

MONSOON WREAKS HAVOC ACROSS SIKKIM

Elderly Darap farmer washed away by flood

KUSH HANG LEEWANG & IPR

GEYZING, June 16: An elderly man was killed after he was swept away by flood waters on Friday at Sedang, Darap under Yangthang constituency.

The 90-year-old man, identified as Ash Lal Nugo from Darap, who used to reside in his cowshed on the banks of the river, was washed away when the water level rose due to incessant rain on the intervening night of June 15-16. His body was recovered today afternoon from the river banks at Sikkip, a considerable distance away. Few cattle are also missing.

Police and the panchayats had launched a massive rescue and search operation after the deceased was found missing from Sedang where he used to stay alone, tending his cattle.

The rains that caused the river to swell also dealt severe damage to land and caused erosion of the river bank.

The rain also severely damaged Sangkhola-Chawri suspension bridge and Rimbik-Topung suspension bridge, near Rimbi school at night causing distress to local commuters.

Gyalshing collector visited the affected area in the morning hours accompanied by Yuksam SDM, DFO (T), DPO, WRD AE, officials and panchayats. SNT chairman Basant Tamang and local residents of Rimbi accompanied the visiting team as they toured and inspected the severely eroded river banks upstream to the farthest accessible point. The SSB personnel of 72nd Battalion were also engaged.

Minister and area MLA Bhim Hang Subba and PHE chairman H.N. Subedi also visited the affected area at Rimbi today.

The district collector has instructed both concerned SDMs along with the Forest and Irrigation departments to prepare their reports urgently for submission to authorities, while immediate relief has been provided to the affected by District Disaster Management Authority.



A JCB that was swept away by the Rangpo river. Pic: IPR

Rangpo river washes away footbridge, abutment walls, machines

AJAY THAMI & IPR

PAKYONG, June 16: Due to heavy rainfall last night, the footbridge connecting the villages of Thek and Rolep under Gnathang Machong constituency in Pakyong district swept away by swollen Rangpo river today morning.

Students from Thek village could not go to their school, as it was the only footbridge that leads to the school in Rolep.

Pakyong SDM Tshering Norgyal Theengh, panchayat Gayatri Rai and others visited the site and took stock of the damages caused by the river.

Officials from District Disaster Management Authority visited the various affected areas including Lossing, Rorathang and Rongli adjoining Latuk-Rongli river.

The morning's incessant downpour has significantly raised Rangpo river's highest flood level. This has had a significant impact on the steel bridge abutments of the road from Latuk Thek to Rolep over Rangpo river.

As a result, both the retaining walls and the

freshly constructed road formation were totally washed away.

The flood has badly damaged the steel bridge spanning Rangpo river's two abutments, as well as the abutment wing walls on both the Thek and Rolep sides.

Five families from Latuk- Thek area and ten families from Rolep were evacuated to a safer nearby household with the help of the zilla panchayat and ward panchayats. Cattle sheds were also shifted to the safer locations.

Five different buildings at Rolep are found to be partially destroyed, including a washed-out fish tank, a pig shelter, goat huts, and the cement godown of a NHIDCL contractor.

Additionally, one NHIDCL crane and one earthmover were washed away.

Private lands have also been affected in several locations.

Immediate relief was also provided to the victims as per the State Disaster Response Fund norms and there are still more to be seen and release after meticulous verification.

Namchi water line swept away by landslide

NAMO DIXIT

NAMCHI, June 16: The public of Namchi area will likely face acute water scarcity in the upcoming weeks as the main water transporting network of PHE department was swept away last night at Ravangla Bypass by landslides triggered by heavy rainfall.

This is second time this trunk main has been swept away by landslide in the area. A PHE engineer said the condition is worse than before.

In June 2021, the same trunk main was swept away by landslide, and entire town had to survive on water provided by the PHE department through trucks and tankers for more than a month.

The PHE assistant engineer for Namchi subdivision, Sonam Karthak, blamed the negligence on the part of NHDCIL and Nagen Company who are constructing national highway and tunnels along the pipelines.

"This year too, the weak landform was caught by landslide due to negligence of same company during hill-cutting," the AE said. The PHE department informed that manpower has already been put to work to reconnect the pipelines so that at least a minimum amount of water can be provided to the public of Namchi.

However, the connection through perennial sources of water prepared by PHE department earlier will not be able to support the requirement of the town due to lack of water in those sources owing to late monsoon this year, the assistant engineer further informed. Although, he promised minimum restoration of water in PHE in next 3-4 days, the continuous rainfall and the heavy fog may affect the restoration of pipelines.



A landslide swept away the main water line for Namchi.