

DISASTERS UPDATE

www.nidm.gov.in

Date: 25.08.16

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

National

Death toll mounts to 37 in flood-ravaged Bihar

The Hindu, August 26, 2016 02:31 IST



Two children on a makeshift raft after floods, in Bhagalpur district of Bihar on Thursday. —PHOTO: RANJEET KUMAR



: Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Thursday visited relief camps set-up for flood-affected people in Patna, and instructed officials to focus on the quality of relief materials and sanitation for women. There was no let up in flood fury in Bihar with eight fresh deaths reported on Thursday.

Meanwhile, water in major Uttar Pradesh rivers are receding though they are still flowing above the danger mark. West Bengal's Malda and Uttarakhand's Uttarkashi district witnessed one death each in flood and rain-related incidents. With the fresh death, the flood toll rose to 37 in Bihar, with Bhojpur district accounting for the maximum 12 deaths.

Over two million people from 1,115 villages of 12 districts in Bihar have been affected by devastating floods forcing over 1.7 lakh to take shelter in altogether 179 relief camps set-up in

various affected areas. The government has also deployed 160 medical teams at these relief camps, and set-up 49 shelters for animals.

“We’re plying 1,507 boats and we have pressed several teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) to take people out of the flood but people at some places are reluctant to come out,” said Mr. Vyasji, principal secretary of the Bihar State Disaster Management Authority.

CM inspects camps

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Minister for Water Resources Rajiv Ranjan Singh and other officials inspected several relief camps in Patna district, from Maner to Athamalgola. Mr. Kumar checked the quality of food and asked flood victims about the help from the government. He also instructed officials to focus more on the quality of food, and sanitation for women, at the camps. The Chief Minister also asked officials to provide monetary help to children born in the relief camps. Earlier, reports had said babies, since called ‘Gangaputras’ (sons of the Ganga), were being born in relief camps and rescue boats.

However, at some places like Samastipur, Chhapra and Patna’s Didarganj, flood-hit people protested against inadequate relief from the government. At Samastipur, angry protestors even took the Circle Officer hostage, while in Chhapra they protested outside the residence of the district magistrate. In Patna’s Didarganj area, protestors blocked the national highway for an hour and demanded immediate help from the government. Later, district officials reached Chhapra and Didarganj to dispense relief to aggrieved families.

Opposition parties charged the Nitish Kumar government with failing to provide succour to flood-hit people on time. “The Nitish Kumar government has completely failed in providing the required relief to those living in camps...even today, during his visit to these camps, he couldn’t stand at a relief camp for more than five minutes,” charged senior state BJP leader Sushil Kumar Modi. Union Minister and Lok Janshakti Party chief Ram Vilas Paswan, who too visited the flood-affected areas of his parliamentary constituency, Hajipur in the Vaishali district, alleged that “whatever is being provided in the name of relief to the flood-hit people is just eyewash...people are managing and living on their own”.

(With inputs from PTI).

Quake jolts east, north-east India

PTI, August 25, 2016 02:35 IST



People in the street after they rushed out of offices following tremors in Kolkata on Wednesday. PHOTO AP

A powerful 6.7 magnitude earthquake struck several parts of Bihar, Odisha, Assam, West Bengal and Tripura on Wednesday. There were, however, no immediate reports of human casualties or damage to property.

The epicentre was 58 km deep below the earth's surface at Chauk, a small town in north-central Myanmar, according to the National Centre for Seismology, a unit of Ministry of Earth Sciences. The U.S. Geological Survey put the intensity of the quake at 6.8 on the Richter scale.

Panic on the streets

Tremors were felt in several parts of north India, including Gurgaon, Manesar and Bhondsi in Haryana, authorities said.

People in Kolkata, Patna and Guwahati were seen rushing out of their homes and offices into the streets in panic immediately after the quake struck at 4:04 p.m.

Buildings develop cracks

The Director of Bihar's Met office A.K. Sen said the quake caused some old buildings to develop cracks.

People in many Bihar towns prone to quakes, including Darbhanga, Madhubani, Muzaffarpur and Sitamarhi, rushed to open spaces as the ground shook violently.

In Odisha, tremors were felt in places like Cuttack, Paradip, Jagatsinghpur, Bhadrak, Balasore and Keonjhar, officials said.

In Assam, the quake on Wednesday followed two tremors measuring 3.1 and 5.5 on Tuesday morning.

Gurgaon's District Public Relations Officer R.S. Sangwan said tremors were felt in the satellite township.

