

NHRC notice to all states, UTs as youth in UP dies of snakebite due to lack of facilities



NEW DELHI, SEP 8

THE NHRC has issued notices to all state governments and Union Territory administrations following a complaint alleging that a youth died after being bitten by a snake due to medical negligence and a lack of emergency life-saving infrastructure at a district hospital in Uttar Pradesh's Chitrakoot, officials said.

According to the proceedings of the case dated September 1, the complainant alleged that despite being brought to the district health facility immediately after the snakebite, the victim was denied timely emergency care, including anti-snake venom (ASV) and ventilator or ICU support, and was instead referred to Prayagraj without adequate emergency transit support, resulting in his death en route.

The complainant has alleged that the absence of basic life-saving medical supplies at a main district hospital violates the fundamental Right to Health and Life under Article 21 of the Constitution, officials said. In the complaint submitted to the NHRC, it has been alleged that "a youth died due to severe medical negligence, delay in treatment, and a total lack of emergency life-saving infrastructure at the district hospital in Chitrakoot, UP, after being bitten by a poisonous snake in Khandeha village".

NHRC asks Delhi govt, UGC to address shortage of hostels

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has directed the Delhi government and the University Grants Commission (UGC) to prepare a comprehensive action plan to address the shortage of hostels for students of the University of Delhi.

The directions were issued by an NHRC bench headed by member Priyank Kanoongo while hearing a complaint filed by the Network for Access to Justice and Multidisciplinary Outreach Foundation regarding lack of affordable hostel facilities for Delhi University students.

According to the complaint, Delhi University has around 72,000 undergraduate students, while hostel accommodation remains highly inadequate, forcing many outstation students to depend on expensive paying guest facilities and rented accommodation.

The Commission noted that the response submitted by the University of Delhi failed to adequately address the concerns raised in the complaint.

Meta India officials summoned over child abuse ads

Ambika.Pandit
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has summoned Meta India's managing director and country head to appear before it on Wednesday over advertisements allegedly linked to child sexual exploitation and abuse material (CSEAM) on Instagram.

NCPCR took suo motu cognisance of a BBC Eye report and issued a notice to Meta Platforms Inc on July 3, seeking an explanation and documents. Meta replied a week later, following which the NCPCR instituted a formal inquiry to establish the facts.

Commission officials remained tight-lipped about Meta's response. However, they said the inquiry would examine Meta India's role in the appearance of the advertisements, how they cleared Instagram's systems and why the situation arose.

The scrutiny would consider the stringent provisions relating to such material under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, they added.

Last week, NHRC issued

NCPCR officials said the probe would examine Meta India's role in the appearance of advertisements, how they cleared Instagram's systems, and why the situation arose

ed notices to the ministry of electronics and information technology and ministry of information and broadcasting as part of its scrutiny of alleged CSAM on Instagram.

An NHRC member Priyank Kanoongo, whose bench issued the notices on Sept 2, said the inquiry was no longer only identifying who uploaded the content. "It also examines the extent to which the platform's own editorial and publishing systems participate in the generation, selection, circulation, amplification or monetisation of content," he said.

The company denied knowingly targeting such advertisements at people.

Queries to Meta did not elicit a response.

• LEGAL

Inside India's problem with reporting child sexual abuse material

Amaal Sheikh

New Delhi, September 8

THE NATIONAL Human Rights Commission (NHRC) issued notices to two Union ministries and the Delhi Police last week over paid Instagram advertisements that allegedly used search terms like "rape video" and "child video" to direct users to Telegram channels offering child sexual abuse material (CSAM). It has directed for the Action Taken Report to be sent to the Commission within two weeks.

The notices flagged advertisements that had passed review systems of Meta, which owns Instagram, and remained available until they were brought to the company's attention.

What NHRC asked

The NHRC's order raised two questions: on whether statutory reporting obligations under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, were complied with, and whether platforms whose

AI systems actively shape content can continue to claim the legal protections available to intermediaries.

