National Institute of Advanced Studies

The Green Ribbon

*A Monthly Monitor of the **NIAS C3SP initiative** on Climate Change, Civil Society and Peace*

NIAS-STIR Programme

global politics

Discourses | Trajectories | Forecasts

The 2026 Nepal Floods

Responses, Challenges, Lessons and the Road Ahead



Image source: The Kathmandu Post, PMO, UNICEF

The Green Ribbon #06, September 2026

NIAS Monthly Monitor on Climate Change, Civil Society & Peace supported by GPPAC South Asia and CLIMPSE

National Institute of Advanced Studies
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About NIAS

National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) was conceived and founded in 1988 by JRD Tata and Dr Raja Ramanna with an objective to nurture a broad base of scholars, managers and leaders who would respond to the complex challenges that face contemporary India and global society, with insight, sensitivity, confidence and dedication.

About NIAS Climate Change, Civil Society & Peace (C3SP) Initiative

The C3SP Monitor is a research initiative at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) dedicated to building a comprehensive database on civic responses to climate change across South Asia. The monitor focuses on four core objectives: tracking regional media coverage of climate events; documenting localized individual and collective adaptation strategies; developing empirical case studies; and curating an open-access resource base.

Beyond data collection, the NIAS C3SP serves as an active capacity-building platform. Aligning with the founding mission of NIAS to nurture the next generation of researchers, the initiative invests in young scholars - equipping them to conduct rigorous fieldwork, capture community narratives, and analyse the intersection of climate resilience, civil society, and peacebuilding.

The Green Ribbon is designed as a NIAS Monthly Monitor, addressing the above two.

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About GPPAC South Asia & the CLIMPSE

The monitor is supported by GPPAC South Asia's Climate, Peace, and Security (CLIMPSE) research initiative. The CLIMPSE initiative aims to strengthen local peacebuilders' capacity by deepening awareness of the links between climate, peace, and security, and strengthening practical skills, local peacebuilders are better equipped to develop and implement climate-sensitive peacebuilding policies, practices, and infrastructures in their communities. It also aims to amplify local knowledge and strengthening their capacity. The CLIMPSE initiative is co-funded by the European Union.

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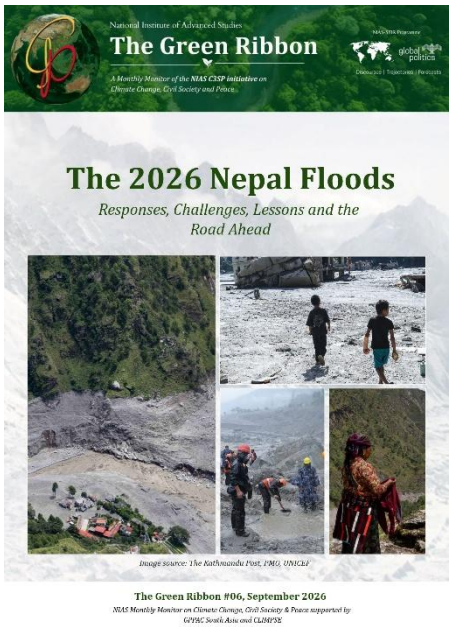
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Source: Resolve Support Media / ISAF Regional Command, Ahadul Karim Khan / Dhaka Tribune, Ali Raza / AP, UNDP, Mongabay, TBS News, Orissa Post

Editor's Note

August 2026: Lessons from Nepal Floods

This sixth issue of The *Green Ribbon* has the latest environmental disaster in the Himalayan region as the main focus. The disaster that stuck Nepal during the last week of August underlines the nature of the threat from the climate change to the region. The extent and the magnitude of the disaster has left a colossal human and infrastructural casualties. Given the infrastructure and economic capacity of the state, Nepal would take a longer time to recover. This is the second major natural disaster that Nepal has faced during the last two decades. In 2015, Nepal witnessed a huge earthquake, killing more than 8000.

The *Green Ribbon* team at the Institute stands in solidarity with the people of Nepal in this difficult time. It would take years for the resilient Nepali nation to recover; rest of the international community, and the immediate region will have to support Nepal's recovery. Nepal and its people have faced multiple natural disasters; but the scale is increasing, and the time between the natural disasters are shrinking. Nepal needs better early warning systems to predict natural disasters and provide advanced warnings with adequate time to face the natural wrath. Nepal also needs a better infrastructure that is disaster resilient.

Nepal also needs to augment its capacity to address rescue, relief and long-term rehabilitation. It is not merely rebuilding; it is about building better and safer. While the state will have to take the responsibility of building a resilient infrastructure and invest in early warnings, the civil society has a role to play in immediate rescue and relief when the disaster strikes. Rest of the region in South Asia has also been facing natural disasters, and can share their experiences with Nepal. India in particular, with a long border, and sharing a similar Himalayan geography on Nepal's east and west is better placed to support Kathmandu with technical needs and scientific inputs. The disaster in Nepal should unite the region to address a common challenge. And any development in the Himalayas would have an impact on the entire region.

This edition has a few commentaries, focusing on Nepal's floods. Sreemaya Nair's note analyses the Nepal's geographic and technical challenges in addressing the immediate aftermath because of its remote regions and nascent early warning and disaster response systems. Priyanka Makhijani's note explains what happened along the Nepal-China border with the collapse of a glacier, and how the subsequent flow of debris should be seen as more than a glacial lake outburst. Preetha Renganarayanan's note looks at the role of the civil society in the immediate relief work. Brighty Ann Sarah compares the landslides in Kerala with what happened in Nepal. Preetha's second note, provides a few policy recommendations on how to face the challenge further.

In this issue, we have focused mainly on the floods in Nepal. Besides, the issue also contains our regular "**Documentation**" section, as our team continues to work on the database of major regional developments in climate policy and environmental action.

For the next issue, we return to our focus on field-based research with focus notes drawing on two key fieldwork efforts in Chennai and Kanyakumari on climate change, coastal communities and gender. The case study from Chennai examines how climate change is experienced by fishing communities, its implications for livelihoods, the specific challenges faced by women, gaps in adaptation and the way forward. The issue will also feature interviews with community representatives and women from the Mukkuvar fisherfolk community in Kanyakumari along with a case study on strengthening coastal women's livelihood resilience.

Continuing our focus on capacity building and youth engagement, the October issue will also feature over ten stories of individuals and organisations working on climate action across the Indian neighbourhood, drawn from the posters presented at the second edition of our '*Grass Roots'* poster workshop, held in August on "*Climate Action from the Ground: Stories of Individuals and Organisations across the Indian Neighbourhood*."

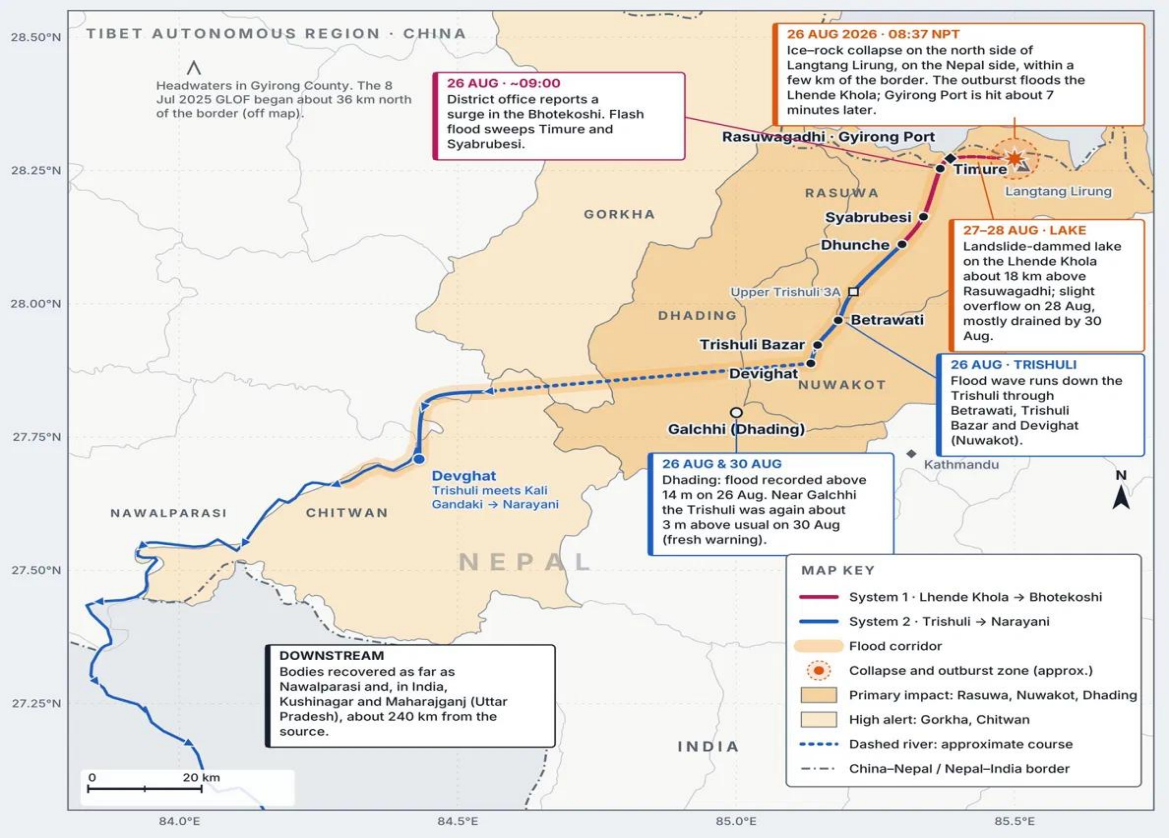
D Suba Chandran
Editor, *The Green Ribbon*.

Case Studies

The 2026 Nepal Floods:

The Challenge of remote regions, Early warning and Disaster response mechanisms in Nepal

Sreemaya Nair



Source: AI Generated

In the news

On 26 August, The Kathmandu Post reported that the Rasuwa District Administration Office received reports of a surge in the Bhotekoshi River that could increase the risk of downstream flooding towards the Trishuli River. A flash flood swept through the Timure and Syabrubesi areas of Rasuwa. The flood's origin is situated in a high-vulnerability zone for Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs).

The disaster was triggered by a massive rock-and-ice avalanche following a glacial collapse on the Langtang Lirung peak, a subrange of the Nepalese Himalayas. As there were no rains before and during the floods, a glacial lake burst was suspected. According to available news reports, the primary trigger was glacial collapse and debris flow, potentially involving water and ice released during the collapse.

On 28 August, The Kathmandu Post reported that the confirmed death toll from the flood reached 538, with 977 still missing. The Nepali Army notified the Rasuwa Chief District Officer that the newly formed barrier lake near the Chhochen Khola-Purepu Tsangpo confluence had breached. The US Geological Survey confirmed that there was no earthquake, and the 4.4-magnitude signal was a result of a glacier collapse that led to the Bhotekoshi flood.

Issues at large



Source: The Kathmandu Post

1. Remote regions and limited early warning systems in the Himalayas

The initial collapse occurred in an extremely remote region near the Nepal–China border, while the resulting debris flow travelled nearly 100 kilometres downstream along the Bhotekoshi and Trishuli river systems. The region's steep terrain, limited road connectivity and destruction of access routes severely complicated rescue operations. Although Nepal had routine flash-flood warnings in place, there was no specific warning predicting the sudden glacial collapse and resulting flood wave; the flood arrived within minutes, highlighting the limitations of existing transboundary early-warning systems.

2. Destruction of critical infrastructure and resulting isolation

Critical infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and hydropower installations, has been destroyed along the path of the flood. Transport infrastructure damage has isolated several communities and severely restricted access for rescue operations, humanitarian aid and relief supplies. The US Geological Survey estimates that the flood travelled nearly 100 kilometres, affecting populated areas downstream and damaging infrastructure on both sides of the Nepal–China border. The damaged area is strategically important for Nepal–China connectivity, including the route towards the Gyirong border area in Tibet.

3. Secondary environmental hazards and expanding disaster zones

The collapse and subsequent deposition of enormous quantities of ice, rock, and sediment created a natural barrier lake near the confluence of the Chhochen Khola and Purepu Tsangpo rivers. The lake initially held an estimated 1.5–2 million cubic metres of water, with an additional three million cubic metres of water estimated to enter, creating the possibility of another destructive downstream surge. On 28 August, the barrier lake breached, just a few days before China's estimated timeline, prompting temporary disruption of rescue operations as authorities assessed the risk of another flood wave entering the Bhotekoshi system. As the glacial collapse triggered an avalanche, debris flow, river blockage, temporary lake formation, and a subsequent flood, the threat is therefore not confined to the original disaster zone but extends hundreds of kilometres downstream, including communities and infrastructure that had already been damaged.

4. Emergency management and command changes

Helicopter operations were initially severely constrained by the terrain, damaged helipads, high floodwaters and poor accessibility which led to the Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) at Tribhuvan International Airport to go through a rapid succession of leadership changes, shifting from a Home Ministry deputy secretary on the morning of 26 August, to a joint-secretary in the evening, to an Army colonel on 27 August, and finally being placed under Law Minister Sobita Gautam on the morning of 28 August to streamline flight management, while the destruction of roads and bridges prevented rapid deployment of ground rescue teams. The disaster highlights a transboundary monitoring gap between Nepal and Tibet.

5. Vulnerability and climate risks in the Himalayan region

The Himalayan region is highly sensitive to glacial collapses, ice-rock avalanches, and Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs), especially because of its cascading nature, where one disaster is almost always accompanied by another. Scientists have warned that rising temperatures are accelerating glacier melt and destabilising ice, rock and permafrost at high elevations. Nepal, Tibet and the wider Hindu Kush Himalayan region are estimated to possess 25,614 glacial lakes, out of which 47 are deemed potential outburst risks. The current disaster is particularly significant because the same Bhotekoshi River experienced another major flood in July 2025, when a rapidly shrinking supraglacial lake in the upper Purepu Tsangpo contributed to a destructive flood. The recurrence within just over a year showcases that this is not an isolated natural disaster but part of a broader pattern of cascading cryosphere hazards.

About the author

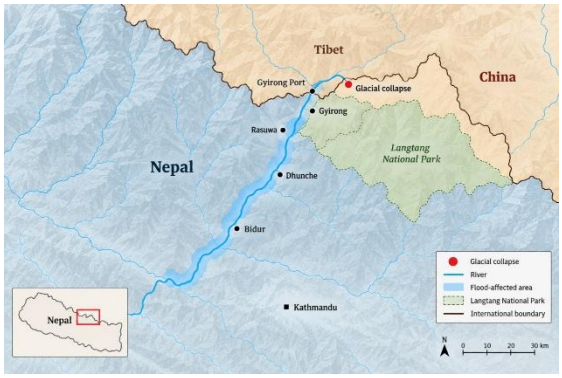
Sreemaya Nair *is currently pursuing her postgraduate degree from the Department of Defence and Strategic Studies, University of Madras, Chennai, and is part of the Neighbourhood Reader team at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS).*

Case studies

The 2026 Nepal Floods:

The Gyirong Glacier, Vulnerabilities along China-Nepal border in the Himalayas, and the Crisis response

Priyanka Makhijani



Source: AI Generated

On 26 August, a massive section of ice and rock broke away from the Langtang Lirung peak in the Himalayas, sending a debris-laden flood into Gyirong County on the Chinese side of the Nepal–China border. The wave destroyed Gyirong Port, a major Chinese border crossing and Belt and Road-linked trade hub, along with its customs buildings, a bridge, roads, telecommunications towers and power lines, and cut the area off from the outside world for days. As reported by Reuters and Chinese state media, China's official toll in Gyirong County stands at 16 dead and several hundred missing, including more than 260 foreign nationals, and Beijing has since restricted entry to the border zone. The same glacier collapse sent floodwater downstream into Nepal, where the confirmed death toll has climbed past a thousand, with thousands more still missing. However, Tibetan rights groups, cited by The Guardian and Radio Free Asia, argue that the figures may understate the true scale of the loss inside Tibet as well, given the tight controls on independent reporting from the region. What triggered the collapse, what does the disaster reveal about development choices on the border, how has the Chinese state responded, what lessons are being drawn, and how is Beijing framing the event?

What caused the glacier to collapse, and how did the flood reach the border?

