrators during the 60-day conflict, demonstrating extraordinary courage. He laid wreaths at the Martyrs' Memorial and honored the families of Kargil martyrs, Gunner Chhote Lal Singh and

Naik Kalu Prasad, presenting their wives with shawls and coconuts.

The Chief Minister asserted that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has become a formidable force, capable of striking enemies beyond its borders, akin to the US and Israel. He cited the Surgical Strikes, Wing Commander Abhinandan's return, and 'Operation Sindoor' as testaments to India's resolve against terrorism. Dr. Yadav lauded the Sainik School's contribution, noting that both the current Army and Navy Chiefs hail from the Vindhya region, having received their foundational training there. The event also featured a daring display by the Indian Army's Dare Devil team and the flagging off of the 'Wheels of Valor' motorcycle expedition.

## Opposition gears up to corner govt over fertilizer crisis

By Kanhaiya Lodhi, Bhopal

The upcoming Monsoon Session of the Madhya Pradesh Assembly, beginning July 28, is expected to be highly charged, with both the ruling BJP and the opposition Congress finalizing their strategies. Sources indicate that the opposition will push for adjournment motions to discuss the ongoing fertilizer crisis and the deteriorating law-and-order situation across the state.

**Session highlights and government agenda:** The session will run until August 8, comprising 10 sittings. However, with Raksha Bandhan falling on August 9, the session could conclude a day earlier, on August 7. A major highlight will be the presentation of the First Supplementary Budget for FY 2025-26, likely on July 30. At least four new bills are also expected to be tabled.

Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav has chaired two high-level meetings to ensure the administration is fully prepared for the session. The BJP is planning a robust counteroffensive to any opposition attacks, with ministers briefed to respond with data and facts to neutralize criticism.

**BJP strategy: Control the narrative, avoid internal dissent:** The BJP legislative party is expected to meet on July 28 at the CM's residence. Party

► Monsoon session set for fireworks



leaders have reportedly advised MLAs to avoid raising uncomfortable questions that could embarrass ministers during the Q&A sessions. Sources suggest the party may even compile a list of MLAs who habitually challenge the government line within the House.

Adding a new layer of scrutiny is Hemant Khandelwal, the newly appointed State BJP President, who will be present throughout the session. Unlike past state presidents who were MPs, Khandelwal is an MLA and will be watching his colleagues closely from the front benches.

## Massive corruption alleged in Jal Jeevan Mission: Hemant Katare

► Congress demands CBI probe

**Bhopal:** In a sensational revelation, Deputy Leader of Opposition Hemant Katare has alleged a Rs 10,000 crore scam in the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in Madhya Pradesh and demanded a CBI investigation. Addressing a press conference, Katare claimed the scheme has been reduced to a "Jaldi-Jaldi-Money Mission" due to hasty execution, commission-driven planning, and deep-rooted corruption.

**Loot under the guise of development:** Katare accused officials across the Public Health Engineering (PHE) Department, including ministers, principal secretaries, and chief engineers, of orchestrating a systematic loot.

Of the Rs.30,000 crore allocated by the Centre to ensure tap water in every rural household, a significant chunk allegedly went to politically connected contractors and officials through inflated commissions and paperwork without ground-work.



**Haste over planning, no maintenance framework:** He pointed out that over 27,000 tube well-based projects were launched hastily, ignoring better surface water alternatives. Despite provisions for shared funding (Centre and State: 45% each, 10% by Gram Panchayats), implementation focused more on quick payouts than sustainability. Shockingly, no maintenance component was included.

**Fake DPRs, commission-based fund allocation:** Katare claimed DPRs were fabricated using a model template sent via email by nodal officer Alok Agrawal, with data copy-pasted and later revised. Consultants were paid

Rs.10,000 per DPR without field surveys. He also alleged that funds were released based on commission payments, bypassing senior finance officials.

**Contractual appointments, inflated equipment costs:** He named K.K. Sonagariya, controversially appointed as ENC over five senior CEs, as a key player. Equipment like Silver Ionizers, costing Rs.4,000, were purchased for Rs.70,000-1 lakh—reportedly via relatives of top officials—despite no proven utility as per IIT Chennai.

Congress has demanded a CBI probe, asserting that only an independent investigation can uncover the depth of this "water-for-money" scandal.

## CM Yadav: Ladli Bahna Yojana a pillar of respect

**Bhopal:** Chief Minister Dr. Mohan Yadav declared the 'Ladli Bahna Yojana' a profound symbol of respect for sisters and daughters, emphasizing the state government's unwavering commitment to women's economic advancement and social harmony. Speaking at the Matrushakti Utsav in Singhpur, Satna, on Saturday, he reiterated Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for holistic empowerment across all sections of society.

Highlighting the inherent reverence for 'Bharat Mata' in Indian culture, Dr. Yadav underscored the pivotal role of 'Matrushakti' as the bedrock of family traditions. "Daughters bring honor to families," he stated, explaining that the 'Ladli Bahna Yojana' embodies this respect. He announced that during the holy month of Sawan, an additional Rs.250 would be disbursed, raising the monthly installment to

► Financial empowerment for women



₹1250 for beneficiaries.

