

India monsoon death toll rises as search for missing continues

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New Delhi, July 26 (RHC)-- More than 135 people have died from flooding and landslides triggered by heavy monsoon rains in India, with rescuers searching for dozens more missing on Sunday.

The country's western coast has been inundated by torrential rains since Thursday, with the India Meteorological Department warning of further downpours over the next few days.

In Maharashtra state, 114 people have been killed, including more than 40 in a landslide that hit the hillside village of Taliye, south of Mumbai, on Thursday. Villager Jayram Mahaske, whose relatives remained trapped, told the AFP news agency that “many people were washed away as they were trying to run away” when the landslide hit.

It flattened dozens of homes in a matter of minutes, leaving just two concrete structures standing and cutting off the power supply, local residents told AFP.

Rescuers were scouring the mud and debris for at least 99 others still missing. “My entire team is engaged in rescue operations now,” Rajesh Yawale, National Disaster Response Force inspector who was coordinating rescue operations in the village, told AFP, adding that many bodies were washed away, with some found stuck among trees downstream.

A dozen others were killed in two separate landslides, also south of Mumbai. In parts of Chiplun, water levels rose to nearly 20 feet (6 metres) on Thursday after 24 hours of uninterrupted rain submerged roads and homes.

Eight patients at a local COVID hospital also reportedly died after the power supply to ventilators was cut off by the floods.

In neighbouring Goa state, a woman drowned, state government officials told the Press Trust of India, in what Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said were the “worst floods since 1982”.

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