Chinese and Nepali scientists broadly agree on the mechanism, even if the deeper cause is still being studied. A high-altitude glacier on Langtang Lirung broke away, fell roughly 4,000 feet, and pulverised rock and ice into a fast-moving avalanche that dammed a river before bursting through as a flood. Experts from the Chinese Academy of Sciences, quoted in Chinese and international coverage, have described it as a "complex multi-hazard cascade" an ice-rock avalanche, debris flow and river-blockage in sequence rather than a single, simple glacial-lake outburst. Whether the initial break was set off by a seismic tremor, prolonged high-altitude warming, or slow accumulated instability in the ice remains unresolved.

Why was a major border crossing rebuilt on ground already known to be hazardous?

Gyirong Port was a significant Chinese infrastructure investment, handling hundreds of millions of dollars in annual trade with Nepal and serving as a gateway for Kailash pilgrimage tourism. It had already been damaged and closed for repairs after a similar, smaller flood roughly fourteen months earlier. Its continued operation on largely the same site, before the underlying glacial and landslide hazards were fully assessed or mitigated, has drawn scrutiny from hazard specialists and Chinese commentators alike Chinese Digital Times has noted that online discussion of "site selection" and the recurrence of geological disasters near the port briefly trended on Chinese social media before fading from the country's trending-topics lists.

What has Beijing's rescue and relief effort looked like on the ground?

Beijing moved quickly at the political level: President Xi Jinping ordered an "all-out" rescue effort and chaired a Politburo meeting on the disaster, and Premier Li Qiang visited the affected area. On the ground, China deployed hundreds of firefighters, rescue dogs, drones and military aircraft, evacuated more than a thousand tourists and residents, and built an emergency road corridor to reach the cut-off crossing. Rescue work was twice suspended over the risk of a secondary breach from an unstable barrier lake upstream, then resumed once engineers judged the risk manageable. China also sent USD 2 million in emergency relief to Nepal and coordinated the rescue of its own nationals stranded across the border. Even so, the harder, longer task clearing debris, rebuilding the port, and restoring normal life to Gyirong County is still under way well over a week on.

Could this recurrence have been anticipated, and what is it forcing both governments to reconsider?

The recurrence of destructive flooding at the same crossing within about a year has raised pointed questions about whether existing glacial and landslide monitoring in the Himalayas is adequate, and whether an earlier warning system could have reduced casualties on both sides of the border. Both Chinese and Nepali officials have pointed to climate change as a contributing factor, noting that Himalayan glaciers are melting and destabilising faster than in previous decades, and have called for joint China–Nepal monitoring and information-sharing to anticipate future cascades.

How does Beijing's official account of the disaster hold up against competing versions of events?

Beijing's official line, delivered through the foreign ministry and state broadcaster CCTV, is that the flood was a climate-driven natural disaster rather than a preventable infrastructure or governance failure; Chinese experts have attributed it to accelerating glacial melt on the Tibetan Plateau under global warming. China's embassy in Kathmandu has firmly pushed back on alternative accounts, rejecting Nepali suggestions that a dam collapse on the Chinese side caused the disaster or that China failed to give adequate warning, dismissing such claims as "fake news" and stating that "accusation helps nothing, cooperation saves lives." Beijing has also called "malicious speculation" any suggestion that its hydropower projects in the region contributed to the flood. Nepal's government has broadly converged on the same climate-change explanation, though it has separately used the disaster to press wealthier, higher-emitting nations for climate support.

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Case studies

The 2026 Nepal Floods:

The Civil society responses, Lessons learned, and Challenges ahead

Preetha Renganarayanan



Source: The Kathmandu Post

On 26 August 2026, an ice-and-rock avalanche on the Nepal-China border triggered a sudden flood that crossed into Nepal within minutes, devastating parts of Rasuwa, Nuwakot and Dhading. By early September, more than 1,300 people had been confirmed dead and more than 5,000 remained missing. The flood destroyed roads, bridges, communications and local government infrastructure, with communities, volunteers and civil society organisations becoming important sources of assistance and information. Nepal's experience following the 2015 earthquake provides an important reference point here, where civil society played a significant role across rescue, relief and recovery. Against this backdrop, the note examines the role of civil society in Nepal's disaster response, lessons from previous disasters, immediate challenges, followed by measures to strengthen civil society's role in Nepal's disaster-management ecosystem.

What role does civil society play in Nepal's disaster response?

First, civil society bridges the operational gaps when formal systems are stretched thin.

The 2015 earthquake showed that civil society organisations (CSOs) could work across the disaster cycle, from search and rescue to recovery and resilience-building. In a 2016 report, the European Institute for Asian Studies stated that domestic CSOs proved valuable as they connected national policies with local implementation. For example, the Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) coordinated with government authorities to provide healthcare, shelter and household supplies and later supported cash distribution and livelihood restoration. The 2015 incident also showed how the domestic civil society's embeddedness within international networks came in handy. For example, the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) and the Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction (GNDR) proved meaningful in coordinating and channelling donations to Nepalese CSOs. The 2026 flood response shows how this role has expanded. Young volunteers supported clean-water distribution, food supply chains and displacement camps whereas the Nepal Army, Nepal Police and Armed Police Force undertook major rescue operations. Civil society was therefore operating along with the state, extending the reach of formal response mechanisms to affected communities.

Second, domestic CSOs provide local knowledge and insights that broader response systems may overlook.

The 2015 earthquake experience showed the consequences when local knowledge is not integrated into a large humanitarian response. Post-disaster assessment reports highlight how poor communication between domestic and international organisations contributed to duplication in certain remote areas and under-distribution in others following the 2015 incident. In places, international medical teams were insufficiently briefed about local conditions. It is in bridging this gap between large-scale response and on ground needs that civil society's role becomes more important. This stands particularly relevant in a

geographically difficult disaster such as the 2026 floods. Studies consequently argue that recovery should follow a people-based approach relying on local skills and expertise, with continuous engagement with affected communities.

Third, the role of civil society is growing beyond manpower to provide specialised technical capabilities.



Source: The Kathmandu Post

The 2026 floods show this most clearly. Young people from Nepal's Drone Association and Geovation Nepal used LiDAR i.e. light detection and ranging to measure debris depth and thermal-imaging drones to search hillsides, caves and flooded tunnels that conventional rescue teams could not safely enter. Hami Nepal developed a drone team along with the police and army, whereas young engineers and geomatics students contributed to humanitarian mapping through a Humanitarian OpenStreetMap Team (HOT) Tasking Manager. The World Economic Forum's (WEF) 2026 assessment highlights that such youth networks should be viewed as a technical resource in disaster planning, and not be limited as volunteers to be mobilised only as crisis strikes.

Fourth, civil society plays a key last-mile role in connecting early warning and community action.

The evacuation of students at Tribhuvan Trishuli Secondary School during the 2026 floods stands as a good example for this. The case reflects the importance of community-based warning networks along with formal systems. As per several media reports, at around 09:10 AM, Rajendra Dawadi, the head teacher of the school received calls from community members warning of an approaching flood and moved roughly 900 students and 16 staff to higher ground. About ten minutes later, floodwaters struck the school, burying the compound under debris. The warning reached the school through community relationships rather than Nepal's formal sensor-and-SMS system. The incident shows that the effectiveness of an early-warning system depends not only on detecting a hazard but also on whether warnings reach trusted local actors who can act on them. In line with this, the WEF notes that technology can detect hazards, but communities require trusted people and local systems to interpret warnings and channel them into timely action. Civil society therefore plays a critical last-mile role in connecting formal early-warning infrastructure with community-level preparedness and evacuation.



Rajendra Dawadi with his students at a UNICEF-supported temporary learning centre at Tribhuvan Trishuli Secondary School in Nuwakot

Source: UNICEF

What have Nepal's previous disasters taught about civil-society-led rescue, relief and rehabilitation?

First, voluntarism is an important national resource but it needs to be organised before disaster sets foot.

The 2015 earthquake showed a strong culture of voluntarism with citizens supporting search-and-rescue teams and relief distribution. The 2026 flood response again brought out the capacity of young people and community volunteers to mobilise rapidly. Youth were not simply restricted to carrying relief supplies, they contributed drone-based search, debris assessment and humanitarian mapping. The

lesson here is that Nepal not only has a strong volunteer base, but this capacity can become a formal disaster-response asset when supported by training, networks and technology.

Second, civil society can make recovery more responsive through community knowledge and engagement.

The 2015 report by Asian Development Bank on "Response to Nepal's Earthquake: Ten Lessons from Evaluations," charts out the importance of affected communities' participation in the recovery process. It draws on from Aceh-Nias, the joint recovery and reconstruction region in Indonesia, following the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. Local communities participated in designing social-housing standards that reflected local culture and traditions. The report notes that such participation can produce lower-cost and more sustainable solutions. Nepal's own 2015 earthquake reconstruction experience reinforces this point wherein local involvement helped make housing designs more responsive to cultural and community needs. For civil society, this points to a role in bringing community knowledge, preferences and concerns into recovery planning and design. This matters for Nepal in 2026 because the disaster has altered physical landscapes. With agricultural land buried and settlements and livelihoods having to be relocated, decisions cannot be based only on engineering assessments. Land, livelihoods, social networks and cultural relationships all become part of the recovery question.

Third, civil society can strengthen recovery through monitoring, feedback and course correction.

Nepal's experience after the 2015 earthquake shows that civil society's contribution extends well beyond immediate relief. Nearly 200 plus International and national NGOs and community-based organisations supported 412 reconstruction projects covering housing, schools, health institutions, livelihoods, heritage, water and irrigation. The scale of reconstruction also showed the importance of mechanisms that could identify gaps and adjust programmes. The Nepal Reconstruction Authority received 634,973 complaints concerning housing-grant eligibility, of which 27.4 per cent were subsequently added to the beneficiary list after re-surveys and verification. For the 2026 floods, this experience underlines the importance of civil society mechanisms that can gather community feedback, identify exclusion, correct errors and improve the delivery of recovery programmes.

What are the immediate challenges facing civil society during the 2026 floods?

First, the institutions closest to communities have themselves become casualties.

Under Nepal's federal framework, local governments are the primary line of disaster response. The Local Government Operation Act 2017 gives local governments responsibilities across the disaster cycle, whereas the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act 2017 established the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) and structures for coordination across levels of government. The floods, however, destroyed the institutions responsible for that task. In Gosaikunda Rural Municipality, the vice-chair, two ward chairpersons and several employees went missing, and the municipal office was washed away. Its chairman reported that seven members of his own family were missing. In Uttargaya, the municipal office was washed away along with its records. Roads, power and telephone networks failed, leaving officials unable to collect data or coordinate. The scale of this institutional vulnerability is reflected in a 2022 Emergency Preparedness and Response Assessment by the NDRRMA wherein Nepal's emergency response system scored only 39.8 per cent, and local units were assessed as considerably weak. As Anil Pokhrel, former executive chief of the NDRRMA, puts it: "The local level's capacity is even weaker; it completely lacks the capability to withstand a flood like the one in Rasuwa."

Second, the centralisation of relief has created a tension between coordination and civic participation.

The government implemented a one-door

system through which aid was directed to the Prime Minister's Disaster Relief Fund and unauthorised fundraising was halted. Such a system can provide a mechanism for consolidating resources and avoiding duplication. Indeed, the 2015 EIAS report records the rationale behind Nepal's one-window approach as consolidating donations and seeking more equitable distribution. However, civil-society activists in 2026 have argued that centralisation delayed distribution and restricted the participation of elected local governments, civil society organisations and citizens. They have specifically criticised the one-door system as ineffective and called for broader participation. The immediate challenge therefore is reaching a middle ground. It could involve combining central oversight with decentralised implementation, so that accountability and coordination do not obstruct assistance from reaching communities at the earliest.

Third, the destruction of communication infrastructure is curbing civil society's ability to reach and identify affected communities.
The 2026 floods disrupted the very communication networks on which civil-society response depends. In the affected districts, 83 Nepal Telecom mobile towers and 27 Ncell sites were damaged, whereas more than 60 kilometres of optical fibre at Timure were washed away. The consequences were visible on the ground with local authorities struggling to establish the whereabouts of missing people, while humanitarian organisations reported that damaged roads, bridges and communications had left some communities cut off from assistance. In Uttargaya Rural Municipality, officials reported being unable to contact residents or establish reliable information on more than 1,000 people who were initially unaccounted for. The challenge therefore is maintaining reliable two-way communication through which civil society can identify needs and connect them to response mechanisms.

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Cross regional learnings

The 2026 Nepal Floods:

Lessons from Wayanad landslides on climate anomalies and disaster preparedness

Brighty Ann Sarah



Source: The Mongabay India

On 26 August, a glacial collapse in the Langtang Himal Region of northern Nepal, adjoining the Tibet Autonomous Region of China triggered catastrophic flash floods and landslides, causing a 5.2 magnitude seismic event. The disaster unfolded in less than an hour; flash floods drove a massive deluge of water, ice and rock debris into Nepal's Bhotekoshi River system, continuing for about 100 kilometres, tearing through the districts of Rasuwa, Nuwakot and Dhading. On the Chinese side the same event triggered a devastating mudslide at Gyirong, a major Nepal-China trading port, cutting off a critical trade and transit route between the two countries. The human toll of the floods stands at a devastating 1,355 deaths, with over 5,000 people still missing.

Just over two years earlier, on 30 July 2024, a similarly catastrophic landslide had taken over the Mundakkai and Chooralmala villages in Wayanad, along India's Western Ghats, triggered by a cloudburst. Weeks of relentless rainfall had oversaturated the soil on the steep slopes of Mundakkai, and gave way to several successive landslides that travelled a path of nearly eight kilometres. The catastrophe claimed over 200 lives and displaced hundreds of people, marking one of the deadliest disasters in the state's history

Where do the two catastrophes converge and diverge?

The similarities in the geological makeup of both Wayanad and the Himalayas end largely in the fact that they are high-altitude mountainous regions. The same can be observed in the immediate triggers of both catastrophes. The 2024 Wayanad landslides were a repeated instance of slope failure triggered by a cloudburst. Days of sustained monsoon rained over four to five times the capacity of what the soil could absorb and retain; 572 millimetres of rain over just 48 hours. Landslides are endemic to the Western Ghats, where deforestation, slope-cutting for construction and other activities have weakened the soil, increasing the region's susceptibility to landslides.

The Bhotekoshi floods, on the other hand, is a result of a rarer phenomenon of structural failure of a glacier body and its underlying bedrock, possibly due to the degradation of permafrost that destabilised the bedrock. It is distinguished from a conventional glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF) that the region is familiar with.

Although neither disaster can be tucked away neatly under the blanket explanation of anthropogenic climate change, several climate-change induced triggers can be identified in Wayanad and Bhotekoshi. In Wayanad, the increasing frequency of intense bursts of short spells of rain (unlike the consistent monsoons), have been associated with the warming of the Arabian Sea and shifting monsoon dynamics. In parallel, the accelerated loss of glacial mass and the thawing of permafrost in the Himalayas due to rising global temperatures are well documented.



Source: AI Generated

Disaster preparedness and early warning systems: A comparison of contexts

The early warning architecture in Wayanad rested primarily on the Indian Meteorological Department's (IMD) tiered, colour-coded rainfall alert system of yellow, orange and red alerts. The alerts are issued at a district scale and escalated according to forecasts of rainfall intensity. Other alert mechanisms include rain gauges are situated across the region, but they require manual monitoring and additional data before the official authorities can issue warnings based on their readings.

Nepal's disaster warning systems float on a network of hydrological river gauges operated by the Department of Hydrology and Meteorology (DHM), including a station at Syabrubesi, designed to detect the kind of gradual river-level rise associated with conventional monsoon flooding or slow-forming GLOF events. This meant that the glacial collapse was an outlier, and the system was unprepared to detect the mud flow as it was not triggered by intense rainfall.

Moreover, the destruction of roads, bridges, health facilities and communication infrastructure rapidly isolated affected settlements, making evacuation, rescue and relief difficult even after the disaster began.

Limitations of warning systems and lessons learned

The limitations in disaster preparedness in both contexts extended to the dissemination of warnings and evacuation processes. In Wayanad, despite the lack of region-specific warning systems rendered the district level orange alert largely nominal. The inadequate monitoring of the rain water gauges, and bureaucratic delays also failed the effective dissemination of warnings and the relocation of people before the landslides struck.

In Nepal, the peak flow was below the Amber warning threshold, even though it had already killed hundreds upstream. Further, the affected districts were only under a Code Orange alert in the government's bulletin, but such warnings are issued routinely during monsoon season and are often treated as a matter of course. The dearth of a chain of command in the

event of such disasters was also pronounced. In both contexts, the routine warnings of intense rainfalls, or imminent floods, with the usual non-occurrence of disasters had also diminished the people's perception of risk.

