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200 houses affected in flash floods One killed, 7 injured in landslide at Paddar

Kuldeep Sharma

KISHTWAR/JAMMU, Aug 9: One person was killed while seven others were injured in the landslide at Massu Paddar in district Kishtwar.

Police said that local Romesh Kumar was killed while Sant Ram of Kukandroo, Kanta Devi wife of Sant Ram, Shivam son of Sant Ram, Ram Singh of Gulabgarh Paddar (all locals) and Sham Lal Gandotra and his wife Meera Gandotra of Housing Colony Udhampur and Ram Singh of Gulabgarh were injured when a landslide occurred at village Massu Paddar.

Locals said the Machail yatries as well as locals were standing in a shed of the tea stall when land slide happened in which one local lost his life and other seven were injured.

Police reached the spot after getting the news and started shifting the injured to Primary Health Centre Atholi Paddar in which doctors declared one of them as brought dead while the conditions of others were stated to be out of danger.

The heavy rains have also adversely effected the three villages of Tehsil Marwah District Kishtwar, in which near about 15000 Kanals of land have been washed away due to flash floods. These villages have been identified as Changer, Rar, Hynan and Gamrar.

The high level official team under the supervision of Area Development Officer has been air dropped to asses the loss and submits the report to Deputy Commissioner G.R. Bhagat.

The sufferers who were sitting on dharna at Marwah have been assured for every possible help. MLA Kishtwar, Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, D.C Kishtwar, S.P. Kishtwar along with the team rushed to spot through Chopper and interacted with the people there.

Meanwhile, five houses were destroyed in heavy rains and flash floods and over 200 others affected due to submergence of various areas in Jammu, Kishtwar and Samba districts in past 24 hours.

Official reports said that two houses collapsed due to heavy rains in Rajouri and Jammu areas and three were completely washed away in flash floods in Lohakhi Khad and Manawar Tawi rivers here since last night. No casualty was, however, reported in these incidents so far, they said.

Heavy rains, which were still continuing since yesterday in Kishtwar district, triggered flash floods and submerged the Chajjar belt of Marwah tehsil, reports said, adding that a special team of officials, including doctors, led by Kishtwar Deputy Commissioner G. R. Bhagat have been rushed to Marwah with various items for the affected people today.

Due to flash floods, over 200 houses have been affected and 330 families were shifted to safer place.

As many as 252 houses of nearly eight villages namely Garad, Magial Lallu, Magial Avtara, Kharaota, Gigrial, Dhar, Channi Dewano and Platan have been damaged due to flash floods in river Chenab yesterday. The river Chenab was flowing at 36.2 feet above the danger mark and river Tawi at 9.2 feet above the danger mark in Jammu district, till last evening.

IPTK demands UN probe into Kashmir killings

KT NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR, Aug 8: International People's Tribunal on Human Rights and Justice in Kashmir (IPTK) has urged UN investigation into the killing of civilians from June to August.

According to a press note, IPTK filed a complaint with the office of the United Nations high commissioner for human rights in this connection and submitted a 16-page dossier to Dr. Christof Heyns, special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions, in this connection.

The allegation documents a list of 51 civilians who were reportedly killed by military, paramilitary, and police forces in Kashmir between June 11 and August 8.



The special rapporteur is expected to address the allegation to the government of India, typically requesting a response within 60 days. "We request that the United Nations high commission for human rights hold the government of India accountable, investigate the conditions of repression in Kashmir, and ask that a minimum agenda for conflict resolution be followed," said the press note.

IPTK stated that between June 11 and 30, this year 13 killings occurred and of them were Muslim boys and men. Between July 1 to 31, 13 deaths (12 Muslim boys and men and a Muslim woman) occurred. Likewise, between August 1 to 8, 25 killings occurred (23 Muslim boys and men and two Muslim women).

IPTK stated that the widespread peaceable protests across Kashmir dissenting the suppression of civil society by Indian forces have been continuously brutalized by the police, military, and paramilitary without provocation. Indian forces have acted with the knowledge and sanction of the Government of India and the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, using human rights violations to maintain military governance. In numerous instances, the repeated repression by state forces provoked civilians to engage in stone pelting and to be in non-compliance with unremitting curfews. In certain instances civilians engaged in acts of violence, including arson. There have been no reports of deaths of military, paramilitary, and police personnel resulting from violent acts by civilians, IPTK added.

