

# Monsoon toll rises across South Asia

● **Floods and landslides killed at least 67 people across Nepal**

● **In Bangladesh, at least 29 have died**

New Delhi, India

At least 12 people were killed when a house collapsed in northern India following heavy monsoon rain which has left more than 100 dead across South Asia, officials said yesterday.

Floods and landslides caused by torrential downpours have killed at least 67 people across Nepal while 30 more are missing, police said.

In Bangladesh, at least 29 people have died since July 9 including 18 who were hit by lightning and seven who drowned after their boat capsized in choppy waters in the Bay of Bengal.

Another 10 people have died in overcrowded Rohingya refugee camps in southeast Bangladesh where thousands of shanty homes have been destroyed.

In the latest monsoon-related tragedy in India, a four-storey building on a hillside in the northern state of Himachal Pradesh collapsed, killing 12 people and trapping at least seven others. The structure --



An Indian rickshaw puller transports commuters on a flooded street after a heavy downpour at Baldakhal village in Agartala, the capital of northeastern state of Tripura,

located near popular tourist destination Shimla -- came down on Sunday following days of heavy downpours.

Rescue workers searched the rubble for survivors, while heavy machinery removed heaps of mangled steel and wires from



Indian men shelter under a plastic sheet and an umbrella during heavy monsoon rains at India Gate in New Delhi

the muddied debris.

Local official K.C. Chaman said 12 people had died in the collapse, adding that rescuers

were looking "for at least seven other people" trapped in the debris.

One soldier -- who was pulled

out alive from the rubble -- said they had gathered for a party in the building's restaurant, "but suddenly the building shook and collapsed".

Such incidents are common across the region during the monsoon because of dilapidated structures that buckle under the weight of continuous rain.

The June to September monsoon causes widespread death and destruction across South Asia each year.

Floods have devastated much of the northeastern Indian state of Assam where four people died on Sunday after being swept away by sudden torrents.

The state's Kaziranga National Park, a UNESCO-recognised reserve and home to two-thirds of the world's one-horned rhinos, has also been seriously affected by the weather.

In the eastern state of Bihar, five rivers were flowing over the danger levels with more rain forecast over the next few days.

The downpours have eased in Nepal but authorities still fear the death toll could rise, said police spokesman Bishwaraj Pokharel, who gave the latest number of dead and missing from floods and landslides.

"There are the challenges of resettlement of the displaced as many houses.. have been swept away. We are also cautious about the risk of epidemics due to polluted water," Pokharel said.

## Philippines quake



A motorist drives past a destroyed house after a large earthquake that hit Surigao City, in southern island of Mindanao. Fifty-one people were injured and several homes, churches and other buildings damaged on Saturday when an earthquake sent terrified residents of the southern Philippines fleeing

## Taliban bomb kills at least 11 Afghans

Kandahar, Afghanistan

At least 11 civilians were killed and dozens more wounded Monday after their vehicle hit a bomb in southern Afghanistan that officials told AFP had been planted by the Taliban.

The deaths come just one week after Taliban and Afghan officials unveiled a "roadmap for peace" in which they pledged to eliminate civilian casualties.

It was not immediately clear if the victims had been travelling in a bus or in the back of a large truck.

## Hong Kong leader condemns 'rioters' after violent mall clash

Hong Kong, China

Anti-government protesters who fought police inside a Hong Kong shopping mall were "rioters", the finance hub's pro-Beijing leader said Monday, as she threw her support behind the city's beleaguered police force following another weekend of clashes.

Hong Kong's ongoing political crisis deepened further on Sunday as riot police and protesters fought running battles inside a shopping complex packed with luxury stores.

Police used pepper spray and batons against small groups of protesters, who responded by hurling umbrellas, bottles and other projectiles, in a night of fresh violence.

Officers and protesters were injured in the chaotic melee which left blood-



A police officer falls down during a clash inside a shopping arcade in Sha Tin of Hong Kong after a rally against a controversial extradition law proposal in Sha Tin district of Hong Kong

stains on the floor and at least 28 people needing hospital treatment.

City leader Carrie Lam rounded on protesters after visiting injured officers Monday.

"They were committed to the duties, and also very pro-

fessional and restrained. But they were wantonly attacked by rioters -- I think we can really describe them as rioters," Lam told reporters.

Lam said police and prosecutors will press charges following investigations.

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