Both disasters reiterate the need for mechanisms to monitor slow-building geological and climatic precursors in terrains already known to be fragile. In Wayanad, the IMD's district-level alert system, however accurate, could not substitute the need for localised region-specific measures to interpret local conditions in real time. Rain gauges and threshold-based alerts are only as useful as the public's ability to read and act on them.

This need becomes even more pronounced when the hazard is an anomaly outside the historical pattern a monitoring system was designed for, as both a monsoon cloudburst in Wayanad and the glacier-and-bedrock collapse in Rasuwa demonstrates. This demands sustained investment in geological and climatological research needed to navigate the newly emerging risk profiles of climate sensitive regions.

Conclusion

Despite the differing geological and causative factors underlying the Bhotekoshi floods and the 2024 Wayanad landslides, both disasters indicate the growing susceptibility of climate-sensitive regions to climate catastrophes and anomalies. The manifestations of gradual climate change and environmental degradation prove to be more complex, unpredictable and difficult to accommodate within existing disaster frameworks. There is also a growing need to develop new systems and approaches for understanding climate change-induced disasters, assessing emerging risks, strengthening preparedness and rethinking existing response mechanisms, demanding a renewed approach to understanding and addressing climate-induced disasters.

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The 2026 Nepal Floods:

Policy recommendations to strengthen civil society capacities

Preetha Renganarayanan

The 2026 Nepal floods stood as reminder on the critical role of civil society and the need to systematically build its capacity. Pre-existing humanitarian partnerships, community-based monitoring and youth-led technical initiatives came in as a timely response. At the same time, Nepal and the global community saw the limitations of depending primarily on formal early-warning infrastructure especially in a region that is vulnerable to cross-border hazards. In this context, conscious efforts on strengthening civil society between disasters stands necessary. Post-disaster reflections also point us to the need for deeper integration of community knowledge into early-warning systems, and institutional mechanisms for youth to contribute their technical skills to disaster management. Equally important is the exercise of 'Futures literacy' i.e. preparing for multiple possible future risks instead of simply responding to the last disaster. Drawing on the 2026 response, the recommendations below outline how Nepal can build a more organised, technically capable and forward-looking civil society that complements public institutions and strengthens community resilience.

First, invest in civil-society capacity between disasters.

Nepal's experience shows that the organisations able to respond quickly in 2026 were often those whose capacities and partnerships had been built before the disaster. For example, Dhulikhel Hospital's (an independent, not for profit hospital) response to the 2026 floods was supported by a long-standing partnership with Direct Relief and pre-positioned medical supplies. When the floods struck, the hospital was able to deploy medical staff with emergency supplies to affected communities. Direct Relief notes that several of its Nepal partners responding to the 2026 floods had also been partners during the 2015 earthquake, reflecting how relationships developed during one disaster can become preparedness infrastructure for the next. These examples suggest that Nepal should invest between disasters in sustained youth networks, technical organisations, community groups and humanitarian partnerships. Regular simulations, training and preparedness exercises can then build on these existing capacities. This would allow civil society to move from being mobilised after a disaster to maintaining capabilities, relationships and resources that can be activated when one occurs.



Source: Direct Relief

Second, strengthen civil society's capacity to participate in layered early-warning systems.

The 2026 disaster originated entirely on the Tibetan side of the border, outside Nepal's monitoring network. However, more than 600,000 SMS alerts were issued by National authorities to downstream residents within 10 minutes of receiving confirmation. The deeper challenge here is that data does not reach as hazards such as glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs) can originate outside any single country's instruments. In this context, the World Economic Forum highlights the need for a binding, cross-border data-sharing.



Citizen Scientists of the VICTORY project
Source: S4W-Nepal

Civil society can complement such systems by providing hyper-local information that formal monitoring networks may not be able to capture in such terrains. The Institute of Himalayan Risk Reduction has attempted to address this gap through community-based, citizen-science monitoring. Its VICTORY project capacitates residents of Nepal's hazard-prone Bardiya and Dolakha municipalities to document signals that often precede a hazard such as rising cloudiness in the water, unusual river sounds and shifting slopes. Scaling such initiatives across the region would allow hyper-local data to feed into early-warning systems. In addition, communities trained this way will be self-equipped to assess a disaster and organize an evacuation based on local knowledge even if mechanisms fail. Nepal should therefore invest in training, community-based monitoring and technical partnerships that equip CSOs to function as an active layer within the early-warning ecosystem.

Third, youth should be institutionalised as a technical disaster-management resource.



Source: The Kathmandu Post

The 2026 flood response shows that young people can contribute far beyond conventional volunteering, with youth undertaking drone operations, mapping, engineering, geospatial work and humanitarian data collection during the response. Nepal can build on these capacities by developing trained pools of youth responders connected to local authorities and disaster-management institutions. This would turn the technical capabilities shown by youth during the 2026 floods into a more sustained civil-society disaster-response resource.

Fourth, build civil society's 'Futures Literacy' to improve anticipation and resilience.
Developed by UNESCO, *Futures Literacy* approach enables communities to imagine and prepare for multiple possible futures instead of simply responding to the last crisis. The WEF has identified futures literacy as one of the core skills required at a period of rapid, compounding global change. For Nepal and the wider Himalayan region, this could involve regular scenario-planning exercises with CSOs, community leaders and local authorities around risks such as faster glacier melt, more frequent GLOFs and the potential relocation of at-risk settlements. Strengthening civil society's futures literacy would therefore enable organisations and communities to anticipate future risks, take part in long-term planning and prepare for scenarios that may differ significantly from past disasters.

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Climate Change, Civil Society & Peace in South Asia

Padmashree Anandhan & Priyanka Makhijani

BANGLADESH

Bangladesh recovers 2,300 acres of forest land in five months, strengthening climate resilience

On 31 August, The Climate Watch reported that Bangladesh has recovered about 2,300 acres of forest land in the five months since the current government took office, State Minister Sheikh Faridul Islam told parliament, even as 4,817.02 acres remain leased to government-linked institutions. Islam said 4,752 acres were allocated for rubber plantations run by the Bangladesh Forest Industries Development Corporation, with smaller portions leased to a gas field company and power and telecom services. He said no forest land had been leased to individuals in Habiganj's Madhabpur and Chunarughat upazilas, despite most of the district's forest land remaining unofficially used or illegally occupied, a pattern that continues to erode the country's natural carbon sinks and climate resilience. Islam said district administrations have been asked to identify illegally occupied land, with recovery continuing in phases. Citing the Global Climate Risk Index 2026, which ranks Bangladesh 13th among the world's most climate-vulnerable countries, he said protecting and restoring forest cover remains central to the country's broader climate adaptation strategy, alongside efforts to halt illegal resort construction on Saint Martin's Island, which he visited on 08 August.
("Bangladesh recovers 2,300 acres of forest in five months: minister," The Climate Watch, 31 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/bangladesh-recovers-2300-acres-of-forest-in-five-months-minister/

Bangladesh among world's most climate-vulnerable, minister reiterates, citing Global Climate Risk Index 2026

On 31 August, The Climate Watch reported that Bangladesh ranks 13th globally among countries most vulnerable to climate change, Environment Minister Abdul Awal Mintoo told parliament, citing the Global Climate Risk Index 2026, as rising temperatures drive growing risks of heat-related illness and death. Mintoo said Bangladesh has formulated a National Adaptation Plan under the UNFCCC and submitted its Third Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC 3.0), targeting an unconditional 6.39 per cent emissions cut by 2035, equivalent to 26.74 million metric tonnes of CO2. Subject to international support, the country aims for a further 13.92 per cent conditional reduction. Work has also begun on Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategies, Mintoo said, alongside a new integrated carbon market framework intended to expand Bangladesh's participation in international and voluntary carbon markets and attract foreign climate investment through credit trading.
("Bangladesh among world's most climate-vulnerable, minister warns," The Climate Watch, 31 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/bangladesh-among-worlds-most-climate-vulnerable-minister-warns/

Editorial calls extreme heats a matter of climate injustice for children

On 29 August, Dhaka Tribune published an editorial arguing that the finding that 22 million Bangladeshi children are now exposed to intensified heat should alarm every policymaker, calling heat "a direct, daily threat" to children's health and development rather than an abstract concern. It said heat disrupts schooling, increases dehydration and malnutrition risks, and strains families without adequate cooling or healthcare access, calling for heat-resilient schools, shaded community spaces, and early-warning systems. The editorial argued Bangladesh should not bear this burden alone, since wealthy

nations drove the climate crisis while countries like Bangladesh face its consequences, calling for predictable climate finance through grants rather than loans, and genuine technology transfers from the Global North.
("Extreme heat is climate injustice," Dhaka Tribune, 29 August 2026)
https://www.dhakatribune.com/opinion/editorial/418562/extreme-heat-is-climate-injustice

Health ministry, UNICEF chart climate-resilient path for child health and nutrition

On 27 August, The Climate Watch reported that Bangladesh has launched work on a climate-resilient health and nutrition roadmap as part of its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) 3.0 commitments, seeking to safeguard its health system and children from escalating climate risks. A consultation workshop held Sunday in Dhaka, organised by the Climate Change and Health Promotion Unit (CCHPU) under the Ministry of Health, with technical support from UNICEF Bangladesh, brought together officials and experts to identify priorities for embedding climate adaptation into national health strategies. Discussions centred on strengthening emergency preparedness, addressing nutrition vulnerabilities, and ensuring child-sensitive adaptation reaches communities most affected. UNICEF's Dr Malalay Ahmadzai and Antonio Franco Garcia attended as special guests, underscoring continued support for child-focused NDC 3.0 implementation. Participating institutions pledged stronger coordination going forward.
("Bangladesh moves to climate-proof health and nutrition sectors under NDC 3.0," The Climate Watch, 27 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/bangladesh-moves-to-climate-proof-health-and-nutrition-sectors-under-ndc-3-0/

Dhaka builds first standardised system to count and finance climate losses

On 26 August, The Climate Watch reported that Bangladesh is developing its first standardised national framework to assess climate-induced loss and damage, aiming to strengthen national planning and access to international climate finance. The mid-term workshop, held at the Department of Environment in Dhaka, is implemented with technical support from the Centre for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS) and financed by the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund. ERD's A K M Sohel said Bangladesh serves as the national focal point for the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD), stressing that proper institutional procedures must be followed to access international funds. Additional Secretary Mohammad Navid Safiullah said securing finance requires reliable data and stronger institutional coordination, calling for a coherent national framework to advance climate justice.
("Bangladesh advances national framework for climate loss and damage," The Climate Watch, 26 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/bangladesh-advances-national-framework-for-climate-loss-and-damage/

Climate stress, exclusion push boat-dwelling Manta community to the margins

On 26 August, The Climate Watch reported that stakeholders called for coordinated action to protect Bangladesh's boat-dwelling Manta fisherfolk community, as climate change, social exclusion, and lack of access to basic services threaten their survival and cultural identity. Displaced over generations by river erosion, many Manta families lack National Identity cards, land ownership, healthcare, and education access. Intensifying cyclones, rising salinity, and declining fish stocks are reducing livelihoods further, according to the MantaConnect Project's quarterly meeting in Barishal. Community representative Nurbanu Begum said changing weather and fewer fish are making traditional life harder daily. YouthNet Global's Arifur Rahman Shuvo said the Manta should be seen as rights holders, not just aid beneficiaries. The meeting adopted a three-month action plan to expand service delivery and climate resilience support.
("Coordinated action needed to protect Bangladesh's Manta fisherfolk," The Climate

Watch, 26 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/coordinated-action-needed-to-protect-bangladeshs-manta-fisherfolk/

Climate-driven salinity pushes one in five coastal Bangladeshis toward heart disease

On 25 August, The Climate Watch reported that saline drinking water is emerging as a major climate-linked health threat in coastal Bangladesh, with new icddr,b research tying rising sodium exposure to elevated cardiovascular and kidney disease risk in Koyra and Assasuni. The study, surveying over 27,000 water sources and 15,000 adults, found over half of Koyra's drinking water sources saline, against nearly a quarter in Assasuni. icddr,b's Aliya Naheed said the crisis "is no longer only an environmental challenge," now driving disease risk directly. Imperial College London's Prof Adrian Butler said cyclone-driven storm surges leave water sources salinised for years, calling for stronger embankments. As sea levels rise and cyclones intensify, researchers said Koyra and Assasuni offer an early signal of climate-driven salinity's global health toll.
("Saline water pushing 1 in 5 coastal Bangladeshis toward heart disease: icddr,b," The Climate Watch, 25 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/saline-water-pushing-1-in-5-coastal-bangladeshis-toward-heart-disease-iccddrb/

Bangladesh calls for youth-led land restoration as climate pressures mount at UN summit

On 25 August, The Climate Watch reported that Bangladesh urged world leaders at UNCCD COP17 in Mongolia to place science, youth leadership, and women's empowerment at the centre of the global fight against land degradation, as negotiations continue through 28 August under the theme "Restoring Land. Restoring Hope." As one of the world's most climate-vulnerable nations, Bangladesh's delegation said millions across its coastal, riverine, and drought-prone regions already face salinity intrusion, water scarcity, and river erosion, pressures steadily eroding livelihoods and displacing communities. Environment Minister Abdul Awal Mintoo told a ministerial dialogue that "land protection is fundamental to ensuring climate resilience and food security," citing the Climate Change Trust Fund, which has mobilised over USD 495 million since 2009 and distributed 19,400 metric tonnes of drought- and salinity-tolerant seeds. Mintoo warned that shifting upstream water flows are raising drought and salinity intrusion risks across delta nations like Bangladesh, calling for closer regional cooperation on shared river basins and stronger, time-bound climate financing commitments.
("Bangladesh urges youth-led, science-based land restoration at UN desertification summit," The Climate Watch, 25 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/bangladesh-urges-youth-led-science-based-land-restoration-at-un-desertification-summit/

PM's political advisor calls for wider tree planting to address climate risks

On 23 August, The Climate Watch reported that Prime Minister Tarique Rahman’s political adviser, Zahir Uddin Swapan, called for wider tree planting and afforestation to address climate risks. Speaking at a tree-planting programme in Gazipur, Swapan said greater forest cover was essential to protect the environment and keep Bangladesh habitable for future generations. He linked rising temperatures and the risk of coastal inundation to carbon emissions from excessive fossil fuel use. The government has adopted a five-year plan to plant 250 million trees, and Swapan said this year’s target had already been achieved. He urged every family, educational institution and social organisation to participate in the campaign under the idea of “one child, one tree”. He also called on the agricultural community to lead the initiative.
("Bangladesh adviser urges wider tree planting to tackle climate crisis," The Climate Watch, 23 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/bangladesh-adviser-urges-wider-tree-planting-to-tackle-climate-crisis/

Climate shifts increase pressure on green bee-eaters

On 23 August, The Climate Watch reported that rising temperatures and changing rainfall patterns could place increasing pressure on Bangladesh's green bee-eater population. The species remains common and is classified as Least Concern, but its dependence on flying insects, open habitats and suitable nesting banks makes it vulnerable to climate-related changes. Extreme heat can force the birds to spend more energy cooling themselves, reducing time available for feeding and breeding. Changes in rainfall and temperature can also affect insect availability and breeding patterns. Heavy rainfall and flooding may erode sandy or earthen banks where green bee-eaters build nesting tunnels. The report cited research showing broader declines in tropical bird abundance linked to intensifying heat extremes. It recommended protecting insect-rich habitats, conserving natural riverbanks, limiting unnecessary pesticide use and monitoring breeding populations.

("Heat, rain shifts put green bee-eaters under growing climate strain," The Climate Watch, 23 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/heat-rain-shifts-put-green-bee-eaters-under-growing-climate-strain/

Satkhira stages theatre-based drill to prepare coastal communities for heatwave health risks

On 21 August, The Climate Watch reported that a preparedness drill highlighting how people in the disaster-prone coastal upazilas of Ashashuni and Shyamnagar can adapt to global warming and address growing health risks was held in Satkhira district, using drama to portray coping strategies for climate change and rising temperatures. Speaking as chief guest at the drill, held at 14:30 at Ashashuni Government Secondary School, Satkhira District Commissioner and District Magistrate Kausar Aziz said coastal residents must learn to adapt to global warming and tackle rising health risks, urging students to treat the performance as an educational lesson rather than mere entertainment. The drill, organised by the Upazila Disaster Management Committee and managed by the Uttaran Care Project, was chaired by Ashashuni Upazila Nirbahi Officer Shyamananda Kundu, with officials from several government departments in attendance. It concluded with a performance titled "The Diary of the Last Harvest" by the Sundarban Theatre Group.