On compliance with statutory obligations, the NHRC has asked Meta whether alleged offences were reported, and if not, for it to identify those responsible for ensuring compliance. Section 19 of the POCSO Act mandates that any person "who has apprehension that an offence under this Act is likely to be committed or has knowledge that such an offence has been committed" shall report it to the Special Juvenile Police or the local police unit. This obligation, the NHRC states, "cannot be substituted by internal correspondence, grievance redressal or regulatory engagement".

A supplementary representation filed before the Commission argued that Meta's AI-assisted tools now does more than host third-party content, that is, the company's systems can generate captions, recommend posting schedules, optimise engagement, and assist monetisation. On this, the

The limits of CyberTipline

- A CyberTipline report often identifies where CSAM was found, not where it originated — establishing that requires a separate investigation.
- The challenge is growing more complex as offenders increasingly use encrypted platforms and AI-generated content.

NHRC has asked the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to examine whether such functions remain consistent with intermediary status, or whether they resemble the role of a publisher of online curated content under the IT Rules, 2021.

India's larger problem

The complaint against Meta lands inside a system that already struggles to convert reports into prosecutions. India received around 1.9 million CyberTipline reports — alerts that are generated when tech platforms detect suspected CSAM — in 2025. Yet only a fraction of these translate into police action.

According to Naresh Diwan of the Delhi Police Cyber Cell, the reports are processed by the National Crime Records Bureau and the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre, and then routed and assigned to the relevant state and district authorities.

Before an FIR is registered, authorities conduct preliminary verification. But not every CyberTipline report progresses

beyond this, as these reports vary significantly in quality and completeness.

Investigators assess whether the flagged material prima facie depicts CSAM. Once the jurisdiction is identified and the material verified, the case is forwarded to the local police station or cyber police unit.

One of the more recurring difficulties is verifying the age of the victim. Diwan said that poor image quality, blurred visuals, or uncertainty about age can present obstacles. Once an FIR is registered, investigators begin the process of identifying the individual behind the account.

Cases are generally tried before special courts designated under the POCSO Act. However, convictions depend heavily on the digital evidence. Experts say that defence arguments frequently focus on whether the accused was actually the person using the device, SIM card, or internet connection linked to the offence.

Where investigators are unable to identify the person responsible, police may file a closure report.

Why Delhi's Crashing Buildings Should Shake Up All Of India

As in the capital, so in other cities, safety protocols are utterly inadequate. Here's a civil engineering solution: use quality engineers and easily available tech. Then, mandate structural audits

Siddharth Roy



A building rarely collapses without warning. Failures can begin years earlier, with unauthorised alterations, overloaded floors, corrosion, water seepage, poor workmanship, foundation distress or neglected maintenance. The collapse of a five-storey paying guest (PG) building at Delhi's Satya Niketan on Sept 6, should therefore be viewed as a failure of urban risk management.

For an urbanising India, building safety cannot remain an issue addressed after disaster.

Satya Niketan's roughly 50-year-old building housed students and reportedly had repair/construction work underway in its basement, when it collapsed. The exact technical cause must be established through independent forensic investigation.

From a civil engineer's perspective, work around foundations demands prior structural assessment, method statements, and well-designed temporary support. Excavation, dewatering, removal of walls, changes in drainage, or alteration of structural members, can change load paths, and destabilise an otherwise functioning building. The question is whether competent engineering supervision existed, before work began.

The scale of the problem is larger than just this tragedy. Delhi's own records indicate 464 building collapse incidents in 2024, and 544 in 2025, with 46 deaths across the two years. These figures should warn every urban local body. Nationally, NCRB recorded nearly 4.7L accidental deaths in 2024, across causes; "collapse of structures" is only one category, but its human cost is concentrated and often preventable.

In 2025, the Virar East collapse in Maharashtra reportedly killed 17 people. NHRC noted the building was allegedly unauthorised. Residents had reportedly received three evacuation notices. Such cases show how engineering risk and regulatory failure reinforce each other.

Indian buildings rarely remain as originally designed. Residential buildings become paying guest accommodation, offices become restaurants, houses acquire extra floors, balconies are enclosed, walls are removed, and heavy equipment installed. Each modification can alter loads, fire safety, and structural

behaviour. An approval issued decades ago cannot be treated as a permanent guarantee of safety. A building's risk profile changes with use, age, alterations, groundwater conditions, and maintenance.

