

India floods leave 240 dead, 1.5 million homeless

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New Delhi - Heavy floods in southern and western India have killed 240 people and left more than 1.5 million homeless, news reports said Monday.

Days of heavy rains led to the worst floods in southern Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh states in 60 years, inundating hundreds of villages in the region.

Karnataka accounted for 178 deaths and neighbouring Andhra Pradesh registered 37 deaths, the PTI news agency reported.

At least 25 people were killed in flood-related incidents in western Maharashtra state, the report said.

In Karnataka, the local government focused on rehabilitation efforts with the rains having subsided over the weekend.

In the worst-hit northern regions of the state, an estimated 1 million people were rendered homeless, officials told the NDTV network.

More than 300,000 flood victims were lodged in 1,200 relief camps in the state. Karnataka chief minister BS Yeddyurappa pledged to rebuild 200,000 homes that had been destroyed in the floods, with help from the private sector.

NDTV reported that the river Krishna had turned into a sea in Andhra Pradesh, flooding thousands of homes and forcing residents to leave all belongings and take refuge in government relief camps. Government officials said 500,000 people had been evacuated from their homes across the state.

The chairwoman of India's ruling United Progressive Alliance, Sonia Gandhi, and Federal Home Minister Palaniappan Chidambaram undertook an aerial survey of the affected states on Monday.

More than 1,400 people have died across 19 of India's 28 states during the monsoon rains this year.

The monsoon season usually begins in June and wanes by September. Heavy cloud formations over the Arabian Sea to the west of India's southern peninsula and a depression over the Bay of Bengal in the east have caused the unusually heavy rains, according to the Meteorology Department.

http://www.monstersandcritics.com/news/southasia/news/article_1505118.php/India-floods-leave-240-dead-1-5-million-homeless