("Bangladesh district stages heatwave health risk preparedness drill," The Climate Watch, 21 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/bangladesh-district-stages-heatwave-health-risk-preparedness-drill/

One in four Satkhira residents is a climate migrant, citizens demand housing protection

On 20 August, The Climate Watch reported that citizens' leaders in Satkhira placed an eight-point demand for housing and disaster protection, saying one in four residents of the municipality is a climate-displaced person or low-income slum dweller. The demands emerged at a civic dialogue organised by the Bangladesh Resource Center for Indigenous Knowledge (BARCIK), chaired by President of Green Coalition Satkhira Abu Affan Rose Babu. A concept paper presented by BARCIK Programme Officer Gazi Mahida Mizan said around 50,000 of the town's nearly 200,000 residents are low-income pavement, shack, or slum dwellers, often ignored in urban planning despite sustaining the local economy. It cited the 2024 eviction of 104 families from Itagacha slum without rehabilitation. Leaders called for disaster-resilient housing, an end to eviction without rehabilitation, subsidised utilities, and free education and healthcare for slum children.

("Satkhira citizens seek protection for climate migrants in city slums," The Climate Watch, 20 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/satkhira-citizens-seek-protection-for-climate-migrants-in-city-slums/

Nearly 59 million children exposed to climate hazards, UNICEF and government discuss response

On 20 August, The Climate Watch reported that Bangladesh and UNICEF discussed

measures to protect children and adolescents from climate change and make essential services, including education, health, nutrition, water, and sanitation, more climate-resilient, the environment ministry said. UNICEF Bangladesh Representative ad interim Gillian Mellsop met Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Abdul Awal Mintoo in Dhaka, where they also discussed protecting children from lead pollution. A recent UNICEF report found around 58.8 million children in Bangladesh are exposed to at least one climate-related hazard, with nearly nine in ten facing three or more simultaneously. The two sides agreed to jointly develop a district-level Children's Climate Risk Index and Climate Landscape Analysis for Children to guide adaptation investment. UNICEF will also support rooftop solar assessments at government schools and health facilities, and the inclusion of children in Bangladesh's NDC 3.0 emissions plan.
("Bangladesh, UNICEF discuss climate threats facing children, youth," The Climate Watch, 20 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/bangladesh-unicef-discuss-climate-threats-facing-children-youth/

The Climate Watch and Shakti Foundation partner to spotlight local climate solutions ahead of COP31
On 19 August, The Climate Watch reported that it signed a partnership agreement with Shakti Foundation to jointly produce a climate communication initiative around COP31, aimed at bringing Bangladesh's community-level climate experiences to national and international audiences. Executive Editor of The Climate Watch Md Ibrahim Khalilullah and Head of Health & Climate Change Program at Shakti Foundation Dr Shamsher Ali Khan signed the agreement in Dhaka. Under the partnership, titled "Shakti–The Climate Watch COP31 Climate Dialogue Series: From Local Solutions to Global Climate Action," the two organisations will produce ten video talk shows during COP31, bringing Shakti Foundation representatives into discussions with negotiators, policymakers, and community representatives. The initiative will cover urban greening, clean air, renewable energy, and resilient livelihoods, running through 31 December 2026. COP31 is scheduled to take place in Antalya, Türkiye, from 9 to 20 November.
("The Climate Watch and Shakti Foundation sign COP31 climate partnership," The Climate Watch, 19 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/the-climate-watch-and-shakti-foundation-sign-cop31-climate-partnership/

Dhaka seminar calls on youth to lead the city's fight against climate, urban strain
On 18 August, The Climate Watch reported that speakers urged young people to take a leading role in tackling Dhaka's environmental and climate challenges, at a seminar titled "Resilient Dhaka: Youth-Led Climate Action Initiatives" held on 16 August at North South University (NSU). Organised by NSU's Institute of Climate Change, Environment and Sustainability (ICCES), with the NSU Earth Club and Department of Environmental Science and Management, the panel discussion drew academics, government officials, and youth-focused organisations, including ICCES Chairman Sheikh Tajul Islam Tuhin and Economic Relations Division's A.K.M. Sohel. Speakers stressed low-carbon infrastructure, life-cycle carbon emissions from road and bridge construction, urban waste management, nature-based solutions, and expanded rainwater harvesting. They highlighted links between Dhaka's geology, declining groundwater levels, and environmental pressure, urging planners to incorporate groundwater recharge into urban design. Speakers said young people should move beyond acquiring knowledge to applying it in practice, addressing the city's climate vulnerabilities directly.
("Youth urged to lead action on Dhaka's climate and urban challenges," The Climate Watch, 18 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/youth-urged-to-lead-action-on-dhakas-climate-and-urban-challenges/

Satkhira students plant 5,000 trees to fight rising heat and salinity along the coast

On 13 August, The Climate Watch reported that students and children in Satkhira district have begun planting 5,000 fruit, timber, and medicinal saplings. This is a local adaptation effort to protect Ashashuni's coastal ecosystem from rising heat, salinity, and freshwater scarcity. The saplings were distributed at the Ashashuni Upazila Model Mosque auditorium, organised with support from NGO Eco-Social Development Organization (ESDO). Ashashuni's chief administrative official, Shyamananda Kundu, said unless local adaptation measures are taken now, large parts of the region risk losing habitability within decades. Students Rakib Nur, Rakib Anwar, Anan, and Rafiqul Islam said the coast could not be protected by relying on global climate finance policies alone, describing the initiative as building a green belt to increase carbon absorption and protect embankments and soil health. Experts said such community-led adaptation projects offer a more effective model for building resilience than policy-level discussions alone.

("Students plant 5,000 trees to protect Satkhira's fragile coastlands," The Climate Watch, 13 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/students-plant-5000-trees-to-protect-satkhiras-fragile-coastlands/

Climate finance lab trains 35 professionals to develop Green Climate Fund funding concepts

On 13 August, The Climate Watch reported that a five-day Climate Finance Leadership Incubation Lab in Gazipur trained around 35 participants from 23 organisations to develop investment-ready Green Climate Fund (GCF) concept notes, producing 35 proposals spanning mitigation, adaptation, resilience, and climate insurance. The programme, organised by the International Climate Finance Cell with support from the Asian Development Bank, brought together government officials, bankers, researchers, and civil society representatives for mentor-guided proposal development. Ten concept notes received awards: three Diamond, three Gold, and four Silver. Economic Relations Division's AKM Sohel urged participants to "talk in the GCF language," while Joint Secretary Dr Shah Abdul Saadi stressed grounding proposals in the Paris Agreement's broader climate objectives rather than merely labelling conventional projects as climate action. Organisers said the awards mark only the beginning, with selected participants receiving further mentoring before potential inclusion in Bangladesh's climate finance pipeline. A second batch is planned for December.

("Bangladesh climate finance lab develops 35 GCF funding concepts," The Climate Watch, 13 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/bangladesh-climate-finance-lab-develops-35-gcf-funding-concepts/

Rooftop solar could add 3,600 MWp to national grid, requires BDT 16,295 crore investment

On 12 August,The Daily Star reported that Bangladesh could generate more than 3,600 megawatts peak (MWp) of electricity from rooftop solar panels, according to a new assessment by state-owned Infrastructure Development Company Limited (Idcol). Tapping this potential would require BDT 16,295 crore in investment. The textile and garment sector dominates the opportunity, accounting for 2,815 MWp, needing BDT 12,669 crore. Idcol identified 1,171 companies as strongest near-term candidates, with combined potential of 1,263 MWp. Under its roadmap, Idcol plans to scale annual financed capacity from 129 MWp in 2026 to about 233 MWp by 2029-2030. It has so far approved 352 MWp of projects, with 264 MWp operational. IEEFA's Shafiqul Alam called Idcol's estimate "broadly credible," citing available rooftop space as supporting the range.

("Rooftop solar panels can add 3,600MWp to national grid," The Daily Star, 12 August 2026)
https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/rooftop-solar-panels-can-add-3600mwp-national-grid-4245801

Khulna city unveils plan to manage growing wave of climate displacement

On 13 August, The Climate Watch reported that Khulna City Corporation Administrator Nazrul Islam Manju welcomed a new strategy to address climate-induced internal displacement, saying the number of people forced from their homes by climate change is rising rapidly. Titled "Strategy for Managing Climate-Induced Internal Displacement in Khulna Metropolitan City," the document was prepared by Khulna University of Engineering and Technology's Institute of Disaster Management and Caritas Bangladesh, under Caritas Khulna's Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation project. Manju said the strategy would guide the corporation's future planning to improve socio-economic conditions for displaced people, calling for coordinated housing initiatives and an integrated database of climate-displaced communities. Government agencies, NGOs, and development partners, including UNICEF, ADB, and BRAC, participated in the formulation process and attended the handover ceremony.

("Khulna city unveils strategy to manage climate-induced displacement," The Climate Watch, 13 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/khulna-city-unveils-strategy-to-manage-climate-induced-displacement/

Opinion highlights Union Parishads have no dedicated budget or trained staff to fight climate change, despite new national framework

On 13 August, The Climate Watch published an opinion piece by Rawnak Jahan Khan Ranon, arguing that Bangladesh's new National Framework and Action Plan for Locally Led Adaptation gives Union Parishads (UPs) greater climate responsibility without matching authority, funding, or capacity. The author noted a typical UP serving 25,000 people has only one secretary, one accounts assistant, and ten village police, with no engineer or planner, and no budget set aside for climate adaptation. He argued the framework's own feasibility assessment acknowledges this gap, though it lacks firm deadlines or costed plans. Drawing on fieldwork in Sunamganj under the now-ended LoGIC programme, the author found reporting requirements strained under-staffed offices, despite transparent fund transfers. He warned that without strong monitoring, devolved climate funds risk elite capture rather than reaching the poor and marginalised groups the framework aims to protect.

("Can Our Union Parishad Really Fight Climate Change?", The Climate Watch, 13 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/can-our-union-parishad-really-fight-climate-change/

Heatwaves push Dhaka's informal workers deeper below living wage, study warns

On 12 August, The Daily Star reported that heat-related wage losses cost Bangladeshi workers as much as BDT 77,000 crore annually, equivalent to about 1.4 per cent of GDP, according to a joint study by the UK-based International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Program (OKUP). The study found outdoor workers lose an average of 23.7 working days a year to heat, against 13.5 days for indoor workers, based on interviews with 175 Dhaka households in informal work. Outdoor workers lost about 8.5 per cent of annual income, while indoor workers lost 4.5 per cent, pushing many further below Dhaka's living wage. Nearly 23 per cent reported symptoms of heat-related kidney injury. Researchers called for heat-linked cash transfers and mandatory workplace heat protections.

("Extreme heat costs workers Tk 77,000cr a year: study," The Daily Star, 12 August 2026)
https://www.thedailystar.net/business/economy/news/extreme-heat-costs-workers-tk-77000cr-year-study-4245566

Minister launches five-year drive to save and replace lost trees nationwide

On 11 August, The Climate Watch reported that Bangladesh aims to save at least 25 crore trees nationwide over five years to address climate risks, State Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Sheikh Faridul Islam said, launching a

plantation programme at Nayabazar Degree College in Keraniganj. The government plans to plant 30 to 32 crore saplings, replacing trees lost to disasters or other causes, with five crore to be planted this year alone. Faridul Islam cited PM Tarique Rahman's "One Child, One Tree" initiative, under which each student plants and tends a sapling, and urged reduced use of single-use polythene to curb waterlogging and plastic pollution. MP for Dhaka-2 Alhaj Aman Ullah Aman said Tarique Rahman had adopted the five-year plan.
("Bangladesh plans to save 25 crore trees nationwide over five years," The Climate Watch, 11 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/bangladesh-plans-to-save-25-crore-trees-nationwide-over-five-years/

Extreme heat costs informal workers USD 6.22 billion a year
On 12 August, The Climate Watch reported that extreme heat and its long-term health effects cost Bangladesh's informal workers about USD 6.22 billion in lost wages annually, equivalent to 1.38 per cent of GDP, according to a joint study by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Program (OKUP), based on a survey of 175 Dhaka households. Outdoor workers lost an average of 23.7 working days a year, against 13.5 for indoor workers, pushing households further below Dhaka's living wage. Chronic kidney disease linked to heat exposure could affect around 3.56 million workers long-term, researchers estimated. Director of Climate Resilience, Finance and Loss and Damage at IIED, Ritu Bharadwaj, said the losses remain largely invisible in policy discussions. Researchers proposed heat-triggered cash assistance, costing an estimated USD 31.3 million in a normal year.
("Extreme Heat Costs Bangladesh's Informal Workers $6.22 Billion a Year," The Climate Watch, 12 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/extreme-heat-costs-bangladeshs-informal-workers-6-22-billion-a-year/

BHUTAN

Solar-powered lift irrigation empowers women farmers, strengthens climate resilience in water-scarce Bhutan
On 19 August, Kuensel Online reported that Tshering Pem, 45, of Humpathang village, Punakha, is benefiting from an individually managed solar-powered lift irrigation system, the only individual-ownership pilot of its kind in the country, under the WERELIS project. Bhutan irrigates only about 20 per cent of its arable land, leaving mountainous farmers vulnerable to water shortages and climate variability. The project, implemented by ICIMOD with Bhutan's energy ministry and funded by Canada's IDRC, aims to promote solar-powered irrigation while strengthening women's role in agriculture and renewable energy. Built at an estimated cost of BTN 5.2 million, the Humpathang and Tempakha systems, inaugurated on 17 August, cover over three and nine acres respectively. If successful, 17 more systems are planned across five dzongkhags. ICIMOD's Pugazenthi Dhananjayan said the systems aim to boost climate resilience and reduce dependence on fossil-fuel-run pumps. Tshering Pem said the switch has eased her workload significantly, calling water "an asset she owns, manages, and can use to shape the future of her farm."
("Solar lift irrigation: A game-changer for rural agriculture," Kuensel Online, 19 August 2026)
https://kuenselonline.com/news/solar-lift-irrigation-a-game-changer-for-rural-agriculture

INDIA

Climate change intensifies pressure on Indian Pond Heron
On 31 August, The Climate Watch reported that the Indian Pond Heron, one of South Asia's most familiar wetland birds, faces growing pressure as climate change alters the shallow ponds, marshes, and flooded fields it depends on for food and breeding. Widespread across Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Myanmar, the heron feeds along shallow wetland edges, striking at fish, frogs, and aquatic insects. Increasing hydrological uncertainty, driven

by drought, higher evaporation, and greater rainfall variability, is shrinking and fragmenting suitable habitat, concentrating birds into fewer refuges. A Kerala study found reduced foraging areas linked to decreased rainfall, heightening competition among fish-eating waterbirds. Unpredictable monsoon patterns could also disrupt the seasonal rainfall timing tied to the species' breeding, though further species-specific research is needed. Wetland destruction, pollution, and urban expansion add further pressure.
("Indian Pond Heron faces shrinking wetlands as climate pressures grow," The Climate Watch, 31 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/indian-pond-heron-faces-shrinking-wetlands-as-climate-pressures-grow/

Opinion argues India's new grasslands guide challenges the "wasteland" label, urges move beyond tree-centric restoration

On 31 August, Down To Earth published an opinion piece by Santosh Pathak and Manish Subba, arguing that India's first national Guide to Grasslands and Other Open Natural Ecosystems, launched by Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav at UNCCD COP17 in Ulaanbaatar on 17 August, marks a turning point for landscapes long dismissed as "wasteland." The authors argued this bureaucratic label has pushed tree plantations, solar parks, and industrial projects onto ecologically rich deserts, scrublands, and ravines that store significant carbon underground, rather than visibly in trees. The guide, developed with ATREE, IUCN, and ISRO, documents ecosystems including the Thar desert, Banni grasslands, and Aravalli scrublands, alongside pastoral communities like the Raikas and Gujjars who have long managed them. The authors said the guide offers no legal protection yet, and cautioned that climate policy rewarding only visible tree cover risks inadvertently destroying grasslands crucial to species like the Great Indian Bustard.
("India finally gives its 'wastelands' a name and a future," Down To Earth, 31 August 2026)
https://www.downtoearth.org.in/climate-change/india-finally-gives-its-wastelands-a-name-and-a-future