India, therefore, needs a national building-safety programme, based on periodic structural health assessments. Such a programme can include the following.

- Municipal-level digital inventories, classified by age, height, occupancy, construction type, foundation system, and risk. High-risk structures like schools, hospitals, hostels, PG facilities, markets, theatres, and buildings undergoing deep renovation, should face mandatory structural audits periodically. Only competent, independent structural engineers should be allowed to certify, with conflicts of interest controlled.

- Contractors can't excavate beside foundations, or remove structural walls or modify columns merely on an owner's verbal instruction. Only when a structural engineer's and contractor's details, and approval number, are displayed at the site, will there be accountability.

Cities often have regulations, but lack sufficient engineers, inspectors, and updated records to enforce them. Municipal inspection systems can be made technically stronger by creating building-safety cells, staffed with structural and geotechnical engineers. Risk-based inspections, surprise checks, and proper records should ensure every notice, repair and compliance-action is traceable. Further, evacuation, strengthening, or demolition of dangerous buildings has to follow a timeline, rather than disappear into delay.

Safety's economics matter. Students and low-income occupants often live in ageing structures. Safer accommodation is unaffordable. What stops govts from incentivising retrofitting? And targeted financial support for essential repairs? At the same time, deliberate concealment of dangerous conditions, forged certificates, and unauthorised structural modifications, should be heavily penalised.

Tech can supplement engineering judgement. GIS-based mapping can identify concentrations of vulnerable buildings. Sensors can monitor vibration, tilt, crack-width, and moisture in high-risk structures. Drones can inspect inaccessible façades and roofs, and so on.

Most important, India must move from post-collapse reaction to pre-collapse prevention. After every disaster, inquiries are announced, buildings are sealed, and compensation discussed. The harder task is converting lessons into enforceable change.

Old buildings don't inevitably become unsafe; properly maintained and retrofitted structures can serve safely for decades. The real danger arises when ageing buildings are altered without engineering scrutiny, overloaded and inspected only after failure.

Structural safety is not a one-time certificate, but a continuous process. India's cities need a culture in which engineers are consulted before walls are removed, foundations disturbed or floors added. Satya Niketan can, and should, become a turning point.

The writer is a civil engineer, and consultant to Rashtriya Raksha University



- Visual inspection must be twinned with technical audits that look for differential settlement (like unequal sinking of foundation), cracks, corrosion of reinforcement, foundation distress, seepage, illegal alterations, occupancy loads, fire exits & escape routes.

- Geotechnical investigation should be mandatory where foundations, basements or surrounding soil conditions are suspect. Buildings have to be clearly classified: safe, requiring repair, restricted occupancy, or unsafe. And each category must trigger a defined response.

- Renovation rules need a fundamental rethink. Before structural alterations are allowed, owners must submit engineer-certified assessment, construction methodology, risk assessment etc.

Why Delhi's Crashing Buildings Should Shake Up All Of India

As in the capital, so in other cities, safety protocols are utterly inadequate. Here's a civil engineering solution: use quality engineers and easily available tech. Then, mandate structural audits

Siddharth Roy



A building rarely collapses without warning. Failures can begin years earlier, with unauthorised alterations, overloaded floors, corrosion, water seepage, poor workmanship, foundation distress or neglected maintenance. The collapse of a five-storey paying guest (PG) building at Delhi's Satya Niketan on Sept 6, should therefore be viewed as a failure of urban risk management.

For an urbanising India, building safety cannot remain an issue addressed after disaster.

Satya Niketan's roughly 50-year-old building housed students and reportedly had repair/construction work underway in its basement, when it collapsed. The exact technical cause must be established through independent forensic investigation.

From a civil engineer's perspective, work around foundations demands prior structural assessment, method statements, and well-designed temporary support. Excavation, dewatering, removal of walls, changes in drainage, or alteration of structural members, can change load paths, and destabilise an otherwise functioning building. The question is whether competent engineering supervision existed, before work began.

