

Peru's President Declares Avalanche Area State of Emergency



Lima, March 26 (teleSUR-RHC) Peruvian President Ollanta Humala declared Chosica in a state of emergency on Wednesday, two days after an avalanche hit the area.

The avalanche was caused by heavy rains carrying rocks and mud from the top of the mountains. Chosica is a district 24,8 miles from Lima. The avalanche in the area left seven dead and dozens injured.

Ray of Light neighborhood is one of the most affected in the Chosica district close the capital of Peru. According to authorities, all houses in the neighborhood are damaged.

Celedonia Álvarez is a Chosica resident who lost three of her four children aged 3, 11, and 22. She also lost her house and her place of work. "My children are dead and on top of that I don't have anything left, all my things have been taken away," she stated, and proceeded to ask for donations from those passing by like journalists, rescue workers, and other residents.

The preliminary report from authorities in charge has said that 110 houses are inhabitable and another 95 have minor damage. Around 5 residents are still missing.

Citizens from the area claim this tragedy could have been avoided. They say they told authorities about the risks during the rainy season but they were not listening.

Paulino Escobar, who lost his house asked "What are we? Are we a stepson of our government or of those in the government? Why didn't they prevent this?" He continued, "we are already in the avalanche season and if they would have seen the problems that were going to happen, I would have not suffered what I'm suffering."

By Wednesday, the government installed two medical posts to attend to those injured. Health personnel are informing residents about prevention of dengue and chikungunya during emergencies. A small group of government personnel is helping clear certain roads and entrances to houses and Prime Minister Ana Jara has arrived to inspect advances.

The Central Highway that connects Lima with the east of Peru is blocked in several parts. Many vehicles were left buried under the mud and communities like Santa Eulalia and Ricardo Palma remain partially isolated.

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