Swelling Gandak, rising Ganga put Bihar on flood watch after Nepal's disaster

On 27 August, Down To Earth reported that flooding in Nepal has heightened Bihar's flood risk, as the Gandak swells and the Ganga flows close to danger levels at several locations, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). West Champaran, East Champaran, Gopalganj, and Siwan face increased flooding and erosion risk as the Gandak enters Bihar near Valmikinagar. The IMD issued a yellow alert forecasting heavy rainfall of 64.5-115.5mm across Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, and several northeastern states, alongside thunderstorms and winds up to 50 kilometres per hour in parts of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Authorities urged residents near rivers to stay alert and move to safer ground if water levels rise further, while farmers were advised to ensure drainage and avoid fieldwork during storms.
("Daily weather tracker: Nepal flood threat raises alarm in Bihar as heavy rain forecast across several states," Down To Earth, 27 August 2026)
https://www.downtoearth.org.in/climate-change/daily-weather-tracker-nepal-flood-threat-raises-alarm-in-bihar-as-heavy-rain-forecast-across-several-states

Opinion warns climate change is rewriting Karnataka's farming seasons, as seven decades of data show monsoon boundaries dissolving

On 25 August, Down To Earth published an opinion piece by Sukirti and Dina Zaman of WELL Labs, arguing that climate change has driven a measurable, long-term shift in Karnataka's Chikkaballapur district, rewriting traditional farming calendars that generations of farmers relied on. Analysing seven decades (1951-2024) of IMD data, the authors found annual rainfall has risen significantly since the 1950s, with March, April, May, and November now receiving markedly more rain, dissolving the traditional line between monsoon and dry seasons. Warming has stretched summer by

about two weeks, with April now recording hot days above 35 degrees Celsius almost daily, up from fewer than 15 such days in the 1950s. They cited horticulturist Ayyappa, who lost 22 tonnes of mangoes to sudden pre-monsoon showers, and a tomato farmer who lost INR 4 lakh and sold five acres after pest outbreaks linked to humid spells in traditionally dry months, both signs of climate-driven disruption to crop cycles. The authors argued climate adaptation must extend beyond heat-resilient crops and irrigation, calling for stronger institutions to sustain rural livelihoods as young people leave farming for cities amid mounting climate pressures.
("Seven decades of data show this Karnataka district's farming seasons are being rewritten," Down To Earth, 25 August 2026)
https://www.downtoearth.org.in/climate-change/seven-decades-of-data-show-this-karnataka-citys-farming-seasons-are-being-rewritten

El Niño drags India's monsoon to its weakest in nearly 20 years
On 24 August, Reuters reported that India is on course for its weakest monsoon in nearly two decades, with rainfall likely to end the season around 15 per cent below the long-term average, the lowest since 2009. This is according to two senior weather department sources. The weak monsoon could hurt crop output, drive up food prices, and curb rural incomes in the world's fifth-largest economy, where monsoon rains provide around 70 per cent of the country's annual rainfall. Poor rains in the crucial crop-maturing month of September could dent yields of cotton, soybean, corn, and pulses, while depleting soil moisture needed for winter-sown wheat and rapeseed. An unnamed India Meteorological Department (IMD) official said, "We are witnessing the impact of El Niño on monsoon rainfall. It is likely to be severe in September, and we could see a double-digit deficit in rainfall." India has received 13 per cent less rainfall than average since the season began on 1 June, after a 35.4 per cent June deficit and a brief 1 per cent July surplus.
("India faces weakest monsoon in nearly two decades as El Nino strengthens," Reuters, 24 August 2026)
https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/india-faces-weakest-monsoon-nearly-two-decades-el-nino-strengthens-2026-08-24/

Monsoon deficit raises concern over heat risks from strong El Niño
On 23 August, LiveMint reported that India's monsoon rainfall was 13 per cent below normal amid concerns over a potentially record-strength El Niño. Around 40 per cent of the country had received at least 20 per cent less rainfall than average, raising concerns over agriculture and the wider economy. Scientists warned that the developing El Niño could peak between late 2026 and early 2027, with its effects potentially continuing after the event weakens. Roxy Mathew Koll, a climate scientist at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, said temperatures could remain unusually high for several months. Studies of strong El Niño events indicate a greater likelihood of extreme heat across parts of India during spring and early summer. However, scientists cautioned that regional temperatures would depend on atmospheric circulation and Indian Ocean conditions.
("India monsoon 13% below normal as strong El Niño raises risk of hotter summer in 2027: Report — What scientists say," LiveMint, 23 August 2026)
https://www.livemint.com/news/india/india-monsoon-13-below-normal-as-strong-el-ni-o-raises-risk-of-hotter-summer-in-2027-report-what-scientists-say-11787480783717.html

Villages revive centuries-old water systems as climate change accelerates water scarcity
On 21 August, BBC reported that water scarcity and climate change are driving communities across India to restore ancient water-harvesting structures, including johads, tankas, baoris, and kunds, some over 1,000 years old, as climate-resilient alternatives to modern infrastructure. India holds 18 per cent of the world's population but just 4 per cent of its freshwater resources, and pumps more groundwater

than any other nation. Climate change compounds the crisis, with warmer air drying soils faster and making rainfall more intense, meaning more runoff escapes before it can soak into the ground. Modern reservoirs like canals and dams also lose more water to evaporation than traditional structures, which move water beyond the sun's reach into cooler aquifers. Scientist at the Central Arid Zone Research Institute Pratap Moharana said the knowledge was never fully lost, only the political will to prioritise it. Nationally, groundwater recharge from tanks and ponds rose from 14 billion cubic metres in 2017 to 25 billion in 2024, as government programmes increasingly incorporate traditional structures.
("India is turning to ancient water systems as modern ones run dry," BBC, 21 August 2026)
https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20260820-india-is-turning-to-ancient-water-systems-as-modern-ones-run-dry

Opinion warns 150 million menopausal women face compounding climate and health risks
On 20 August, Down To Earth published an opinion article by economics professor Trishna Sarkar, arguing that India's roughly 150 million menopausal women remain largely absent from public health policy, even as rising heat and pollution worsen their symptoms. She wrote that hot flushes intensify when temperatures cross 45 degrees Celsius, while PM2.5 exposure compounds hormonal disruption, and cited a nationwide survey finding nearly 70 per cent of Indian women are unaware of perimenopause. Sarkar highlighted sharper burdens on informal workers, citing an M S Swaminathan Research Foundation survey where 97 per cent of over 3,300 women reported summer income losses averaging over Rs 1,500. She noted women make up 55 per cent of India's most heat-vulnerable population, and called for menopause education in primary healthcare, workplace accommodations, and its inclusion in Heat Action Plans and national health surveys.
("When the body changes quietly: Menopause at the intersection of climate change and social inequality," Down To Earth, 20 August 2026)
https://www.downtoearth.org.in/climate-change/when-the-body-changes-quietly-menopause-at-the-intersection-of-climate-change-and-social-inequality

Every 1°C of warming linked to 3.45 per cent rise in childhood stunting
On 20 August, Down To Earth reported that climate change may be contributing to a "clinically stunted" future for children, according to a University of Notre Dame study analysing 16 years of data from 34 African countries, which found every one-degree-Celsius rise in anthropogenic temperature is linked to a 3.45 per cent increase in childhood stunting. Co-author Arun Agrawal said extreme heat limiting food availability and raising prices directly translates global emissions into child undernutrition, calling climate change a "threat multiplier" on existing inequality. Lead author Nabin Pradhan said combining low service access with sharp temperature anomalies creates a "worst-case scenario" for stunting. UNICEF has said climate change could cause stunting in an additional 40 million children by 2025. India, where nearly every child faces at least one climate hazard, remains particularly vulnerable, given stunting is already a recognised public health challenge there.
("Rise of stunted generation," Down To Earth, 20 August 2026)
https://www.downtoearth.org.in/health/rise-of-stunted-generation

Manipur's farmers battle a monsoon that arrives too little, too late, and all at once
On 18 August, Down To Earth reported that farmers in Manipur are grappling with an erratic monsoon and severe rainfall deficit, threatening the state's rice-dependent agrarian economy. After a 71 per cent June deficit, cumulative July rainfall remained 41 per cent below normal, with Imphal West recording over 52 per cent deficit since June. Farmer Irengbam Ranjana, 47, said delayed transplantation has forced a shift from traditional to short-duration hybrid paddy varieties. Farmer Arambam Subhashini, 37, said yields have declined over 50 per cent, worsened by rising

pesticide costs and an ongoing conflict since May 2023. Environment director Dr T Brajakumar said Manipur received record annual rainfall of 2,164mm against an average 1,500mm, but concentrated within 60-120 days instead of 300, worsening floods and soil degradation. He said Manipur could see 15-40 per cent higher annual rainfall by 2030.
("Erratic monsoon, rainfall deficit threatens Manipur's agrarian economy," Down To Earth, 18 August 2026)
https://www.downtoearth.org.in/agriculture/erratic-monsoon-rainfall-deficit-threatens-manipurs-agrarian-economy

Rising seas swallow Odisha's coast, force India's first climate resettlement colony
On 17 August, The Indian Express reported that about 28 per cent of Odisha's 564-kilometre coastline is undergoing erosion, according to Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, citing a National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR) study covering 1990-2022. Jagatsinghpur is most erosion-prone, with 47.6 per cent of its coastline affected, followed by Ganjam at 45.7 per cent and Kendrapara at 45 per cent. Officials said rising sea levels have already submerged 16 villages in Kendrapara, displacing several hundred people, prompting Odisha to build what it calls India's first climate resettlement colony. In Ganjam, Podampeta, once home to nearly 500 households, has been deserted as the Bay of Bengal swept inland, with nearby Ramayapatna also facing advancing seas. To protect vulnerable stretches, authorities are building a geotextile tube embankment at Pentha village in Kendrapara, using sand-filled synthetic fabric structures to absorb wave impact and reduce erosion.
("Odisha's coastal erosion: What's being done to save lives, livelihoods," The Indian Express, 17 August 2026)
https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-climate/odisha-coastline-erosion-28-percent-affected-climate-change-10835947/

New Delhi to host BRICS environment ministers under India's 2026 chairship
On 16 August, The Climate Watch reported that India will host meetings of the BRICS Environment Working Group (EWG) in New Delhi from 17 to 18 August, with environment ministers from member countries meeting on the second day, the environment ministry said. The meetings, held at Bharat Mandapam under India's BRICS chairship theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability," will begin with the Senior Officers' Meeting of the EWG and the Contact Group on Climate Change and Sustainable Development on Monday, followed by the 12th BRICS Environment Ministers' Meeting on Tuesday, presided over by Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav. India's four priority areas for its chairship include sustainable lifestyles, forest fire management, circular economy, and climate adaptation, building on virtual meetings and webinars held between March and July 2026.
("India to host BRICS environment meetings in New Delhi on Aug 17-18," The Climate Watch, 16 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/india-to-host-brics-environment-meetings-in-new-delhi-on-aug-17-18/

Monsoon depression sparks flood, landslide alerts across eastern and Himalayan India
On 14 August, Down To Earth reported that a monsoon depression over Jharkhand is triggering heavy to exceptionally heavy rainfall across eastern India, with Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand, and West Bengal facing the greatest risk. The depression, located about 40 kilometres northwest of Jamshedpur, is expected to weaken into a low-pressure area within 24 hours. Isolated areas in Chhattisgarh could see rainfall exceeding 204.5 millimetres, prompting orange to red-level warnings. Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh remain under orange alert, with heavy rain raising landslide, flash flood, and cloudburst risks across several districts. Jammu and Kashmir also faces heavy rain in multiple districts, including Srinagar and Anantnag. Delhi-NCR was placed under yellow alert, with thunderstorms and gusty winds forecast, temperatures expected around 36 degrees

Celsius. Authorities advised farmers to prevent waterlogging, secure harvested crops, and avoid outdoor work during thunderstorms.
("Daily weather tracker: Monsoon depression triggers heavy rain alert across Eastern and Northern India; clouds will also pour heavily over the mountains," Down To Earth, 14 August 2026)
https://www.downtoearth.org.in/climate-change/daily-weather-tracker-monsoon-depression-triggers-heavy-rain-alert-across-eastern-and-northern-india-clouds-will-also-pour-heavily-over-the-mountains

Ladakh's Zanskar glaciers slow significantly over 30 years
On 12 August, The Hindu reported that glaciers in the Zanskar region of Ladakh are moving more slowly than they did 30 years ago, according to a new study offering fresh insight into how climate change is affecting these "rivers of ice." The Zanskar region hosts some of the Himalaya's largest, most extensive glaciers, acting as natural freshwater reservoirs that release meltwater during warmer months, sustaining rivers, ecosystems, agriculture, and local communities in Ladakh's arid environment. The slowdown carries long-term implications for the Indus basin, where glacier melt significantly contributes to summer river flows. Increased melting may temporarily boost runoff, a phenomenon called "peak water," but once glaciers lose a substantial share of their stored ice, meltwater contributions are expected to decline.
("Ladakh's giant 'rivers of ice' are slowing as the mountains warm," The Hindu, 12 August 2026)
https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/ladakh-giant-rivers-of-ice-slowing-down-mountains-warm-melt-water/article71331636.ece

Opinion explains "100-year flood" as a 1 per cent annual probability, not a once-a-century event, using Kerala's repeated floods since 2018
On 13 August, Down To Earth published an explainer by Ganesh Radhakrishnan and Gayatri Anil Kumar, arguing that Kerala's recurring floods since 2018 expose a widespread misunderstanding of the term "100-year flood." The authors explained the phrase actually denotes a 1 per cent annual probability of flooding, not a once-per-century event, comparing it to a coin toss where a 50 per cent chance of heads doesn't preclude consecutive occurrences. The 2018 flood, compared to the 1924 "99 Flood," was misread as guaranteeing decades of safety, yet Kerala saw further significant floods in 2019 and 2026, including along the Pamba and Manimala rivers. The piece attributed Kerala's vulnerability to its steep terrain, 44 rivers, and high-intensity rainfall, compounded by dams, wetland encroachment, and riverbank construction. The authors argued flood-risk mapping is essential for infrastructure planning and evacuation preparedness, not merely academic exercise.
("Myth and reality of 100-year flood: Kerala's recurring deluges expose how the comforting phrase masks a harsh, annual risk," Down To Earth, 13 August 2026)
https://www.downtoearth.org.in/climate-change/myth-and-reality-of-100-year-flood-keralas-recurring-deluges-expose-how-the-comforting-phrase-masks-a-harsh-annual-risk#google_vignette

Red alert issued in eastern India as Bay of Bengal storm system intensifies
On 13 August, Down To Earth reported that a strengthening low-pressure system over the Bay of Bengal is set to bring intense rainfall, thunderstorms, and gusty winds across eastern, central, and northern India. Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, and Odisha face the most serious conditions, under red alert, while Jharkhand is under orange alert. The system has moved northwestwards toward West Bengal's coast and adjoining Bangladesh, and may intensify into a depression within 12 hours. Isolated areas in the red-alert zone could see rainfall exceeding 204.5 millimetres, raising flooding and waterlogging risks. Jharkhand could receive between 115.6 and 204.4 millimetres. More than 15 other states remain under yellow alert, with heavy showers and winds up to 50 kilometres per hour forecast. Authorities urged farmers to harvest mature crops, clear drainage

channels, and move livestock to safer, elevated ground.
("Daily weather tracker: Bay of Bengal system intensifies; Red alert for West Bengal, Odisha and Chhattisgarh," Down To Earth, 13 August 2026)
https://www.downtoearth.org.in/climate-change/daily-weather-tracker-bay-of-bengal-system-intensifies-red-alert-for-west-bengal-odisha-and-chhattisgarh

Transport sector drives rising air pollution in Jammu and Kashmir's mountains

On 11 August, Down To Earth reported that Jammu and Kashmir, once known for pristine air, has recorded moderate-to-poor Air Quality Index (AQI) readings every month from August 2025 to July 2026, with experts attributing nearly half the pollution to the transport sector. Srinagar's AQI touched 279 and 246 micrograms per cubic metre in November and December 2025, categorised as "poor." Vehicle registrations are rising by about 20,000 monthly, dominated by petrol and diesel vehicles, while electric vehicles remain few. Respiratory specialist Firdous Manzoor said hospital visits for respiratory illness have nearly doubled since 2017-18. Environmentalist Raja Muzaffar Bhat warned that black carbon deposits on Himalayan glaciers, used for drinking water, pose additional health risks.
("India on e-wheels: Air pollution is rising in the mountains of Jammu and Kashmir mainly due to the transport sector, say experts," Down To Earth, 11 August 2026)
https://www.downtoearth.org.in/air/india-on-e-wheels-air-pollution-is-rising-in-the-mountains-of-jammu-and-kashmir-mainly-due-to-the-transport-sector-say-experts