The scale of the problem is larger than just this tragedy. Delhi's own records indicate 464 building collapse incidents in 2024, and 544 in 2025, with 46 deaths across the two years. These figures should warn every urban local body. Nationally, NCRB recorded nearly 4.7L accidental deaths in 2024, across causes; "collapse of structures" is only one category, but its human cost is concentrated and often preventable.

In 2025, the Virar East collapse in Maharashtra reportedly killed 17 people. NHRC noted the building was allegedly unauthorised. Residents had reportedly received three evacuation notices. Such cases show how engineering risk and regulatory failure reinforce each other.

Indian buildings rarely remain as originally designed. Residential buildings become paying guest accommodation, offices become restaurants, houses acquire extra floors, balconies are enclosed, walls are removed, and heavy equipment installed. Each modification can alter loads, fire safety, and structural

behaviour. An approval issued decades ago cannot be treated as a permanent guarantee of safety. A building's risk profile changes with use, age, alterations, groundwater conditions, and maintenance.

India, therefore, needs a national building-safety programme, based on periodic structural health assessments. Such a programme can include the following.

- Municipal-level digital inventories, classified by age, height, occupancy, construction type, foundation system, and risk. High-risk structures like schools, hospitals, hostels, PG facilities, markets, theatres, and buildings undergoing deep renovation, should face mandatory structural audits periodically. Only competent, independent structural engineers should be allowed to certify, with conflicts of interest controlled.



- Visual inspection must be twinned with technical audits that look for differential settlement (like unequal sinking of foundation), cracks, corrosion of reinforcement, foundation distress, seepage, illegal alterations, occupancy loads, fire exits & escape routes.

- Geotechnical investigation should be mandatory where foundations, basements or surrounding soil conditions are suspect. Buildings have to be clearly classified: safe, requiring repair, restricted occupancy, or unsafe. And each category must trigger a defined response.

- Renovation rules need a fundamental rethink. Before structural alterations are allowed, owners must submit engineer-certified assessment, construction methodology, risk assessment etc.

- Contractors can't excavate beside foundations, or remove structural walls or modify columns merely on an owner's verbal instruction. Only when a structural engineer's and contractor's details, and approval number, are displayed at the site, will there be accountability.

Cities often have regulations, but lack sufficient engineers, inspectors, and updated records to enforce them. Municipal inspection systems can be made technically stronger by creating building-safety cells, staffed with structural and geotechnical engineers. Risk-based inspections, surprise checks, and proper records should ensure every notice, repair and compliance action is traceable. Further, evacuation, strengthening, or demolition of dangerous buildings has to follow a timeline, rather than disappear into delay.

Safety's economics matter. Students and low-income occupants often live in ageing structures. Safer accommodation is unaffordable. What stops govts from incentivising retrofitting? And targeted financial support for essential repairs? At the same time, deliberate concealment of dangerous conditions, forged certificates, and unauthorised structural modifications, should be heavily penalised.

Tech can supplement engineering judgement. GIS-based mapping can identify concentrations of vulnerable buildings. Sensors can monitor vibration, tilt, crack-width, and moisture in high-risk structures. Drones can inspect inaccessible façades and roofs, and so on.

Most important, India must move from post-collapse reaction to pre-collapse prevention. After every disaster, inquiries are announced, buildings are sealed, and compensation discussed. The harder task is converting lessons into enforceable change.

Old buildings don't inevitably become unsafe; properly maintained and retrofitted structures can serve safely for decades. The real danger arises when ageing buildings are altered without engineering scrutiny, overloaded and inspected only after failure.

Structural safety is not a one-time certificate, but a continuous process. India's cities need a culture in which engineers are consulted before walls are removed, foundations disturbed or floors added. Satya Niketan can, and should, become a turning point.

The writer is a civil engineer, and consultant to Rashtriya Raksha University

NHRC seeks hostel action report

OUR BUREAU

New Delhi: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has directed the UGC chairperson and the Delhi chief secretary to submit by October 15 a report detailing specific, consolidated and action-oriented steps to set up more hostels for students of Delhi University following the building collapse in Satya Niketan.

A PIL was moved in Delhi Court on Tuesday seeking hostel facilities for students in all colleges run by DU.

