

DISASTERS UPDATE

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TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

National

22 sheep die in lightning-strike

TNN | Aug 24, 2016, 03.42 AM IST



(Representative image)

ERODE: A total of 22 sheep were killed by lightning strike near Nambiyur in Erode district on Monday night.

According to the Nambiyur police, K Murugesan, 54, of Onnankuttai near Nambiyur is a farmer rearing 40 sheep, goats and five cows in his fertile land. M Kannammal, Murugesan's wife had taken the sheep and goats to graze. On Monday evening, there was a drizzle with lightning and heavy thunder across Gobichettipalayam taluk. Because of the rain, she tied the cattle to a coconut tree nearby. A few goats were returned to the enclosed pen.

However, lightening struck, killing 22 sheep. "I saw it happen right in front of my eyes," said Kannammal. She herself had a narrow escape from death, she added.

Neighbours who witnessed the incident, immediately alerted the Nambiyur police and veterinary doctors. Meanwhile, Anjanur VAO Shanmugam, revenue inspector Logeswaran also visited the spot and estimated the loss.

Veterinary doctor Dr Gokula Krishnan performed autopsy on the spot on Tuesday morning. All the 22 sheep were buried on the same evening.

Previously, 25 sheep were killed when lightning struck near Nangavalli in Salem district in September, 2014.

Similarly, about 3,000 chickens were killed when lightning struck an enclosed pen near Gobichettipalayam in Erode district last October.

20 die of diarrhoea in Chhattisgarh district

The Hindu, August 24, 2016 00:40 IST

At least 20 people have died in north Chhattisgarh's Sarguja district due to diarrhoea in last two weeks.

According to Sitapur Congress MLA Amarjeet Bhagat, five people died due to the disease in last two days.

"The deaths have been reported from Mainpat area in my constituency. It's a hilly area and almost all the deceased were tribals. The district administration has set up a medical camp but it is not enough. More than 50 people have been admitted in hospital and one camp is not enough to tackle this," Mr. Bhagat told The Hindu.

Chhattisgarh Health Director R. Prassana and Health Secretary Subrat Sahoo visited the affected area on Tuesday, however, made conflicting statements about the number of deaths in last 15 days.

In a late evening statement, Mr. Prassana denied that there was any epidemic in Mainpat area.

"Around 20 deaths have been reported over a period of one month. Out of which only five to six are due to diarrhoea. Other deaths were due to old age and other ailments. Medicines were made available and chlorination of hand pumps was done a month ago," he claimed.

Mr. Prassana blamed brewed liquor and unclean surrounding for diarrhoea and said that "change in behaviour" of people was needed to avoid these issues.

Mr. Bhagat informed that Asgav, Paigam, Suflaga and Narmadapur villages had been the worst affected.

International

Four die as 6 magnitude quake strikes Italy

IANIS | Aug 24, 2016, 11.39 AM IST



ROME: At least four people were killed as an earthquake measuring 6.1 on the Richter Scale struck central Italy early on Wednesday, a government official said.

At least four people died in the quake whose epicentre was determined at Rieti, around 170 km southwest of Rome, Xinhua news agency quoted central Amatrice town's mayor Sergio Pirozzi as saying.

Strong tremors were felt in Italy's capital city of Rome, Xinhua news agency cited reports from Italy's National Institute of Geophysics and Vulcanology as showing.

The US Geological Survey put the magnitude at 6.2 and said the quake was shallow.

There were also reports of damage and collapses of buildings.

People were trapped under the rubble of collapsed houses in the town of Amatrice.

"There are people under the rubble... There's been a landslide and a bridge might have collapsed," said Pirozzi.

"The roads in and out of town are cut off. Half the town is gone."

Prime Minister Matteo Renzi's spokesman said on Twitter that the government was in touch with the country's civil protection agency.

120 killed in Italy earthquake

AGENCIES, THE HINDU, August 24, 2016



An injured nun checks her mobile phone as she recovers after an earthquake in Italy on Wednesday. The magnitude 6.2 earthquake, which killed at least 73 people, was felt across central Italy, including Rome. Photo: AP



Reuters

Rescuers work at a collapsed house following a quake in Amatrice, central Italy on Wednesday.



Reuters

A man wrapped in a blanket looks on as a rescuer with a dog stand in front a collapsed house following a quake in Amatrice, central Italy on Wednesday.