Himachal Pradesh launches Mission-32 to raise forest cover amid climate concerns

On 11 August, Down To Earth reported that Himachal Pradesh has launched Mission-32, aiming to raise the state's forest cover from 29.5 per cent to 32 per cent by 2030, as part of a wider climate adaptation and green growth strategy. Secretary of the Department of Environment, Science, Technology and Climate Change, Sushil Kumar Singla, said the mission links afforestation with renewable energy, natural farming, and watershed conservation, rather than treating forestry in isolation. Founder of Himalaya Niti Abhiyan, Kulbhushan Upmanyu, cautioned that forest quality matters more than tree numbers in fragile mountain ecosystems, warning that focusing only on green cover could limit environmental benefits. Experts said the mission's real test lies in whether it restores forest health, protects watersheds, and strengthens community participation.
("Can Mission-32 secure Himachal Pradesh's Himalayan future in a warming world?" Down To Earth, 11 August 2026)
https://www.downtoearth.org.in/forests/can-mission-32-secure-himachal-pradeshs-himalayan-future-in-a-warming-world

Opinion argues natural ecosystems deserve the same infrastructure status as roads and ports in India's climate planning

On 11 August, Livemint published an opinion article by independent expert Soumya Sarkar, arguing that India's mangroves, wetlands and urban forests protect roads, ports and cities from climate risks, yet remain excluded from infrastructure planning despite over INR 11 trillion in annual public capital expenditure. It cited World Bank estimates that surface-flooding risk could cost Indian cities USD 5 billion annually by 2030, rising to USD 30 billion by 2070. The author noted that since 2023-24, India has restored 26,396 hectares of mangroves under the Mishti initiative, though such programmes remain separate from infrastructure budgeting. The article credited Tata Steel and Adani Ports for beginning to treat ecosystems as protective assets, and urged infrastructure appraisals to account for ecosystems' protective value, with dedicated maintenance budgets for natural systems protecting key economic assets.
("All infrastructure isn't made of concrete: natural formations are part of India's climate defence," Livemint, 11 August 2026)
https://english.nepalnews.com/s/climate/eu-ambassador-lorenzo-and-ndrrma-chief-uprety-meet-on-climate-resilience-and-disaster-risk/

MALDIVES

MET forecasts above-normal temperatures for next three months as El Niño intensifies

On 28 August, Edition.mv reported that the El Niño weather pattern is intensifying in the Pacific Ocean and is expected to bring above-normal temperatures to the Maldives over the next three months, the Maldives Meteorological Service (MET) said. MET's forecast for September to November predicts more rainfall than usual in the central region, from Male' Atoll to Thaa Atoll, while southern atolls are likely to see less rainfall. Sea surface temperatures in the Pacific have risen 2 degrees Celsius above normal during the current event, with the Nino 3.4 index rising 1.8 degrees this month alone. MET said El Niño could threaten coral reef health and disrupt fishing through changing sea currents, highlighting the Maldives' vulnerability and the need for early preparedness in tourism, fisheries, and agriculture.

("El Nino expected to bring above-normal temperatures for next three months," Edition.mv, 28 August 2026)
https://edition.mv/news/53749?ref=cat-sub

Opinion warns super El Niño could intensify pressure on coral reefs

On 24 August, Maldives Independent published an opinion arguing that a potential "super El Niño" could pose a serious threat to the Maldives' coral reefs. The article highlights concerns that rising sea temperatures could trigger widespread coral bleaching and mortality. It argues that reef degradation would have consequences beyond marine ecosystems, as coral reefs help protect the country's low-lying islands from waves and coastal erosion. The opinion also highlights the reefs' importance to fisheries and tourism. It points to severe coral mortality during the 1998 El Niño and further damage during the 2016 event as indications of the risks posed by extreme ocean warming. The article calls for stronger reef monitoring, restoration and research. It also argues that limiting reclamation and dredging during periods of extreme heat could reduce additional stress on vulnerable reefs.

("The 'super' El Niño is coming for our corals," Maldives Independent, 23 August 2026)
https://maldivesindependent.com/opinion/the-super-el-nio-is-coming-for-our-corals-df15

NEPAL

Bhotekoshi flood death toll reaches 903

On 31 August, The Kathmandu Post reported that the death toll from devastating floods along the Bhotekoshi and Trishuli rivers had risen to 903, with around 4,247 people still unaccounted for. Government figures showed that Chitwan recorded the highest number of recovered bodies at 272, followed by Nawalparasi East with 207 and Nawalparasi West with 151. Nuwakot reported 1,558 missing people, while Rasuwa had 865 unaccounted for. The missing also included hydropower workers, foreign nationals and security personnel. At least 267 people were injured, while six specialised surgical teams were deployed in the worst-affected areas. More than 20,800 security personnel were involved in search, rescue and relief operations. Authorities reported that 10,451 people had been rescued through ground and aerial operations, with 411 helicopter flights conducted so far.

("Death toll from Bhotekoshi flood reaches 903," The Kathmandu Post, 31 August 2026)
https://kathmandupost.com/national/2026/08/31/death-toll-from-bhotekoshi-flood-reaches-903

Opinion highlights silence of Kathmandu's cuckoo bird and deadly floods as signs Nepal's climate future has already arrived

On 30 August, The Kathmandu Post published an opinion piece by writer Sophia L Pandé, arguing that the cuckoo's absence from Kathmandu Valley gardens this spring, for the first time in over 45 years, is a quiet harbinger of how far Nepal's climate has already shifted, alongside the catastrophic Rasuwa floods that struck "seemingly out of the blue." Pandé noted Nepal's temperatures are already 1.4 degrees

Celsius above pre-industrial levels, threatening the country's biodiversity, glaciers, and UNESCO World Heritage sites. She argued climate awareness must be built into national budgets and education, invoking Kate Raworth's "Doughnut Economics" and circular-economy principles to argue that responsible consumption and stronger state support must close the gap between wealthy and low-income citizens. She warned Nepal cannot keep sidelining climate change amid political and economic crises, saying "if we don't listen and change, the future is bleak, and it will be too late."
("The silence of the cuckoo bird and catastrophic floods warn Nepal's climate future is already here," The Kathmandu Post, 30 August 2026)
https://kathmandupost.com/columns/2026/08/29/the-silence-of-the-cuckoo-bird-and-catastrophic-floods-warn-nepal-s-climate-future-is-already-here

Seven-year Green Climate Fund delay exposed climate finance failures
On 29 August, The Climate Watch reported that a seven-year delay in approving a Green Climate Fund (GCF) project meant to reduce glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF) risk highlights failures in international climate finance, according to Friends of the Earth Asia Pacific, following the Bhotekoshi flash flood of 26 August. The group said the project sat in the GCF pipeline since 2018 but was not approved until July 2025, despite escalating Himalayan risks. Climate Justice spokesperson Meena Raman called the delay "absolutely shocking," saying earlier approval could have enabled early-warning systems. The group urged the GCF and the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage to urgently scale up financing, and called on Nepal to establish a permanent National Himalayan Cryosphere and GLOF Risk Monitoring Mission.
("Nepal GLOF project delay exposes climate finance failures, group says," The Climate Watch, 29 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/nepal-glof-project-delay-exposes-climate-finance-failures-group-says/

Scientists say warming glaciers are driving growing flood risk in Himalayan basins
On 28 August, The Climate Watch reported that warming temperatures, glacier instability, and expanding meltwater lakes are increasing flood risks across Nepal's Himalayan river basins, as search and rescue operations continued following the Bhote Koshi flood in Rasuwa. PhD student Amrit Thapa said a hanging glacier landslide likely triggered the flood, though the source of the water volume remains under investigation. Director of the Center for Disaster Studies Basant Raj Adhikari said rising temperatures are accelerating ice melt and meltwater lake formation, citing an ICIMOD study showing Hindu Kush Himalaya glaciers lost ice 65 per cent faster between 2010 and 2019 than the previous decade. Scientists warned similar or larger disasters could recur, particularly in the Trishuli and Bhote Koshi basins, which hold hundreds of glacial lakes.
("Bhote Koshi flood exposes growing risks from rapidly changing glaciers," The Climate Watch, 28 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/bhote-koshi-flood-exposes-growing-risks-from-rapidly-changing-glaciers/

Bhotekoshi flood death toll reaches 616, hundreds still missing
On 29 August, The Kathmandu Post reported that the death toll from Wednesday's devastating Bhotekoshi flood and subsequent downstream flooding has reached 616, with hundreds still missing, police said. As of 06:00, police had recovered 233 bodies in Chitwan, 158 in Nawalparasi East, 48 in Gorkha, 47 in Nawalparasi West, 45 in Dhading, 41 in Nuwakot, 31 in Tanahun, and 13 in Rasuwa. Search and rescue operations are continuing across the affected districts, with police coordinating with residents and other agencies to locate missing people and assist those stranded. Authorities are moving families from high-risk areas to safety and clearing roads blocked by debris and landslides to reopen access for relief operations. The toll is expected to rise as search teams reach more areas.
("Updates: Bhotekoshi flood death toll

reaches 616, hundreds still missing," The Kathmandu Post, 29 August 2026) https://kathmandupost.com/national/2026/08/29/updates-bhotekoshi-flood-death-toll-reaches-616-hundreds-still-missing#google_vignette

Scientists piece together the complex chain of events behind the Rasuwa flood

On 29 August, The Kathmandu Post reported that scientists are still piecing together how a glacier and rock collapse triggered the devastating Bhotekoshi flood, which had killed 579 people as of Friday evening, with bodies recovered as far downstream as Chitwan and Nawalparasi. Cryosphere specialist Dr Mohd Farooq Azam of ICIMOD said a bedrock failure swept away the glacier above it, with the collapse estimated at 100 to 200 million cubic metres. The US Geological Survey revised its initial earthquake assessment, concluding the glacier collapse itself generated a 5.2-magnitude seismic signal. Columbia Water Center director Dr Upmanu Lall said persistent warming and rainfall rather than snow could have destabilised the slope over months. Scientists cautioned it remains too early to directly attribute the individual collapse to climate change, though broader Himalayan warming trends are undisputed.

("What triggered the Rasuwa flood? Scientists piece together a complex chain of events," The Kathmandu Post, 29 August 2026) https://kathmandupost.com/national/2026/08/28/what-triggered-the-rasuwa-flood-scientists-piece-together-a-complex-chain-of-events

Expert says climate change may worsen quake impacts but no direct link confirmed

On 28 August, The Himalayan Times reported that climate change may increase Himalayan regions' vulnerability to secondary hazards following major earthquakes, but no scientific evidence currently links climate change directly to the recent Tibet-Nepal disaster, according to a City University of Hong Kong (CityUHK) expert. Dean and Chair Professor Benjamin Horton said it was too early to conclude the disaster resulted directly from climate change, noting earthquakes are geological events driven by tectonic processes, while rising temperatures separately drive glacier retreat, permafrost thaw, and reduced snow cover, destabilising mountain slopes. He described the disaster as a possible "compound event," where an earthquake interacts with climate-driven factors, and said understanding such interactions would be crucial for improving disaster-risk assessments in high-mountain regions.

("Climate change may worsen Himalayan quake impacts, but no direct link established," The Himalayan Times, 28 August 2026) https://thehimalayantimes.com/science-and-tech/climate-change-may-worsen-himalayan-quake-impacts-but-no-direct-link-established

Glacial avalanche unleashes deadly flash flood, hundreds still unaccounted for

On 26 August, The Climate Watch, citing AP and Economic Times, reported that at least 95 people were killed and nearly 400 remain missing after flash floods swept through northern Nepal on Wednesday, destroying homes, roads, and hydropower projects across Rasuwa, Dhading, and Nuwakot districts. The Bhote Koshi River flooded after an ice-rock avalanche from a glacier blocked the river, according to disaster specialist Saswata Sanyal of the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, who warned of a "warming Himalaya." China's Xi Jinping ordered rescue efforts after a related mudslide struck Tibet's Gyirong border crossing. India's PM Narendra Modi pledged humanitarian assistance, deploying Air Force planes and nine NDRF teams to Bihar amid downstream flood risk. The EU activated its Copernicus satellite system to support mapping efforts.

("Nepal flash floods kill 95, nearly 400 missing as India pledges aid," The Climate Watch, 26 August 2026) https://theclimatewatch.com/nepal-flash-floods-kill-95-nearly-400-missing-as-india-pledges-aid/

826 stranded after Nepal's Bhotekoshi flood, hundreds of tourists among them

On 27 August, The Kathmandu Post reported that the number of people unaccounted for in the Bhotekoshi flash flood has risen to 826, including residents, security personnel, and foreign and domestic tourists. According to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority, 44 Nepali Army personnel, 28 Nepal Police personnel, and 13 Armed Police Force personnel remain unaccounted for, alongside 162 people from Rasuwa and Nuwakot districts overall. The Nepal Tourism Board reported 590 tourists out of contact, including 476 foreigners and 114 Nepalis. Among foreign nationals, 177 are Indian, followed by 63 Americans, 53 Ukrainians, 34 Australians, and 33 British nationals, along with 25 Canadians, eight Germans, and six each from Singapore and South Africa. Search and rescue operations continue, with security personnel and local authorities scouring riverbanks and downstream areas for the missing.
("826 out of contact after Bhotekoshi flood, including 590 tourists," The Kathmandu Post, 27 August 2026)
https://kathmandupost.com/national/2026/08/27/826-missing-after-bhotekoshi-flood-including-590-tourists#google_vignette

Flash flood damages hydropower projects and settlements in Rasuwa

On 26 August, The Kathmandu Post reported that a flash flood swept through Timure and Syabrubesi in Rasuwa, damaging settlements, markets and hydropower projects. The flood followed a sudden surge in the Bhotekoshi river, which enters Nepal from Tibet. The Rasuwa District Administration Office warned that rising Bhotekoshi waters could increase the Trishuli river's level and cause flooding downstream. It urged residents, people working near the river and hydropower projects to take precautions. The cause of the sudden surge remains unclear. Officials said there had been no rainfall around the district headquarters and were investigating whether an upstream glacial lake burst had triggered the flood. A hydropower project was reportedly washed away, while the Chilime Hydropower Project and other projects were damaged. A rescue helicopter also returned after floodwaters swept away the Timure helipad.
("Flash flood hits Rasuwa, damages hydropower projects and markets," The Kathmandu Post, 26 August 2026)
https://kathmandupost.com/national/2026/08/26/major-flood-damages-syabrubesi-hydropower-projects-in-rasuwa

Nepal: Flash flood death toll reaches 270 as 826 remain out of contact

On 27 August, The Kathmandu Post reported that the death toll from Wednesday's flash floods had reached 270, while 826 people remained out of contact as of 13:30. The missing include residents, security personnel and domestic and foreign tourists. Chitwan recorded the highest number of deaths at 108, followed by Nawalparasi East with 62 and Dhading with 27. Among those out of contact are 44 Nepali Army personnel, 28 Nepal Police personnel and 13 Armed Police Force personnel. Tourists account for 644 of the missing, including 517 foreign nationals and 127 Nepalis. The floods swept through Rasuwa and other districts before moving downstream along the Trishuli and Narayani river systems. They damaged settlements, roads, bridges and other infrastructure. Government agencies and security forces continue search, rescue and relief operations.
("Nepal flood death toll reaches 289 as hundreds remain out of contact," The Kathmandu Post, 27 August 2026)
https://kathmandupost.com/national/2026/08/27/nepal-flood-death-toll-reaches-270-as-hundreds-remain-out-of-contact

Editorial highlights gaps in disaster preparedness and transboundary coordination

On 26 August, The Kathmandu Post editorial argued that the recent Bhotekoshi flash flood highlights Nepal's vulnerability to disasters and gaps in preparedness. It emphasised that stronger early-warning systems and cross-border information sharing are needed to reduce the impact of such events. The editorial highlights the

risks posed by glacial lake outburst floods, noting that Nepal has 2,323 glacial lakes, of which 20 are considered potentially dangerous. It argues that climate change is increasing the threat and that disasters originating across the border can leave downstream communities exposed. The editorial calls for better information sharing with China, particularly on hazards originating upstream. It also advocates greater investment in disaster-response technology and community preparedness. It argues that countries with higher greenhouse gas emissions should provide greater support to vulnerable countries facing climate-related disasters.
("Strengthen early-warning systems, fix cross-border information sharing," The Kathmandu Post, 26 August 2026)
https://kathmandupost.com/editorial/2026/08/26/strengthen-early-warning-systems-fix-cross-border-information-sharing

