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Islamabad, July 30 (RHC)-- Flash floods triggered by torrential monsoon rains in Pakistan have caused countrywide destruction, claimed hundreds of lives, and left thousands homeless.

According to the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)'s data, the disaster so far has claimed 357 lives, left 408 injured, damaged over 23,700 houses, and swept away 52 bridges linking various parts of the country. The floods have also killed 1,787 livestock and damaged 977 kilometers of roads elsewhere.

In a statement on Friday, the NDMA warned that water flows in the Chenab River will reach “medium to high flood” within the next 24 hours, advising concerned civil administrations to people living along the banks of the river and in the vicinity of adjoining nullahs about the expected increase of water flows.

It also advised local residents to shift their cattle away from low-lying areas adjacent to the river, adding that vehicle movement in low-lying areas and at-risk areas should be restricted.

The NDMA also forewarned travelers and tourists about risks posed at flood-vulnerable locations and stressed that police and local administrations should divert tourists to safe waiting areas with a sufficient supply of food, water, and essential medicines in case of dangerous road conditions.

As local authorities declared, more than 200 villagers in Lasbela and 2300 individuals from 4 villages in the Othal area of Balochistan have been evacuated to safer places.

The NDMA and Provincial Disaster Management Authorities (PDMAs) have established dozens of makeshift camps for the homeless. All civic agencies and rescue services will remain alert and ensure the availability of personnel and equipment during the next 24 hours, especially in at-risk areas.

Pakistan Army, Navy, FC, and Rangers troops are constantly assisting the civil administration and local communities in all flood-affected areas. The Pakistani military has so far dispatched two helicopters to help with the rescue work in the flood-stricken villages.

Prime Minister Shaba Sharif tweeted Thursday that Pakistan is facing the challenges of climate change and stressed the need to address the problem of current flash flooding.

“Climate change is an undeniable reality of our times and has serious consequences for developing countries like Pakistan ... The government is aligning its development goals with the climate change requirements,” he said.

As the Pakistan Meteorological Department predicted, the country will face more rains during the ongoing week, and monsoon currents likely to shift and intensify in upper and central parts of Pakistan.

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