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Floods: State braces for another financial blow

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Bengaluru: Barely two months after the state government submitted a memorandum seeking Rs 4,800 crore for the loss caused by the July-August floods in North Karnataka and Kodagu, it's bracing for another major financial jolt with fresh floods in Vijayapura, Kalaburagi, Yadgir and Raichur.

That the government has already received its share of around Rs 750 crore from the Centre under the state disaster relief fund (SDRF) and sought additional funds under NDRF will put added pressure on the Yediyurappa government to divert more money from development works towards flood relief and rehabilitation in the four affected districts.

The recent deluge has been attributed to breach of a tank between Solapur in Maharashtra and Karnataka. "The actual quantity of water released from Ujjani dam is about 1 to 1.5 tmcft. What added to the unexpected flooding is breach of the tank and the heavy rain in the basin, which increased the flow of water along small nalas and rivers," said a revenue department official.

According to the government,

Residents of villages on Bheema's banks moved

The release of 8.5 lakh cusecs of water from Sonna barrage in Afzalpur taluk, Kalaburagi, on Sunday kept residents of villages on the banks of Bheema river on tenterhooks. Many villagers are living in fear of being marooned. In a pre-emptive move, the district administration had relocated residents of Holi Bosaga village on Saturday. However, most residents of Udachan village refused to shift. The residents, some of whom agreed to be relocated after much coaxing, said they were forced to leave the village each time it flooded.



Aerial survey on Wednesday

Considering the large-scale damage caused by heavy rain and release of water from Maharashtra, I have asked the district administrations of Kalaburagi, Vijayapura, Raichur and Yadgir to prepare a ground report. I have asked them to submit it to me on October 21 when I take stock of the situation through an aerial survey

BS Yediyurappa | CM

the worst-hit district is Kalaburagi. The revenue department is hopeful of things improving in next 72 to 96 hours after the water passes through Raichur and meets Krishna river from Bhima.

But assessing the flood damage will be a bigger challenge. According to senior revenue department officials, 50 villages have been completely evacuated, while another 100 have been partially inundated.

"If you do a preliminary assessment, the biggest financial loss the state will incur is from damage to houses. Due to the poor quality of houses in interior parts of North Karnataka — they are mostly made of soil, bricks and loose stones — very little of the homes will be left when the residents return," said the official.

However, revenue minister R Ashoka said the government is committed to giving Rs 5 lakh compensation

for complete loss of houses, Rs 50,000 for damaged ones and Rs 10,000 as immediate relief per family.

"The government is committed to providing compensation for property loss as crop losses will be covered under SDRF and NDRF norms, apart from crop insurance. The commitment will be met with the Rs 33,000 crore loan been freshly sought by the government," he said.

"Our challenge will be to rebuild the roads and bridges that have been washed away as the government has to compensate the public works department (PWD) for restoring them," the minister added.

As per government data, the previous floods alone resulted in a loss of at least Rs 4,851 crore in terms of damage to public infrastructure across the state. But revenue department officials say there is enough and more money for immediate relief.

"There are no financial constraints for DCs to carry out rescue and relief measures in the affected districts. They had sought additional manpower and the government has mobilised staff from neighbouring districts as well," said revenue department (disaster management) principal secretary Anjum Parvez.