The Chief Minister pledged a phased increase in the scheme's benefits, aiming for Rs.3000 per month by 2028. He confirmed an immediate hike to Rs.1500 monthly for all 'Ladli Bahnas' by Bhai Dooj, following Diwali. Over Rs.1500 crore is currently transferred monthly for women's well-

fare.

Beyond direct financial aid, Dr. Yadav highlighted efforts to empower women through self-help groups, job reservations, and representation in local bodies. He lauded Prime Minister Modi's commitment to 33% reservation for women in Parliament and Assemblies, alongside initiatives pro-

viding concrete houses, gas connections, and support for 'Lakshmi Didi's'. Educational incentives like laptops and bicycles for meritorious daughters, and assistance for those pursuing higher education in medical and engineering fields, were also underscored.

Dr. Yadav also touched upon broader developmental goals, including agricultural self-reliance through solar pump subsidies, ensuring adequate water supply via the Bargi Canal completion, and increasing wheat procurement prices. He urged public participation to make Satna the state's best district, inaugurating and laying foundation stones for 232 development works worth over Rs.93 crore. The event also saw 'Ladli sisters' affectionately tying a 20-foot-long Rakhi to the Chief Minister, symbolizing the strong bond between the government and its women beneficiaries.

## Harishankar Mohanta appointed president of IFS Association

**Bhopal:** Harishankar Mohanta, the Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (APCCF), has been appointed as the new President of the IFS Association, succeeding VS Annagiri. The change in leadership marks a significant shift in the association's direction, with Mohanta taking over effective August 1.

The newly appointed leadership team also includes Rakhi Nanda, Director of Satpura Tiger Reserve, as the Vice President; Vijay Kumar, Director of Van Vihar, as Secretary; and Hemant Yadav, DFO of Vidisha, as the new Assistant Secretary.

The IFS Association plays a crucial role in departmental coordination, defending the interests of



its members, and fostering communication among forest officers. It also acts as a crucial body for ensuring the welfare of IFS officers and coordinating their professional concerns.

Though VS Annagiri's tenure had not yet ended, a quick election last night saw Harishankar Mohanta emerging as the new President. Mohanta is known for his disciplined, impartial, and policy-driven approach within the department.

Previously, Mohanta also served as the Secretary of the Forest Department, further solidifying his leadership credentials. The upcoming IFS Meet will be held under his guidance, promising a new era for the association.

## Four family members die by suicide

(Contd from Page 1)

Shivani succumbed during treatment, and Manohar passed away en route to Sagar for further medical attention. Nandram Lodhi, a relative of the deceased, recounted the harrowing discovery. "We are four brothers," he told the police. "Two live in the village, and two live in the farmhouse. I came downstairs after hearing sounds of vomiting and found them all writhing in pain." With the help of villagers, he quickly informed others and arranged for transport to the Khurai hospital, but it was too late for some.

**Authorities on-site as investigation commences:** Upon receiving news of the devastating event, a team of officials, including SDM Manoj Chaurasia, SDOP Sachin Parte, and

SHO Yogendra Singh, immediately rushed to the scene. They meticulously inspected the farmhouse, while a specialized team from Sagar initiated a thorough investigation into every aspect of the incident. SHO Yogendra Singh Dangri stated that the case appears to be one of suicide, with no preliminary signs of struggle or external attack found at the residence. He emphasized that the police are investigating all angles of the case.

**Unanswered questions and a village in mourning:** The precise reason behind this tragic act remains unclear, deepening the mystery surrounding the family's desperate decision. It has been noted that Manohar's wife had gone to her parental home a few days prior to the incident. The family also has

three other brothers, one of whom, intellectually challenged, lived on the upper floor of the same house. The village of Tihar is enveloped in a pall of gloom and disbelief. Residents and relatives are grappling with immense grief, struggling to comprehend why a seemingly calm and ordinary family would take such an extreme step. The incident has left an indelible mark on the community, prompting widespread shock and sorrow.

**Official statement: "A serious matter":** SDM Manoj Chaurasia and SDOP Sachin Parte, after inspecting the scene, addressed the media. SDM Chaurasia stated, "This is a serious matter where four members of a family in Tihar have died after consuming poison. The bodies have been sent for post-mortem examination, and a case has been registered for investigation. The actual cause of the incident will only be confirmed after the post-mortem report is received."

## Aseem Srivastava to retire as HoFF on July 31

**Bhopal:** Aseem Srivastava, the current Head of Forest Force (HoFF) in Madhya Pradesh, is set to retire on July 31, bringing an end to a distinguished career in the Indian Forest Service (IFS). Srivastava has held the top position in the state's forest department, playing a pivotal role in shaping conservation strategies and administrative reforms.

With his retirement approaching, the name of his successor has already been fi-

► VN Ambade likely successor

nalized. According to department sources, VN Ambade, the second-most senior IFS officer in the state, is expected to take over the prestigious post. His promotion was reportedly confirmed in the Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC) meeting held on July 24.

Formal orders of the appointment are likely to be issued on Monday, setting the

stage for a smooth transition in leadership.

Srivastava's tenure has been marked by a strong focus on forest preservation, biodiversity management, and departmental efficiency. His departure marks the end of an era, while expectations are high from the incoming HoFF to carry forward the momentum with fresh vision and continued dedication.