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UAVs to scrutinise operations

Dehradun: June 24, 2013 DHNS



A drone that had floored viewers of Bollywood movie "3 Idiots" was flown by paramilitary force ITBP to pick up images of devastation and human lives in treacherous terrain and worst affected regins Kedarnath, Bhairav Chotti and Jungle Chotti.

Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) 'Netra' have been deployed to scan the air space in flood-ravaged Uttarakhand in hope of locating missing survivors even as relief and rescue operations by armed forces and other agencies on Monday were hindered due to moderate to heavy rainfall and landslides. The UAV will help to locate survivors with precision.

Twice during the day, at least five choppers from the airport near state capital Dehradun, which was lashed by heavy rain, tried evacuation sorties but returned to base due to bad weather.

Fresh landslides in Rudraprayag and on the Badrinath highway also choked the route impeding rescue work. There are also some reports of a cloudburst in Mulan village in Pauri following incessant rains. As the magnitude of the disaster, especially in its epicentre area Kedarnath, starts to show up, officials sources indicate that the death toll could even be three-fold more than the 1000 officially estimated by the CM himself. The toll could rise once the debris is cleared.

Despite heavy rains, the Army and the ITPB stepped up its rescue operations at the ground level. People stuck in flood-ravaged locations in Uttarakhand were shifted to safer locations. The Army has set up a major base camp in Gauchar, some 30 km from Rudraprayag where people were being brought by foot.

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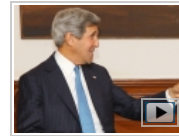
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