

Millions stranded, dozens dead as flooding hits Bangladesh and India

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A fruit vendor sells bananas along a flooded street following heavy rains in Sylhet, Bangladesh.

Heavy rains have caused widespread flooding in parts of Bangladesh and India, leaving millions stranded and at least 57 dead, officials said

Saturday.

In Bangladesh, about two million people have been marooned by the worst floods in the country's northeast for nearly two decades.

At least 100 villages at Zakiganj were inundated after floodwater rushing from India's northeast breached a major embankment on the Barak River, said Mosharraf Hossain, the chief government administrator of the Sylhet region.

"Some two million people have been stranded by floods so far," he told AFP, adding that at least 10 people have been killed this week.

Many parts of Bangladesh and neighbouring regions in India are prone to flooding, and experts say that [climate change](#) is increasing the likelihood of extreme weather events around the world.

Every extra degree of global warming increases the amount of water in the atmosphere by about seven percent, with inevitable effects on rainfall.

At least 47 people have been killed in India this week in days of flooding, landslides and thunderstorms, according to local disaster management authorities.

In Assam state, which borders Bangladesh, at least 14 people have died in landslides and floods.

Assam authorities said Saturday more than 850,000 people in about 3,200 villages have been affected by the floods, triggered by [torrential rains](#) that submerged swathes of farmland and damaged thousands of homes.

Nearly 90,000 people have been moved to state-run relief shelters as [water levels](#) in rivers run high and large swathes of land remain submerged in most districts.

West of Assam, at least 33 people were killed in Bihar state in thunderstorms on Thursday.

More than three dozen people were injured in the unseasonal weather events that damaged hundreds of hectares of standing crops and thousands of fruit trees.

Bihar has also suffered an intense heatwave this week, with temperatures reaching 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit).

'Blessing and curse'

In Bangladesh's Zakiganj, people were seen fishing on submerged roads and some residents took their cattle to flood shelters.

Bus driver Shamim Ahmed, 50, told AFP: "My house is under waist [deep water](#). There is no [drinking water](#), we are harvesting [rain water](#)."

"Rain is simultaneously a blessing and a curse for us now."

All the furniture in widow Lalila Begum's home was ruined, she said, but she and her two daughters were staying put, hoping the waters would recede within a day or two.

"My two daughters and I put one bed on another and are living on top of it," she said. "There's scarcity of food. We're sharing one person's food and one meal a day."

Floodwater has entered many parts of Sylhet city, the largest in the

northeast, where another official told AFP about 50,000 families had been without power for days.

Hossain, the chief administrator, said the flooding was driven by both rains and the onrush of water from across the border in Assam.

But officials said the broken embankment on the border at Zakiganj could only be fixed once the [water](#) level dropped.

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