Last year, the human rights watchdog had received a complaint from the Network for Access to Justice and Multidisciplinary Outreach Foundation, which highlighted that DU admitted around 72,000 undergraduate students every year while hostel accommodation remained highly inadequate. The complainant

had submitted that students from outside Delhi often had to depend on expensive paying guest accommodation, which put an additional financial burden on them.

In September 2025, the NHRC had sought an action-taken report from the authorities concerned. In its response, DU acknowledged the inadequate hostel facilities but did not provide any road map to fix the problem.

Now the NHRC wants the UGC and the Delhi government to collaborate with DU and furnish a report assessing the existing hostel capacity and infrastructure, possibilities of renovation, upgrade and expansion, requirement and feasibility of new/additional hostels, assessment of college-wise requirements, proposed interventions, determination of institutional and financial responsibilities and a clear implementation timeline.

In the high court, advocate Vimal Tyagi, representing the petitioner, sought an urgent hearing of the PIL by a bench of Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karla on Tuesday. The court said it would take up the plea on Wednesday, and observed that it had already heard and passed an order in another PIL on Monday on the same issue.

Tyagi said the other PIL had different asks, including compensation for the kin of the deceased and injured. He said his client's plea sought a direction to every college to have hostel facilities for students.

On Monday, the high court had come down heavily on government authorities over lapses in regulating unauthorised constructions and their failure to arrange housing facilities for outstation students, forcing them to stay in PG

accommodations like the one that crumbled on Sunday.

The court has sought a detailed affidavit from the government bodies on the status of hostel facilities in Delhi and the steps it is taking to curb building collapses.

Following the court's direction, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi has directed its officials across all zones to inspect structures under their jurisdiction and submit comprehensive reports by September 10.

It has carried out demolition of 24 properties and sealed seven illegal structures since the building collapse in Satya Niketan, according to data updated till Tuesday.

The corporation has also issued a demolition order for the property adjoining the collapsed structure and said the demolition would proceed in a calibrated manner depending on the situation.

NHRC notice to Delhi Govt, UGC seeking comprehensive report on hostels

NEW DELHI, Sept 8:

In the wake of the Satya Niketan building collapse, the NHRC has issued notices to the Delhi Government and the UGC, directing them to furnish a "comprehensive report" related to hostels and other accommodation facilities for students, in consultation with the Delhi University, officials said today.

"The exercise shall not remain confined merely to construction of new hostels. The authorities shall undertake an assessment of the existing hostel infrastructure and examine both the feasibility of upgrading, expanding, renovating or otherwise augmenting existing/old hostel facilities and the requirement and feasibility of construction of new hostel facilities, wherever necessary," according to the proceedings of the NHRC, dated September 7.

On September 6 afternoon, the decades-old building housing a boys' paying guest accommodation in Satya Niketan near Delhi University South Campus collapsed, killing seven people and leaving several others injured.

The incident has brought the issue of hostels and condition of out-of-campus accommodation facilities used by students in Delhi.

Network for Access to Justice and Multidisciplinary Outreach Foundation, a non-profit company, in its complaint submitted to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), has highlighted a "serious concern" faced by DU students regarding inadequate hostel facilities, the proceedings reads.

The allegations made in the

complaint prima facie seem to be violations of the human rights of the victims, it says.

The complainant said the university admits around 72,000 undergraduate students but availability of hostels was "highly insufficient".

It has been further alleged that students from other states struggled to secure affordable accommodation, forcing them into expensive paying guests or private rentals.

"This shortage creates a heavy financial burden, negatively impacting students' studies, well-being, and overall quality of life. The situation contradicts the National Education Policy, which emphasises accessibility, affordability and inclusivity in higher education," it adds.

The complainant sought the intervention of the commission on it and requested for urgent action.

Accordingly, the registry is directed to issue notices to the Delhi chief secretary, the chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC), the NHRC said.

"Let the Chief Secretary, Government of NCT of Delhi, and the Chairman, University Grants Commission, be directed to furnish a comprehensive report on the aforesaid aspects, in consultation with the University of Delhi, for augmentation of hostel accommodation in the colleges/institutions concerned," reads the proceedings.

