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NDMA Deploys UAV to Trace Missing Bodies

By Mouli Mareedu | Published: 13th June 2014 06:00 AM Last Updated: 13th June 2014 12:49 AM

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The body of Shabbir Hussain Sheikh, one of the students who died in the Beas river tragedy, being brought Hyderabad on Thursday. (R) Divers jumping into the Beas river during a search operation in Mandi | PTI

The body of Shabbir Hussain Sheikh, one of the students who died in the Beas river tragedy, being brought to Hyderabad on Thursday. (R) Divers jumping into the Beas river during a search operation in Mandi | PTI

HYDERABAD: With rescue teams finding it difficult to trace the bodies of the missing students of VNR Vignan Jyothi Institute of Engineering and Technology, who were washed away in river Beas at Mandi in Himachal Pradesh, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Thursday deployed an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), also called remotely-piloted aircraft.

The vehicle, pressed into service at the behest of NDMA Vice-Chairman Marri Sashidhar Reddy, sent signals to the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams indicating the presence of two bodies in the river a few kilometres from the Larji dam. The NDRF teams fished out the bodies soon after.

"We have intensified the search by using a UAV that will help us locate the bodies if they are floating or stuck amidst rocks under water. Specially-designed operation applications have been installed in the UAV to locate the bodies. Even though it is very difficult to trace the bodies in the river due to the heavy flow of water, we have deployed additional teams to retrieve the bodies as soon as possible," Reddy, who is camping at the accident spot, told Express over phone.

The two bodies have been identified as those of T Upender of Palaocha in Khammam district and G Aravind Kumar, a resident of Vanasthalipuram here. Doctors conducted postmortem and shifted the bodies to Delhi by road due to bad weather and heavy rain. The bodies will be brought to Hyderabad by flight either tonight or Friday morning.

Officials, meanwhile, brought the body of Mohammed Shabbir to the city on Thursday afternoon and handed it over to his family members, who are residents of Serilingampally. His body was recovered Wednesday. With the rescue teams tracing two more bodies on Thursday, the toll in the mishap has touched eight. Sixteen students are still missing.

The doctors, who conducted the postmortem, found serious head injuries on the bodies. Twenty four out of the 48 students of the VNR Vijyana Jyothi Institute of Engineering here, who had gone on a study tour on June 3, were swept away in the swirling waters of the Beas river while taking photographs on Sunday.

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