Opinion argues that infrastructure planning must account for extreme weather
On 26 August, The Kathmandu Post columnist Sandeep Joshi argued that Nepal's infrastructure continues to suffer because planners rely too heavily on historical averages rather than preparing for extreme events. He cited the recent Bhotekoshi flood in Rasuwa, which damaged settlements, hydropower facilities, bridges and other infrastructure. Joshi argues that climate change is increasing extreme weather variability, making traditional engineering based on average rainfall and river discharge inadequate. He highlights that infrastructure designed around average conditions can fail when sudden floods or glacial outbursts occur. The columnist calls for three changes: banning average-based calculations for critical mountain infrastructure, requiring projects to undergo stress tests for extreme events, and changing development assessments to measure resilience. He also advocates forecast-based funding and early warnings to enable preventive action. Joshi argues that Nepal must shift from planning for average conditions to preparing for extreme events.
("Why Nepal's infrastructure keeps getting devoured by rivers," The Kathmandu Post, 26 August 2026)
https://kathmandupost.com/columns/2026/08/26/why-nepal-s-infrastructure-keeps-getting-devoured-by-rivers-1787760582

NAMI ClimateAI Launchpad concludes with nine finalist ventures, three seed grants awarded
On 20 August, The Annapurna Express reported that the Naaya Aayam Multi-Disciplinary Institute (NAMI) ClimateAI Launchpad concluded on Wednesday with a grand finale, marking the completion of the NAMI ClimateAI Venture Builder Program, funded by NAMI College and implemented by Startup Discovery Asia (SDA). Nine finalist teams pitched their ventures live at the Demo Day, held at Banmanche, The Himalayan Courtyard. The event brought together 130 participants, including 28 from academia, 26 from entrepreneurship support organisations, 25 entrepreneurs, nine from development agencies, seven venture capitalists, and three from banks and financial institutions, alongside investors and climate professionals. Three winning teams each received a seed grant of NPR 100,000 to develop their prototypes into market-ready solutions. Raksha won the Scale for Impact Award, Gridflux was recognised for the Most Innovative Use of AI, and Lhota Recyclables was named Most Investable.
("NAMI ClimateAI Launchpad concludes," The Annapurna Express, 20 August 2026)
https://theannapurnaexpress.com/story/66490/

Disasters drain public finances as CDRI warns of fiscal risk from climate shocks
On 20 August, The Himalayan Times reported that disasters have become one of the biggest recurring drains on Nepal's public finances, with steady annual losses and occasional catastrophic shocks threatening to wipe out years of development progress, according to Global Director of Programs and Strategy at the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) Ramesh Subramaniam. CDRI analysis shows Nepal

faces average annual losses of around USD 325 million from earthquakes, USD 220 million from floods, and over USD 101 million from landslides, given the country's fragile Himalayan geography and climate vulnerability. The 2015 Gorkha earthquake alone caused an estimated USD 7.1 billion in losses, while recent floods and quakes have added hundreds of millions more in reconstruction costs, with energy and transport infrastructure among the most exposed sectors. Subramaniam said such disasters were "wake-up calls" underscoring the need for greater investment in resilient infrastructure planning.
("Nepal faces mounting fiscal exposure from climate disasters: CDRI official," The Himalayan Times, 20 August 2026)
https://thehimalayantimes.com/kathmandu/nepal-faces-mounting-fiscal-exposure-from-climate-disasters-cdri-official

Opinion argues Kathmandu's traditional water systems, not bigger drains, hold the key to fixing urban flooding
On 18 August, The Himalayan Times published an opinion article by geomatics engineer Pragati Dhakal, arguing that Kathmandu's recurring urban flooding stems less from rainfall itself than from lost capacity to absorb water, with urban expansion in the Valley increasing over 400 per cent in three decades. She wrote that concrete embankments and encroachment along rivers like the Bagmati and Vishnumati have cut off natural floodplains, while an undersized, fragmented drainage system cannot handle intense rainfall bursts worsened by climate change. Dhakal argued Kathmandu's traditional ponds, rajkulos, and hitis once performed the same function now promoted globally as "sponge city" design, absorbing and slowly releasing water rather than forcing it into drains immediately. She called for permeable pavements, restored wetlands, and infiltration trenches, concluding the solution lies in making the city "capable of holding water again," not building bigger drains.
("Kathmandu once knew how to live with rain: Can it learn again?" The Himalayan Times, 18 August 2026)
https://thehimalayantimes.com/opinion/kathmandu-once-knew-how-to-live-with-rain-can-it-learn-again

Sharp weather split hits Nepal as western Tarai bakes while rain lashes the hills
On 19 August, The Himalayan Times reported that parts of Nepal's western Tarai could see temperatures climb to 36 degrees Celsius, even as monsoon rain and thunderstorms remain widespread, creating a sharp weather contrast across the country. The Meteorological Forecasting Division forecast Nepalgunj and Bhairahawa reaching 34-36 degrees Celsius, while Dhangadi and Dipayal could see 32-34 degrees Celsius. Moderate rain with thunder is likely across hilly regions, while parts of the Tarai in Bagmati, Gandaki, Lumbini, and Sudurpashchim provinces are also expected to see rain, with heavy rainfall possible in isolated areas of Lumbini and Sudurpashchim. Kathmandu is forecast to see moderate rain with a 60 per cent chance of rainfall, temperatures ranging from 19-31 degrees Celsius. Pokhara faces a 70 per cent chance of rain, with highs of 30-32 degrees Celsius. The monsoon trough remains near its average position nationwide.
("Nepalgunj, Bhairahawa face 36°C heat as monsoon rain sweeps country," The Himalayan Times, 19 August 2026)
https://thehimalayantimes.com/environment/nepalgunj-bhairahawa-face-36c-heat-as-monsoon-rain-sweeps-country

Dhankuta landslide swallows homes and farmland
On 18 August, The Himalayan Times reported that a years-long expanding landslide in Sangurigadhi Rural Municipality-6 is creeping towards homes in Majhuwa, Dhankuta, displacing 12 families and leaving 26 more at risk. Residents said the landslide along Sacha Khola has already consumed over 100 ropanis of land. Amrit Magar, who borrowed NPR 150,000 to build his house four years ago, lost most of his ten ropanis of land, saying, "We do not know when it will take the remaining land too." The landslide has worsened since the 2072 BS

earthquake, with technical expert Dipak Rai attributing further instability to haphazard road construction disturbing natural drainage. The danger has cut off Mukten village's road, forcing about 100 students to walk through the affected zone to reach school, while farmers struggle to transport rotting produce. Sangurigadhi's chairman Jitendra Rai said relocation has begun, though difficult terrain and limited resources hinder progress.
("Landslide creeps towards Dhankuta settlement, dozens of families at risk," The Himalayan Times, 18 August 2026)
https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/landslide-creeps-towards-dhankuta-settlement-dozens-of-families-at-risk

Opinion highlights Nepal forest communities producing up to 160 quintals of organic compost yearly, cutting fire risk and chemical fertiliser use
On 18 August, The Climate Watch published an opinion piece by Samjhana Wagle Bhattarai, arguing that community-led composting from fallen forest leaves offers a practical, scalable solution to Nepal's worsening annual forest fires, while reducing dependence on imported chemical fertilisers. The author cited Mahottari District's Tuteshwornath Collaborative Forest Management, backed by NPR 1.6 million from the REDD Implementation Center, which has produced 40 quintals of compost so far and could reach 160 quintals annually, sold at NPR 40 per kilogram using a three-to-four-month layering process with cattle manure, leaves, and earthworms. She also cited Nawalpur's Binayi Community Forest Users Group, which has controlled fires for a decade after initially clearing bushes to prevent wildlife attacks, now selling 50 tonnes of fertiliser yearly and creating over ten full-time jobs. The author argued that with Nepal's forests covering 46 per cent of its land area, wider adoption of such initiatives could simultaneously curb fire risk, protect biodiversity, and generate local employment, calling it "a practical step toward sustainable agriculture, environmental conservation and a greener future."
("Organic Fertilizer Offers a Sustainable Alternative to Chemical Fertilizers," The Climate Watch, 18 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/organic-fertilizer-offers-a-sustainable-alternative-to-chemical-fertilizers/

Editorial argues Nepal's government must shift from disaster rescue to prevention, as monsoon deaths pass 85
On 16 August, Kathmandu Post published an editorial arguing that Nepal's government has consistently failed to prevent monsoon-related deaths, despite recording more than 80 dead, nine missing, and 196 injured over the past four months, with the season only halfway through. The editorial attributed much of the risk to unsurveyed rural road construction and unregulated riverbed and hill mining, often enabled by political backing, citing the 2024 Roshi river flood that killed 78 people partly due to illegal mining. While welcoming government steps like shutting illegal crusher plants, the editorial argued these remain insufficient, calling for stronger early-warning systems, accountability for illegal activity, and urgent relocation of at-risk settlements, including over 100 households in Rolpa.
("Monsoon disasters demand more than rescue," Kathmandu Post Editorial, 16 August 2026)
https://kathmandupost.com/editorial/2026/08/16/monsoon-disasters-demand-more-than-rescue

Floods, landslides sweep through three Nepal districts, leave one missing, homes destroyed
On 14 August, The Kathmandu Post reported that heavy monsoon rains triggered floods and landslides across Bajura, Kaski, and Jajarkot districts, leaving one person missing, at least two injured, and damaging homes, bridges, and roads. In Bajura, a landslide buried two houses in Triveni Municipality-9, injuring two people and leaving one missing. A 17-member rescue team was dispatched amid continuing rain. In Kaski, the swollen Modi river swept away two bridges linking Annapurna Rural Municipality to neighbouring Parbat district, stranding three people near the Mata Annapurna

temple, later rescued using ropes. The flood also washed away sections of the Nayapul-Birethanti-Ghandruk road. In Jajarkot, flooding swept away two houses in Nalgad Municipality-10, placing two more at high risk. A total of 37 people from four households were relocated. The Jajarkot-Dolpa section of the Bheri Corridor remains blocked after the Tasughat river's water level rose sharply.
("Heavy rains trigger floods and landslides in three districts," The Kathmandu Post, 14 August 2026)
https://kathmandupost.com/national/2026/08/14/heavy-rains-trigger-floods-and-landslides-in-three-districts

Erdoğan invites Nepal's PM Shah to represent country at COP31 climate summit in Turkey

On 12 August, Nepal News reported that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has invited Prime Minister Balendra (Balen) Shah to represent Nepal at the 31st United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP31). The official invitation was delivered to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and forwarded to the Prime Minister's Office. Joint Secretary Krishna Prasad Dhakal disclosed the communication during a National Assembly committee meeting, noting the size and tier of Nepal's delegation is still being decided. Scheduled for 9-20 November 2026 at the Antalya Expo Center, COP31 will convene nearly 100,000 participants under Turkish Environment Minister Murat Kurum's presidency, in partnership with Australia. The summit aims to secure post-2025 financial architecture for climate-vulnerable nations and enforce NDC 3.0 targets to keep warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius. Nepal's participation strategy follows the compact, roughly 20-member delegation model used at COP30 in Belém, Brazil.
("Turkish President Erdogan invites PM Shah to COP31 in Antalya," Nepal News, 12 August 2026)
https://english.nepalnews.com/s/climate/turkish-president-erdogan-invites-pm-shah-to-cop31-in-antalya/

Western Nepal braces for 38°C heat as very heavy rain threatens Karnali, Sudurpashchim hills

On 14 August, The Himalayan Times reported that western Nepal is set for a sharp weather contrast on Friday, with Dhangadhi and Nepalgunj forecast to reach up to 38 degrees Celsius, while parts of Karnali and Sudurpashchim provinces face possible very heavy rainfall. The Meteorological Forecasting Division said generally cloudy conditions would prevail nationwide, with moderate rain, thunder, and lightning expected across the Himalayan, hilly, and Terai regions. Very heavy rainfall is likely in one or two places in Karnali and Sudurpashchim's hilly regions, with heavy rain also possible in Koshi, Bagmati, Gandaki, and Lumbini provinces. Among major cities, Dhangadhi, Nepalgunj, and Bhairahawa are forecast to see maximum temperatures of 36-38 degrees Celsius. Kathmandu is forecast to see moderate rain with thunderstorms, temperatures ranging from 28-30 degrees Celsius, while Pokhara faces a 60 per cent chance of rain, with highs of 30-32 degrees Celsius.
("Western Nepal faces 38°C heat as very heavy rain threatens hills," The Himalayan Times, 14 August 2026)
https://thehimalayantimes.com/environment/western-nepal-faces-38c-heat-as-very-heavy-rain-threatens-hills

Landslide buries homes in Rolpa, kills three, leaves nine missing in remote hillside village

On 13 August, The Kathmandu Post reported that the death toll from a landslide in Rolpa has risen to three, with nine people still missing after heavy rain sent mud and debris down a hillside in Thabang Rural Municipality-5 on Wednesday night. The landslide struck Kotlabara at around 2040 hrs, burying houses, shops, and cattle sheds where about seven families lived. Two people were seriously injured and rescued from the debris. Police reached the site by 2215 hrs and continued searching through the night. Local health worker Bimarsh Gharti Magar said steep terrain was hampering rescue efforts. The landslide struck an area about 80 kilometres

northeast of Liwang, the district headquarters, in the Uwa area, considered highly landslide-prone.
("Rolpa landslide update: Death toll rises to three in Rolpa landslide, nine still missing," The Kathmandu Post, 13 August 2026)
https://kathmandupost.com/national/2026/08/13/two-killed-10-missing-after-landslide-buries-homes-in-rolpa

Nepal braces for near 40°C heat in Tarai, heavy rain forecast in hilly regions
On 13 August, The Himalayan Times reported that Nepal is set for a sharp mix of near 40 degrees Celsius heat and heavy monsoon rain on Thursday, with several provinces bracing for heavy downpours even as Tarai cities face searing temperatures. The Meteorological Forecasting Division said Janakpur could record a maximum of 38-40 degrees Celsius, while Dhangadi could reach 37-39 degrees Celsius. Nepalgunj, Bhairahawa, and Biratnagar are also expected to see temperatures up to 38 degrees Celsius. Heavy rainfall is likely in parts of Gandaki, Bagmati, Koshi, and Lumbini provinces, with very heavy rainfall possible in isolated Himalayan and hilly areas of Gandaki and Lumbini. Pokhara faces a 40 per cent chance of daytime rain, rising to 60 per cent at night with thunderstorms. Kathmandu is forecast to remain cloudy with moderate rain, temperatures ranging from 21-33 degrees Celsius, and rain probability rising to 70 per cent overnight. The monsoon trough remains near its average position nationwide.
("Nepal faces near 40°C heat as heavy rain forecast for several areas," The Himalayan Times, 13 August 2026)
https://thehimalayantimes.com/environment/nepal-faces-near-40c-heat-as-heavy-rain-forecast-for-several-areas

EU ambassador and NDRRMA chief discuss climate resilience and disaster risk cooperation
On 11 August, Nepal News reported that EU Ambassador to Nepal Veronique Lorenzo met National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) Executive Chief Dharmaraj Uprety to review ongoing disaster risk reduction projects supported by the European Union. The two officials discussed Nepal's disaster management, mitigation of climate change impacts, and risk transfer mechanisms. Uprety thanked the EU for its continuous support and expressed confidence that bilateral cooperation would expand further. Lorenzo reaffirmed the EU's commitment to supporting Nepal, particularly in assessing climate-induced risks such as glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs) in high mountain regions, and stressed leveraging science and strengthening institutional capacity for disaster risk reduction.
("EU Ambassador Lorenzo and NDRRMA Chief Uprety meet on climate resilience and disaster risk," Nepal News, 11 August 2026)
https://english.nepalnews.com/s/climate/eu-ambassador-lorenzo-and-ndrrma-chief-uprety-meet-on-climate-resilience-and-disaster-risk/

PAKISTAN

Experts call for disaster mapping to protect Sindh's vulnerable coastline
On 20 August, The Express Tribune reported that experts said Sindh's coastal communities need better disaster mapping combining satellite imagery, GPS, and real-time digital data to convert early warning signs into timely action, as cyclones, floods, and seawater intrusion threaten the coast. The message emerged during a panel discussion, "Disaster Mapping in Coastal Areas: A Foundation for Resilience and Sustainable Development," organised by the Green Media Initiative in collaboration with the University of Karachi's Institute of Environmental Studies. Speakers argued for a shift from reactive disaster response to identifying and mapping risks, including exposed areas, evacuation routes, and livelihood impacts, before disasters strike. Provincial Ombudsman Sindh Climate/Disaster Justice Unit Director Imdad Hussain Siddiqui said coastal residents should not be viewed merely as disaster victims, since they are often the first to notice environmental changes around them.
("Mapping Sindh's coast before disaster strikes," The Express Tribune, 20 August 2026)

https://tribune.com.pk/story/2624864/mapping-sindhs-coast-before-disaster-strikes