Reuters

People stand by a road following a quake in Amatrice, central Italy on Wednesday.

At least 120 people have been killed in a strong earthquake that struck central Italy early on Wednesday, levelling buildings in several towns as residents slept. One Mayor reported that a family of four was trapped under the debris without any sign of life and another said, “The town isn’t here anymore.”

Many are still missing as people are buried under rubble.

The 6.1 magnitude quake that struck at 3.36 a.m. was felt across a broad swath of central Italy, including the capital Rome, where residents felt a long swaying followed by aftershocks. First images of damage showed debris in the street and some collapsed buildings in towns and villages that dot much of the Umbrian countryside.

The hardest-hit towns were reported as Amatrice and Accumoli near Rieti, with residents running into the streets as aftershocks continued into the early hours. As daylight dawned, residents and civil protection workers began digging out with shovels and bulldozers as dazed residents huddled in the open streets.

Here are the updates:

02.53 am: Rescue crews using bulldozers and their bare hands raced to dig out survivors. The death toll stood at 120, but the number of dead and missing was uncertain given the thousands of vacationers in the area for summer’s final days - *AP*

7.27 pm: The Civil Protection Department in Italy now says that atleast 73 people are dead.

4.29 pm: No reports of casualties or injuries to Indian nationals living in the affected region, says Vikas Swarup, spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs.

Following are helpline numbers for any queries: **+39-3316406173, +39-3311928715**

3.20 pm: At least 38 people died in the earthquake, a spokeswoman for the civil protection department said.

The quake struck towns and villages in the mountainous heart of the country, which was making the rescue operation more difficult, said spokeswoman Immacolata Postiglione.

Speaking to journalists, Ms. Postiglione said 27 people had died between the towns of Accumoli and Amatrice, and a further 10 had died in the nearby Arquata area. Later in her press conference she upped the death toll to 38, without giving further details.

2:30 pm: This video tweeted out by an Italian radio channel *Rai Radio 1*: "Missing persons searches continue unabated in Amatrice."

2:15 pm: Latest report from *Reuters* says that at least 20 people are dead. The number of people missing is not available as yet. But buildings were razed down as the ground shook. Officials are sifting through the rubble to find and rescue people.

11: 55 am: "Now that daylight has come, we see that the situation is even more dreadful than we feared with buildings collapsed, people trapped under the rubble and no sound of life," said Accumoli mayor Stefano Petrucci. The town, which is about a 110 kms from Rome, is one of the worst-hit by far.



(A scene after the quake struck in Amatrice, central Italy. Photo: Reuters)

11:40 am: Latest update from *Reuters* say that at least 10 people believed killed in the mountainous central Italy. There are no figures on how many are injured so far but many are trapped in buildings. Rescue operations are on.

11:15 am: Here are some reactions from the locals who felt the tremors.

While the epicentre was more than 100 kilometres from the capital city Rome, the tremors were felt there.

10:45 am: According to Associated Press, the ANSA news agency says two bodies have been pulled from the rubble of quake-hit Amatrice in central Italy.

10:15 am: Reports coming in saying that at least six people have been killed in the aftermath of the earthquake and many others injured.

10:10 am: The mayor of Amatrice near Rieti, Sergio Pirozzi, told state-run RAI radio and Sky TG24 that residents were buried under collapsed buildings, that the lights had gone out and that heavy equipment was needed to clear streets clogged with debris. “The town isn’t here anymore,” he said. The office of Premier Matteo Renzi tweeted that heavy equipment was on its way.

10:00 am: The European Mediterranean Seismological Center put the magnitude at 6.1. The U.S. Geological Survey put the magnitude at 6.2 with the epicentre at Norcia, about 170 km northeast of Rome, and with a relatively shallow depth of 10 km.



(This map provided by USGS shows the epicentre of the earthquake.)

In 2009, a 6.3-magnitude earthquake struck in the same region and killed more than 300 people. The earlier earthquake struck L’Aquila in central Italy, about 90 kilometers (55 miles) south of the latest quake.

A 1997 quake killed a dozen people in the area and severely damaged one of the jewels of Umbria, the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi, filled with Giotto frescoes. The Franciscan friars who are the custodians of the basilica reported no immediate damage from Wednesday’s tumbler.

*Compiled by
Dr.AD Kaushik*