Each instance of civilian violence documented was provoked by the first and unmitigated use of force on civilians and/or persistent extrajudicial killings on the part of Indian forces. The cases recorded by IPTK are often interconnected -- individuals protesting the actions of Indian forces, caught in the midst of the unrest, or mourning the death of a civilian killed, without provocation, by Indian forces, were fired upon, leading to other killings by Indian forces, more civilian protests, greater use of force by the police and paramilitary, use of torture in certain instances by Indian forces, more killings by Indian forces, larger, even violent, civilian protests, and further state repression. They tell a story of the web of continued violence in which civil society in Kashmir is confined, IPTK said.

In the deaths documented by IPTK, family and community members were largely unable to lodge First Information Reports (FIRs) due to unrest in their locality, or their requests to record FIRs were denied by the police. In most instances where FIRs have been lodged, the police have recorded them without consulting relevant stakeholders. At times, personnel from police stations whose officers were perpetrators of the crime, or personnel from neighbouring police stations, recorded the FIRs. Indian forces have threatened eyewitnesses. Civil society activists and media persons were denied access to localities in which the killings took place. Massive numbers of civilians have been injured this summer by the Indian military, paramilitary, and police in Kashmir. Recent acts of stone pelting, and incidents in which civilians damaged state property and engaged in arson, have also caused injury to paramilitary and police personnel. Accurate, independently derived figures are not available. "We note that stone pelting, and selective incidents of arson and violence are not causal to the violence that is prevalent in Kashmir today," IPTK said. Along with civilians, Kashmiri journalists have been targeted by Indian forces. Arrests have been made on uncorroborated suspicion, as evidenced by the cases of Advocate Qayoom, Advocate Shaheen, and Muhamad Fazili. Police have engaged in extortion and demanded bribes from those in custody and those seeking to free the imprisoned.

Between January 1 and August 8, this year reportedly 84 civilians have been killed (66 were killed by Indian forces, including military, paramilitary, and police), 120 persons identified as militants have been killed, and 66 Indian forces personnel have been killed (34 were killed by militants, 16 committed suicide, 2 died in fratricidal killings, eight died in grenade/mine explosions, and 6 were killed by unidentified gunmen). Fake encounter killings are utilized to enhance the supposition of cross-border terrorism. Cross-line of control infiltrations and insurgency into Kashmir are real and significant issues, even as the Indian state exaggerates these realities to escalate militarization.

The ITPK viewed that during the humanitarian crisis that has subsumed the Kashmir Valley in summer this civil disobedience paralleled that of 1989 as well as 2008. State institutions, certain human rights organizations, and dominant media have asserted that civil society protests are being orchestrated by political interest

groups in and outside Kashmir, with the objective of endorsing violence. Such contention refuses to recognize the inequitable historical-political power relations at play between the states of India and Pakistan and the Kashmiri peoples, and distorts the conditions that have provoked civilian youth to throw stones and selectively use arson and attack this summer.

ITPK has also come forward with minimum agenda for conflict resolution. It has favoured immediate halt to, and moratorium on, extrajudicial killings, and the use of torture, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, and gendered violence by the Indian military, paramilitary, and police. Agreement to non-interference in the exercise of civil liberties of Kashmiris, including the right to civil disobedience, and freedom of speech, movement, and travel have also been projected in the report. Pro-active demilitarization and the immediate revocation of authoritarian laws. Release of political prisoners. Detention and torture centres, including in army camps, be identified, made public, and dismantled. Instatement of a Truth and Justice Commission for political and psychosocial reparation, permitting spaces for acknowledging the culture of grief and the staggering corporeal and spiritual fatalities of the past two decades, to imagine and energize local and civil society initiatives in order to heal, and imagine a different future.

ITPK also supports cultural, economic and peace initiatives by disenfranchised groups, including half-widows, families of the disappeared, minority communities, and former militants. International and transparent investigations into torture, disappearances, gendered violence, unlawful deaths, and unknown and mass graves constitutive of crimes against humanity committed by the Indian military, paramilitary, and police. Open and transparent dialogue toward conflict resolution between Kashmir, India, and Pakistan, inclusive of Kashmiri civil society and leadership as primary stakeholders.

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