Crops worth 21.48 crore destroyed

TNN | Aug 25, 2016, 01.46 AM IST

Lucknow: Agriculture production commissioner (APC) [Pradeep Bhatnagar](#) held a meeting of district magistrates (DMs) of the flood-affected districts through video conferencing and directed them to ensure payment of at least 25% of crop insurance claims of farmers who have lost their yields due to floods. As per government estimates, crops worth an estimated Rs 21.48 crore have been destroyed in the floods so far.

The Indian Air Force and the Allahabad district administration launched relief operations in the Sangam city by dropping food packets particularly in regions which have been marooned and cut off from the rest of the district. Earlier, a similar exercise was launched in [Gorakhpur](#). The [NDRF](#) teams evacuated 118 persons at [Ranipur](#), 25 persons at [Mirzapur](#), 640 at Varanasi, 507 at [Ballia](#), 32 at [Ghazipur](#) and eight persons at Banda. Besides, NDRF teams have also distributed relief materials to marooned people in low-lying areas.

While the [Ganga](#) remained above the danger mark at Phaphamau and Chatnag in Allahabad, Mirzapur, Varanasi, Ghazipur and Ballia districts, Yamuna

continued to swell in Jalaun, Hamirpur, Banda and Allahabad. The Betwa river was also inching towards the danger mark in Hamirpur and Lakhimpur Kheri. A sharp increase in water levels of the Ganga in Farrukhabad, Yamuna in Mathura and [Auraiya](#) and [Ghaghra](#) in Barabanki, Faizabad and Lakhimpur Kheri has increased the concern of those involved with rescue work.

As epidemic looms, Centre reviews disease control plan

TNN | Aug 25, 2016, 02.13 AM IST



(Representative image)

NEW DELHI: Union health secretary C K Mishra on Wednesday held a meeting with officials of various agencies, including the Delhi government and municipal corporations, to review their preparedness to prevent and manage [chikungunya](#) and dengue in the city.

While chikungunya has taken [epidemic](#) proportions this year—first time since 2006—dengue has affected over 300 people and claimed at least two lives this season in Delhi.

According to senior officials in the health ministry, the recent upsurge in chikungunya cases can be attributed to non-immune population as the number of cases was comparatively less in the previous years.

"Abundance of vector mosquitoes, construction activities, water storage practice, increased mobility of population and human behaviour have also added to its transmission," said a senior official. At AIIMS alone, there were 83 and 279 confirmed cases in July and August (as on August 20) respectively.

Dr K K Aggarwal, secretary general of Indian Medical Association (IMA), said chikungunya was characterised by pain in the joints, along with high-grade fever. "This time, however, we are coming across patients who have mild to severe pain in joints, rashes and headache. It is difficult to diagnose the disease on clinical examination alone as symptoms often match with those caused due to other viral illnesses," he added.

IMA, Aggarwal said, had directed all private hospitals and laboratories to put a cap of maximum Rs 1,100 for testing of chikungunya. "It's a voluntary decision taken by us and

communicated to all agencies concerned. Our aim is to ensure that patients are not fleeced needlessly," Aggarwal said.

There is no preventive vaccination or cure for chikungunya and dengue and treatment is mostly symptomatic. Medicine experts claim timely diagnosis can help reduce serious complications in such cases. "Dengue can be fatal while chikungunya rarely causes death. Both are self-limiting illnesses and symptoms tend to go away in about a week. One should take rest and take lots of fluid," said a senior [doctor](#) at AIIMS.

Data collected under National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme shows chikungunya is prevalent in several other states of the country as well, including Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Kerala. There is no specific treatment for this disease, but patients should be given non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and they should get plenty of rest.

Choked drainage, waste causing vector-borne diseases in Jaripatka

ToI, Aug 25, 2016, 03.29 AM IST

Nagpur: Ever since the Vaswanis moved to Vishwas Nagar in Jaripatka, health issues refuse to leave them. Reason being a pool of stagnant sewage water and heaps of garbage right next to their house.

Last year, their 14-year-old son tested positive for dengue. A little beyond, another resident was suffering from malaria. "Our family doctor has advised us to shift from the area as the open sewage and garbage is a major health hazard," said Kamal Vaswani.

After receiving complaints from many residents, TOI visited the spot on Wednesday. A massive pool of muck covers a vacant plot. A swarm of mosquitoes can be seen circling the entire area. Residents informed that with not much fumigation inside the colony, the mosquito and insect count is always on the higher side.

Even inside the drawing rooms and bedrooms of nearby residents, one cannot escape the stench and fleas. "The problem worsened in last four to five months with excessive dumping of garbage by nearby slum dwellers. The drain seems to be choked with garbage which has resulted in overflowing of sewage water," said a resident Dinesh Ingle.