The chief secretary and the UGC chairman "shall jointly coordinate with the University of Delhi and submit a specific, consolidated and action-oriented report, together with the proposed plan, within four weeks

from receipt of this communication for consideration of the Commission," the proceedings says.

The proposed plan or report shall indicate assessment of the existing hostel capacity and infrastructure, including the scope for renovation, upgradation, modification and augmentation to ensure adequate accommodation for students; assessment of the need and feasibility for new or additional hostels, along with specific recommendations for creation of adequate hostel capacity, it adds.

The report shall disclose specific decisions, college-wise requirements, proposed interventions, allocation of institutional and financial responsibilities and definite timelines for implementation.

In September 2025, a bench of the NHRC, presided over by its member Priyank Kanoongo had taken cognisance of a matter related to such issues, following which an action taken report was sought from the Delhi chief secretary and the secretary in the Ministry of Education.

A report dated November 11, 2025, from the Joint Registrar (Colleges), University of Delhi, has been received and taken on record, the NHRC said.

"The report states, inter alia, that admissions to undergraduate programmes of the University of Delhi are made in 65 constituent/affiliated colleges; out of these, 12 colleges are 100 per cent funded by the government of NCT of Delhi, while the remaining 53 colleges are funded wholly or substantially (100 per cent or 95 per cent) by the University Grants Commission (UGC)," it adds."(PTI)

NHRC issues notices to Delhi govt, UGC

Direction to furnish 'comprehensive report' related to hostels and other accommodation facilities for students

NEW DELHI, Sept 8: In the wake of the Satya Niketan building collapse, the NHRC has issued notices to the Delhi government and the UGC, directing them to furnish a "comprehensive report" related to hostels and other accommodation facilities for students, in consultation with the Delhi University, officials said today.

"The exercise shall not remain confined merely to con-

struction of new hostels. The authorities shall undertake an assessment of the existing hostel infrastructure and examine both the feasibility of upgrading, expanding, renovating or otherwise augmenting existing/old hostel facilities, and the requirement and feasibility of construction of new hostel facilities, wherever necessary," according to the proceedings of the NHRC, dated September 7.

On September 6 afternoon, a decades-old building housing a boys' paying guest accommodation in Satya Niketan near Delhi University South Campus collapsed, killing seven people and leaving several others injured.

The incident has brought the issue of hostels and condition of out-of-campus accommodation facilities used by students in Delhi.

Network for Access to Jus-

tice and Multidisciplinary Outreach Foundation, a non-profit company, in its complaint submitted to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), has highlighted a "serious concern" faced by DU students regarding inadequate hostel facilities, the proceedings reads.

The allegations made in the complaint prima facie seem to be violations of the human rights of the victims, it says. – PTI

एनआईटी पटना में मानवाधिकार जागरूकता पर संवाद आयोजित



पटना | एनएचआरसी के विशेष मॉनिटर प्रो. कन्हैया त्रिपाठी ने एनआईटी पटना का दौरा कर परिसर में मानवाधिकार मूल्यों, समावेशिता और छात्र कल्याण से जुड़े मुद्दों पर संस्थान नेतृत्व से चर्चा की। उन्होंने निदेशक के साथ संवाद में कहा कि शिक्षा संस्थानों में अधिकारों के साथ कर्तव्य, गरिमा और समानता की समझ व्यवहार में उतरनी चाहिए, ताकि विद्यार्थियों का समग्र विकास हो सके। डॉन (छात्र कल्याण) प्रो. प्रभात कुमार ने छात्र हित में चल रही शैक्षणिक, सामाजिक और सांस्कृतिक पहलों की जानकारी दी। बैठक में बताया गया कि संस्थान ने 21-दिवसीय खेल व सांस्कृतिक आयोजन कर लगभग 4,000 विद्यार्थियों की भागीदारी से तनाव कम करने और मानसिक स्वास्थ्य को सहारा देने का प्रयास किया। प्रो. त्रिपाठी ने मानवाधिकार प्रमाणपत्र पाठ्यक्रम, हॉस्टलों में मंजिल-वार चर्चा मंच और मानवाधिकार विषयक छात्र पत्रिका शुरू करने जैसे सुझाव दिए, ताकि संवाद और जागरूकता सुदृढ़ हो सके।