

15 killed as torrential rains lash Uttar Pradesh

Torrential rainfall claimed at least 15 lives in various parts of Uttar Pradesh, including the state capital which received the heaviest rains for September in the last 10 years, officials said Saturday.

House collapses due to heavy rains caused most of the deaths, they added.

The officials said the casualties were reported from Rae Bareli, Sitapur, Sultanpur, Hardoi, Siddharth Nagar, Barabanki, Lucknow, Bahraich and Unnao. The details of the damages caused by the rainfall were still being collected.

The maximum number of deaths was reported from Rae Bareli, where four people died in a ceiling collapse.

'Four people died when they got crushed under the ceiling of a house which collapsed in Banpurva village,' Mahendra Kumar, additional district magistrate of Rae Bareli, told IANS on phone.

Two deaths each were reported from Hardoi and Gorakhpur, while Sitapur, Lucknow, Barabanki, Bahraich, Sultanpur, Siddharthnagar and Unnao reported one death each, the officials said.

In Lucknow, which recorded 143.6 mm of rainfall by 8.30 p.m. Friday, the highest in last 10 years in September, several localities were inundated with water.

Moreover, heavy rains along with strong winds at a speed of about 70 km per hour lashed the state capital throughout the day. As a result, scores of trees in several localities including, Aliganj, Nishatganj, Jankipuram, Hazratganj, and Gomtinagar were uprooted.

'Heavy rains have transformed our locality into an urban slum with submerged streets and drain water entering our houses,' said Deepak Mehrotra, a scientist with the Geological Survey of India (GSI) living in Aliganj locality.

The district magistrate ordered all schools and colleges to remain closed.

Traffic snarls were witnessed as hoardings and trees crashed down on streets.

'There are several roof-top hoardings in Gomtinagar locality. Authorities should remove all such hoardings that can cause a mishap at any moment in this season,' said Devesh Kumar, a medical practitioner in Gomtinagar.

Most parts of Lucknow remained without electricity for over 10 hours. The situation in the Old City was no different, as power supply remained disrupted for over 14 hours.

The 33 KV feeder of Alambagh area suffered a breakdown and 500,000 residents of the locality had to go without electricity and water.

'Though the officials claim to have rectified the problem, the voltage is very low,' said Seema Sehgal, a teacher living in Alambagh.

The state meteorological department said Saturday afternoon that the present weather conditions across the state will continue for the next 24 hours.

'The change in weather is due to the depression (low pressure area) that formed over the Bay of Bengal has crossed Orissa and Chhattisgarh and now settled over Uttar Pradesh,' said state met director L.C. Ram.

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