Repeated complaints to local corporators and Nagpur Municipal Corporation's zonal offices went unheard. "We approached everybody — right from the top NMC official to in-charge of sweepers, but got no response," they said. While residents alleged that conservancy workers hardly come once a month to clean the garbage, corporator Sanjay Choudhary said that sweepers go at least thrice a week. He also denied receiving any complaints from the residents. "We will look into the matter if residents approach us," he said.

Residents however said that despite many complaints, corporators or civic officials not once visited the area. "Sweepers demand money from us to clean the area," they added.

They fear that if sewage lines are not cleared soon, the contaminated water will spread throughout and invite more diseases.

North Nagpur MLA Dr Milind Mane said he would take appropriate action. "It is a genuine problem and when I was a corporator, I had ensured that the area remained clean. It is the responsibility of corporators and NMC zone office," he said.

Sanitation system in nearby localities too seems in a mess. Residents staying near Lord Buddha Chowk are also suffering due to unplanned sewage system. "Our chambers keep getting blocked again and again and the dirty water gets accumulated in front of our houses. Cleaning it has become a business for sweepers. They charge us every time," said a resident Rajni Gehani.

Paediatrician Dr Vinky Rughwani, who runs a hospital in Jaripatka, said that communicable diseases are a common plight among residents. "Apart from seasonal viral, typhoid, malaria, dengue, jaundice hepatitis are on the rise. The main reason is that overall sanitation of this area is very poor when compared to other parts of the city. Open drainage and garbage is a common sight," he added.

Landslide at Vaishno Devi kills CRPF jawan

TNN & Agencies | Aug 25, 2016, 04.23 AM IST

JAMMU: A CRPF jawan guarding the Vaishno Devi shrine died on Wednesday afternoon in a landslide triggered by heavy rains.

The deceased has been identified as Harvinder Singh of Hoshirapur district in Punjab. His body has been recovered from under the debris and the Vaishno Devi shrine board has announced an ex-gratia of Rs 3 lakhs for the next of kin of the deceased.

The incident occurred near gate number 3 when a landslide washed away a portion of the track to the hill shrine and hit a pilgrim shelter. However, no other casualty was reported and the yatra continued after rescue operations were completed.

"Death toll is likely to go up as we fear many pilgrims are buried under the debris. Rescue teams are working on clearing the rubble," said a police officer. Situated in the Trikuta hills of Reasi district, the track to the Vaishno Devi shrine is vulnerable to landslides during monsoons. Earlier this month, five people, including a four-year-old were killed on their way to the shrine.

Rain washes away Rs 5 crore dam in home minister's constituency

TNN | Aug 25, 2016, 10.09 AM IST

BILASPUR: An anicut (dam) constructed at a cost of Rs 5 crore in the assembly constituency of home minister Ramsevak Paikra was washed away within five months of its construction. The dam could not survive the first rain it faced. Besides, the anicut its approach was also washed away in the recent floods. According to information, the dam was constructed on river bank, between villages Keradand and Khorma. During the recent rain a part of the said dam and portions of its approach on both sides got washed away.

Construction of the said anicut was approved in the year 2014-15. Its construction was completed in February this year. During the recent rains at least 100 mt of approach on both side of the anicut were washed away. At the same time walls of anicut have developed cracks on several places.

International

Quake jolts Myanmar's Bagan pagodas, leaves 3 dead

AFP, August 25, 2016 11:18 IST



AFP

Myanmar military staff collect the pieces of bricks at the damaged ancient Htilominlo Temple on Thursday, after a 6.8 magnitude earthquake hit Bagan. A powerful 6.8 magnitude earthquake struck central Myanmar on Wednesday. Three people were killed and 185 ancient Buddhist pagodas have been damaged.

Officials picked through the wreckage of toppled spires and crumbling temple walls in Myanmar's ancient capital of Bagan on Thursday after a powerful earthquake rattled the top tourist destination, leaving three dead.

Clouds of dust settled over the damaged pagodas as officials took stock of the destruction caused by the 6.8 magnitude quake, which struck just south of the famous archaeological site on Wednesday, killing two young girls and a man in nearby towns.

Tourists blocked by police

Police blocked tourists from entering Bagan's vast field of some 2,500 Buddhist monuments — among the country's most venerated religious sites — as workers cleared piles of bricks and swept the grounds.

“I heard sounds after I paid homage at a pagoda. There were foreign tourists there as well,” said Khin Maung Toe, a Myanmar man who was visiting Bagan for the first time when the earthquake struck. “My wife barely escaped outside as the pagoda collapsed,” he told AFP.