Two killed, over 300 evacuated as heavy rain triggers flooding across Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa

On 20 August, The Express Tribune reported that two people were killed and at least four injured after heavy rain caused flooding and building collapses in Swabi, with more than 300 people evacuated, Rescue 1122 said, as the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) warned of possible urban flooding across Mardan, Peshawar, and Nowshera. A father and daughter died, and a mother and son were seriously injured, when a house roof collapsed in Topi, Swabi. Rescue 1122 teams evacuated over 300 people by boat from flooded areas including Khamza Dher and Managai, with a further 60 rescued overnight from homes inundated by floodwater. Heavy rain also continued in Rawalpindi and Islamabad for a second day, with eight people rescued in separate incidents and WASA Rawalpindi declaring a rain emergency, deploying staff across vulnerable areas as authorities monitored rising water levels in Nullah Lai.
("Two killed, more than 300 evacuated as PMD warns of more rain, urban flooding across K-P," The Express Tribune, 20 August 2026)
https://tribune.com.pk/story/2624885/two-killed-more-than-300-evacuated-as-pmd-warns-of-more-rain-urban-flooding-across-k-p

Opinion recalls how shifting seasons in Gilgit-Baltistan are quietly reshaping mountain life

On 18 August, Dawn published a personal essay by Mehnaz Parveen, a writer from Passu in Upper Hunza, describing how her home village has changed as unpredictable weather patterns disrupt the seasonal rhythms that once shaped daily life, farming, and family gatherings in Gilgit-Baltistan. She recalled snowfall hitting blossoming apricot orchards one April, and last year's glacial lake outburst flood in Gulmit, which cut the Karakoram Highway and stranded her family without electricity or phone signal for days. Parveen wrote that while no one in her village explicitly says "climate change," conversations increasingly turn to shifting harvests, delayed winters, and road closures after heavy rain, alongside traditional talk of weddings and orchards. She said her community, once able to read the seasons with precision, is still "learning what those changes mean."
("The Gilgit-Baltistan village where no one says climate change but everyone talks about the weather," Dawn, 18 August 2026)
https://www.dawn.com/news/2023638/the-gilgit-baltistan-village-where-no-one-says-climate-change-but-everyone-talks-about-the-weather

Heavy rain floods Rawalpindi low-lying areas, Nullah Leh nears flood alert level

On 19 August, The Express Tribune reported that heavy rain between Monday and Tuesday night submerged several low-lying areas across Rawalpindi and Islamabad, while a pre-alert was issued as the Nullah Leh's water level rose to 10.5 feet. Rainfall up to 118 millimetres was recorded across various locations, causing substantial damage to residents' valuables. The rain began at 0125 hrs, inundating areas including Javed Colony, Nadeem Colony, Ariya Mohalla, and Ziaul Haq Colony, forcing residents to move to safer locations. Shamsabad recorded the highest rainfall at 118mm, followed by Pirwadhai at 81mm, Bokra at 71mm, Gowalmandi and Nawaz Katariyan at 68mm each, Rawalpindi Kacheri at 50mm, and Golra at 24mm. Water also entered Murree Road, Liaquat Road, Commercial Market, and a newly launched beautification project at Raja Bazaar. A pre-alert was issued over flooding risk in Katariyan and Gowalmandi, with the Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) remaining active in the field.
("Rain submerges low-lying areas," The Express Tribune, 19 August 2026)
https://tribune.com.pk/story/2624647/rain-submerges-low-lying-areas

Opinion argues Abbottabad's century-old trees are being felled amid fragmented authority, warns of a nationwide pattern

On 13 August, The Friday Times published

an opinion piece by Saqib Ali Khan, arguing that Abbottabad, founded partly for its chinar trees, is losing its tree cover as authority over the city remains fragmented across five separate institutions, meaning "who allowed this?" has no real answer. The author linked the city's urban sprawl to the 2005 Kashmir earthquake, when displaced populations settled in Abbottabad's Orash Valley without planning, expanding built-up land unmanaged. He contrasted this with the Pakistan Military Academy at Kakul, where clear institutional accountability preserves greenery. He warned the Galiyat Development Authority's expanding powers increasingly override the Forest Department's mandate over Reserved Forest land, benefiting timber interests and private developers. The author argued this pattern, fragmented authority and no accountability, repeats across Pakistani cities, from Peshawar's shrinking green belts to Karachi's built-over drains, urging stronger, enforced institutional mandates before more damage occurs.
("Every City Cutting Down Its Own Name," The Friday Times, 13 August 2026)
https://www.thefridaytimes.com/13-Aug-2026/every-city-cutting-name

Opinion argues Pakistan's floods stem from unenforced policy, not policy absence, cites 200 hectares of Karachi mangroves cleared since 2010
On 13 August, The Friday Times published an opinion piece by Hamza Butt, arguing that Pakistan's recurring flood crisis reflects a refusal to enforce existing climate policy against political influence and speculative real estate, not a lack of science or planning documents. The author cited a WWF-Pakistan study finding nearly 200 hectares of Karachi's mangrove forests were cleared between 2010 and 2022 for residential projects, including DHA Phase 8, and industrial expansion near Port Qasim. He warned Islamabad's Margalla Hills watershed faces similar deforestation risks, predicting future flooding will be blamed on rainfall rather than landscape degradation. Ahead of COP31 in Antalya, the author argued Pakistan's case for climate finance would be undermined if it kept approving development that destroys resilience domestically, urging nature be treated as core infrastructure, not an afterthought.
("The Flood We Built," The Friday Times, 13 August 2026)
https://www.thefridaytimes.com/13-Aug-2026/flood-built

Opinion argues climate-smart agriculture must replace Pakistan's reactive disaster response, urges province-specific strategies
On 12 August, The Friday Times published an opinion piece by Aftab Hameed Mirani, arguing that Pakistan is experiencing "the collapse of an agricultural system designed for a climate that no longer exists," rather than isolated disasters. The author noted agriculture contributes almost a fifth of GDP and employs over a third of the workforce. The piece argued each province needs distinct strategies: salt-resistant crops for Sindh's coastal salinity, rainwater harvesting for Balochistan's groundwater scarcity, precision irrigation for Punjab, and mountain-ecology approaches for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan. Citing the Netherlands, Vietnam, and Ethiopia as models, the author proposed district-level climate agriculture service centres and "Climate Resilience Zones" bringing together governments, universities, and farmers to test and scale adaptive practices, arguing preparedness matters more than post-disaster relief camps.
("Climate-Smart Agriculture As Pakistan's New Social Contract With Nature," The Friday Times, 12 August 2026)
https://www.thefridaytimes.com/12-Aug-2026/climate-smart-agriculture-pakistan-s-new-social-contract-nature

Opinion warns Pakistan's full reservoirs offer no cushion against sudden glacial floods this monsoon
On 11 August, The Friday Times published an analysis by former Senator and Punjab water governance expert Mohsin Leghari, arguing that Pakistan's dams reaching full capacity against below-average inflows marks a management success, not a hydrological one, and now leaves no buffer for sudden surges. He noted Tarbela hit its Maximum Conservation Level on 10 August, while Mangla remained 64.5 per cent full

despite above-average Jhelum inflows, as managers throttled releases to conserve water for winter. Leghari warned that with conservation pools full, any glacial lake outburst flood would have to be passed through immediately via spillways or tunnels, leaving no passive buffer to absorb a surge. He called for a standing WAPDA-IRSA-NDMA-FFC monsoon operations cell with pre-agreed release triggers, arguing Pakistan's flood risk stems from institutional coordination failures, not water scarcity.
("Full Dams, Narrow Margins," The Friday Times, 11 August 2026)
https://www.thefridaytimes.com/11-Aug-2026/full-dams-narrow-margins

SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka faces rising climate and food security risks from El Niño

On 31 August, Lanka Newspapers reported that Sri Lanka is among countries facing significantly elevated climate and food security risks as El Niño exerts pressure across the Asia-Pacific region, according to a new UN report. The report cited intensified drought, erratic rainfall, and heightened crop failure risk as key threats, warning these could strain food systems still recovering from the country's recent economic crisis. Sri Lanka's rice-dependent agriculture, reliant on seasonal monsoons, is especially vulnerable, with lower-income households and smallholder farmers disproportionately affected. The UN urged the government to strengthen early warning systems, invest in climate-resilient agriculture, and reinforce food distribution networks. Colombo has yet to issue a formal response, though meteorological agencies are closely monitoring what forecasters call one of the more significant El Niño cycles in recent memory.
("UN Warns Sri Lanka Faces Heightened Climate and Food Security Threats Amid El Niño," Lanka Newspapers, 31 August 2026)
https://www.lankanewspapers.com/2026/08/31/un-warns-sri-lanka-faces-heightened-climate-and-food-security-threats-amid-el-ni-o

Specialist warns El Niño drought puts pregnant women, mothers at malnutrition risk

On 29 August, Daily Mirror reported that nearly ten districts affected by El Niño-related drought face serious risk of rising malnutrition, particularly among children, pregnant women, lactating mothers, and adults with non-communicable diseases, unless urgent nutritional and social welfare measures are introduced, according to Doctors' Trade Union Alliance for Medical and Civil Rights Chairman, Specialist Dr Chamal Sanjeewa. The warning comes as Sri Lanka continues to grapple with the effects of the current El Niño weather pattern, which has already affected over 84,000 people nationwide through worsening dry conditions, according to figures reported separately by Daily Mirror.
("El Niño dry spell puts pregnant women, lactating mothers at malnutrition risk: Specialist," Daily Mirror, 29 August 2026)
https://www.dailymirror.lk/breaking-news/El-Ni%C3%B1o-dry-spell-puts-pregnant-women-lactating-mothers-at-malnutrition-risk-Specialist/108-349026

Interactive tool lets readers test El Niño preparedness decisions

On 28 August, Daily Mirror launched "Mirror Missions," an AI-assisted interactive feature inviting readers to make six critical decisions as Sri Lanka faces water shortages, extreme heat, food security risks, and heavy rainfall linked to the current El Niño weather pattern. The initiative is designed to raise public awareness and encourage community-level preparedness as Sri Lanka navigates the compounding effects of El Niño, which meteorological authorities have warned could bring one of the strongest such events on record this year, alongside disrupted rainfall patterns, elevated temperatures, and heightened risks to agriculture, water supply, and public health across the country.
("Mirror Missions: El Niño in Sri Lanka, Can You Protect Your Community?" Daily Mirror, 28 August 2026)
https://www.dailymirror.lk/plus/Mirror-Missions-El-Ni%C3%B1o-in-Sri-Lanka-Can-You-Protect-Your-Community/352-349006

Over 81,000 people affected by El Niño-linked dry weather across seven districts
On 20 August, Ada Derana reported that more than 81,000 people have been affected by prevailing dry weather conditions linked to the El Niño weather pattern, according to the National Disaster Relief Services Centre. The update follows an earlier meeting of a special ministerial sub-committee and officials' committee, formed to address the potential impacts of El Niño, which reviewed preparedness measures including drinking water provision for communities in drought-affected districts such as Batticaloa, Monaragala, and Ampara. The committees have also been reviewing Department of Meteorology forecasts and assessing risks to the plantation, agriculture, wildlife, and water resources sectors as dry conditions persist and groundwater levels come under pressure.
("El Niño-linked dry weather affects over 81,000 people in seven districts," Ada Derana, 20 August 2026)
https://adaderana.lk/news/cmt15a7jt000o356p4ov4ubto

Government issues circular to secure water supply for future El Niño droughts
On 20 August, Ada Derana reported that a circular has been issued to ensure uninterrupted water supplies in areas affected by drought conditions that may arise from a future El Niño phenomenon, Minister of Environment Dr Dammika Patabendi said. Speaking at a media briefing on the potential impacts of El Niño, Patabendi said the circular was issued by the Ministry of Defence on 6 August. He said it introduces amendments to existing laws and regulations to allow faster, more convenient interventions to provide water facilities to communities in drought-affected areas, strengthening authorities' ability to respond efficiently to future water shortages. The minister said the initiative forms part of Sri Lanka's broader preparation for the potential impacts of future El Niño events and their consequences for water availability.
("Circular issued to ensure water supply during future El Niño-related droughts: Minister," Ada Derana, 20 August 2026)
https://adaderana.lk/news/cmt14v9630006356qy2w7wjwo

Government prepares drinking water plan for drought-hit districts as El Niño looms
On 18 August, Ada Derana reported that a special ministerial sub-committee and officials' committee formed to address the potential impacts of El Niño held their third meeting to review preparedness and response measures, according to the President's Media Division. The meeting, held at the Presidential Secretariat under Environment Minister Dr Dammika Patabendi, discussed action plans from the plantation, agriculture, wildlife, and water resources sectors, considered particularly vulnerable to changing weather conditions. A key focus was drinking water provision for communities affected by dry weather, particularly in Batticaloa, Monaragala, and Ampara, to be distributed through respective District Secretaries. The committees also reviewed Department of Meteorology forecasts on El Niño and measures to protect vulnerable sectors if dry conditions persist and groundwater levels fall further.
("El Niño: Special committee reviews water supply and emergency measures," Ada Derana, 18 August 2026)
https://adaderana.lk/news/cmsyetkcr0001356p90gg96qf

REGIONAL

Nepal's flood exposes fragile transboundary water-warning systems
On 28 August, The Daily Star published an analysis by Dhaka-based writer Jannatul Naym Pieal, arguing that Nepal's Bhotekoshi flood, which killed nearly 400 people with the toll still rising, exposed how early flood warning between upstream and downstream Himalayan states functions as an informal diplomatic courtesy rather than a guaranteed floor. The piece found automated gauging stations were swept away before triggering warnings, and formal Chinese notification arrived nearly five hours after floodwaters crossed into Nepal. It argued India's Expert Level Mechanism with China, suspended after the 2017 Doklam standoff, and Bangladesh's

total exclusion from Brahmaputra data-sharing, reveal the same structural flaw at greater scale, with Bangladesh's expiring Ganges treaty adding further urgency.
("What Nepal's flood devastation means for Bangladesh, India and China," The Daily Star, 28 August 2026)
https://www.thedailystar.net/slow-reads/geopolitical-insights/news/what-nepals-flood-devastation-means-bangladesh-india-and-china-4258096

South Asia urged to unite against shared floods, droughts and rising seas

On 24 August, The Climate Watch reported that South Asian countries need stronger regional cooperation to confront shared climate risks, Bangladesh's State Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Sheikh Faridul Islam said, speaking at a South Asia Regional Climate Cooperation (SARCC) meeting in Dhaka. Islam said Bangladesh is implementing several programmes under the Prime Minister's leadership, including planting 250 million trees and a master plan to free rivers around Dhaka, including the Buriganga, Shitalakshya, Turag, and Balu, from pollution. Special Assistant to the PM Dr Md Saimum Parvez said SAARC and BIMSTEC needed reactivation to address cross-border climate risks, calling political will "the most urgent requirement." Keynote speaker Dr A K M Saiful Islam, of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, said, "Climate change is no longer a future threat; it is the current development reality of South Asia," noting heatwaves, floods, cyclones, drought, and sea-level rise increasingly cross-national borders.
("South Asia urged to deepen climate cooperation against shared risks," The Climate Watch, 24 August 2026)
https://theclimatewatch.com/south-asia-urged-to-deepen-climate-cooperation-against-shared-risks/

Cities' extreme heat could cost region 7 per cent of GDP by 2050, World Bank warns

On 12 August, Down To Earth reported that around 520 million people in South Asia could face at least a month of dangerous heat annually by 2070, four times today's figure, according to a new World Bank report covering Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. By 2070, about 1.1 billion people could experience at least one day of theoretically unlivable heat, with nearly 63 million facing three or more months of extreme heat yearly. Heat-related deaths across Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka rose from about 118,000 in 2000 to 230,000 in 2023. Extreme heat already costs South Asia the equivalent of 31 million full-time jobs annually and could shrink the region's economy by nearly 7 per cent by 2050 without adaptation measures. The report urged governments to integrate heat-risk management into urban planning and infrastructure.
("520 million people in South Asia could face dangerous heat for at least one month a year by 2070, says World Bank report," Down To Earth, 12 August 2026)
https://www.downtoearth.org.in/climate-change/520-million-people-in-south-asia-could-face-dangerous-heat-for-at-least-one-month-a-year-by-2070-says-world-bank-report#google_vignette