Officials said the quake damaged at least 185 pagodas — many around 1,000 years old — at the site, which is a top attraction for foreign tourists flocking to the country as it emerges from decades of military rule.

Experts to take stock

The UNESCO office in Yangon, Myanmar's largest city, has deployed experts to assess the damage, said office head Sardar Umar Alam.

The government is also sending teams from its culture and geology departments, he added.

“It takes time to know how the structures are stabilised and how bad the actual damage is — if a roof collapses, how much it affects different walls and mural paintings,” Mr. Alam said.

Witness to many a war, quakes

Bagan's vast expansive of temple ruins — which make for a staggering sunset vista — have survived wars, earthquakes and centuries of tropical sun.

In its heyday the city, which was the capital of a powerful kingdom from the 9th to 13th centuries, was one of Asia's most important centres for learning.

Haphazard renovation?

The last major quake to damage the site struck in 1975 and was followed by a controversial restoration effort under the military junta that stepped down in 2011.

Experts said the haphazard renovation work, much of it hastily done with modern materials, significantly altered the original architecture and design of some monuments.

Democratic transition

In recent years, as the country undergoes a democratic transition and opens up following decades of isolationist junta rule, UNESCO has worked directly with the government to safeguard the monuments.

Myanmar is eager to see the city listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Travel to the once-cloistered country used to be reserved for the well-heeled and intrepid, prepared to endure the travails of a country under military rule with patchy electricity and limited communications.

But foreign tourists have poured in since the military stepped down in 2011, with many of them making a beeline for Bagan.

This year Myanmar is on track to welcome 5.5 million tourists, nearly a million more than 2015, according to Tint Thwin, director-general of Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

Italy quake death toll hits 247 as rescuers hunt for survivors

AFP, August 25, 2016 23:53 IST



AFP

A damaged church in Amatrice after an earthquake rocked central Italy on Wednesday.



Getty Images

A general view of Pescara del Tronto town destroyed by the earthquake in Italy on Wednesday.



AP

Rescuers search amid the rubble following an earthquake in Pescara Del Tronto, Italy on Thursday.



AP

Rescuers pause in Amatrice, central Italy, where a 6.1 earthquake struck just after 3:30 a.m. on Wednesday.

The death toll in the earthquake that shook central Italy rose to 247 on Thursday, officials said, as rescuers desperately searched for survivors in the rubble of devastated mountain villages.

Hundreds were injured, some critically, and an unknown number were trapped under the ruins of collapsed buildings after Wednesday's pre-dawn quake.

That disaster, just 50 kilometres (30 miles) south, underscored the region's vulnerability to seismic events -- but preparations for a fresh quake have been exposed as limited at best.

Amid scenes of carnage, dozens of emergency services staff and volunteers were determined in their attempts to pluck more survivors from the ruins.

Rescuers had pledged to work through the night in the hope of finding people alive in the mangled wreckage of homes.

Prime Minister Matteo Renzi had warned that the death toll would likely to rise after visiting the badly hit village of Amatrice.

Hundreds of people spent a chilly night in hastily assembled tents with the risk of aftershocks making it too risky for them to return home.

Scores of buildings were reduced to dusty piles of masonry in communities close to the epicentre of the quake, which had a magnitude of between 6.0 and 6.2.

It hit a remote area straddling Umbria, Marche and Lazio at a time of year when second-home owners and other visitors swell the numbers staying there. Many of the victims were from Rome.

The devastated area is just north of L'Aquila, the city where some 300 people died in a quake in 2009.

Most of the deaths now occurred in and around the villages of Amatrice, Accumoli and Arquata del Tronto.

Guido Bordo, 69, lost his sister and her husband after they were trapped inside their holiday house in the hamlet of Illica, near Accumoli.

"There's no sound from them, we only heard their cats," he told AFP before the deaths were confirmed.

"I wasn't here. As soon as the quake happened, I rushed here. They managed to pull my sister's children out, they're in hospital now," he added, wringing his hands in anguish.

Among the victims was a nine-month-old baby girl whose parents survived, an 18-month-old toddler and two other young children who died with their parents in Accumoli.

Two boys, aged four and seven, were saved by their quick-thinking grandmother, who ushered them under a bed as soon as the shaking began, according to reports. She also survived but lost her husband.

Mr. Renzi said it was too early to consider what might have been done to prevent the disaster.

"Today is the time for tears and emotion," he said, vowing that his government would start reconstruction work first thing.

*Compiled by
Dr.AD Kaushik*