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FLOOD SPECIAL

FLOODS SHATTER A BRIDE'S DREAM



KHAN RISKED LIFE TO SAVE POLICE OFFICIALS



● **UMAR SHAFI**

Adeel Khan was the one who came to the rescue of policemen trapped in police housing colony Qamarwari.

Khan, a 1st year IG-NOU student and the resident of the same colony, was himself trapped in the deluge for two days and one night.

Khan and his family finally managed to move to a safer place in the nearby area of downtown. But knowing that his friends, neighbors, and many police officials and their families were still trapped inside the deluged colony, Khan decided to come back and save all those marooned people.

According to the residents of the colony, Khan made a makeshift boat with wooden logs and plywood sheets to carry at least 6-8 persons at a time.

“He was like a hero for us, who came all the way from Downtown to save us while putting his own life in to risk. He didn’t care for his life,”

said the wife of senior police official.

A deputy superintendent of police, who didn’t wish not to be named, said, “I was also trapped for many days. This young boy came and saved me and my children, he did a big favour on me when he saved my pregnant wife by bringing her down to the boat from the third floor of the building”.

During days, Khan used to save the people by taking them out of their buildings, and on the evenings he would distribute eatables and drinking water among those left trapped.

Khan said it was getting difficult for him to rescue females and the children as many household items like utensils, refrigerators and cupboards were obstructing his way in the houses. But at the end he could rescue them safely.

Monty Singh, a close friend of Khan said, “I and my family were trapped in the deluged colony for many days. I thought it is going to be the end of us all. But thanks to Khan, who saved me and my family.”

KARGIL JOINS HANDS TO HELP FLOOD VICTIMS

● **Ghulam Murtaza**

The civil society of district Kargil including various religious and social organizations carried out relief and rescue operations to the flood victims in the Kashmir valley.

Religious organizations like Imam Khomeini Memorial Trust, Islamia School Kargil, Ahle Sunnat wal Jamaat setup relief camps. Officials of Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council Kargil (LAHDC) were also included. The Chief Executive Councilor of LAHDC Kargil, Haji Asgar Ali Karbalai, was also in Srinagar to supervise the rescue and rehabilitation programs.

While talking to MERC TIMES, the Vice Chairman of Basij e Rohanian, a branch of Imam Khomeini memorial trust Kargil; Maulana Abbas Karrarvi said, “the flood has immensely affected valley, but we are with our Kashmiri brothers at this tough time.”

“We have sent some volunteers for rescue and relief operations on September 8 and we got success in rescuing Ladakhi students who were stranded in affected areas.” He appealed the people of Kargil to raise reliefs on a huge scale for flood victims of Kashmir and pray for the speedy recovery of the valley.

The students hailing from Kargil, who were in valley for education, also provided their services for rescue operations and relief of the flood victims.

Mohamad Hussain Wazir President of All Kargil Student Union Srinagar (AKSU) while talking to said, “When flood hit Srinagar city, most of the students returned to Ladakh, but some senior Kargil students stayed back to monitor the rescue operations and the relief camps. The relief which was being brought from Kargil was distributed in our supervision.”

Police also played a role in rescuing people in flood affected areas of the valley. SSP Kargil, Sri Sujit Kumar (IPS), said “We distributed our team into three groups and moved in to Bemina, Dalgate and Rajbagh to help people. We were able to rescue the stranded people.”

UNCERTAINTY SURROUNDS SCHOOL EDUCATION IN FLOOD-HIT KASHMIR

● **Rafia Rahim**

The unprecedented floods hit hard the academic activities in Jammu and Kashmir. Nearly 6,000 school buildings in the state were damaged.

Most of the damaged government school buildings are located in villages and other far flung areas. The authorities suspended the class work for a long span.

“We have started repair work and cleaning operation, and the government agencies are yet to swing into action for renovating or rebuilding the damaged school structures”, said owner of a private school at Pampore.

Officials said that in case classrooms in most of the damaged school buildings in the Kashmir valley were not rebuilt and renovated within next two months, the government may have to prepone the winter break as it would not be possible for the students and teachers to study and teach in the open as the valley would be hit by heavy snow and rain in coming months.

“Muddasir Ali and shabir Ahmed” teachers of Walden public school Natipora said, if the damaged school buildings were not renovated in time they would not be able to complete the syllabus. But repairing school buildings is colossal task involving several thousand crores of rupees.



As floods ravaged Kashmir, parents are also worried about their children. They claim that the schools would have posed the highest degree of risk of infections as the school furniture, flooring and even doors and windows lie infected, inundation of school buildings can provide favourable environment for

various diseases to thrive serious air borne diseases. “So we cannot compromise with the health of our children,” they said.

The teachers said that the board of school education and school authorities should change exam criteria that the students would not face any problem.

DISCOUNT ON FLOOD-HIT GOODS ATTRACTS PEOPLE

● **Gazanfarr**

The weekly flea market here witnessed an unprecedented rush of shoppers.

People from all over Kashmir thronged the market in anticipation of heavy discounts on flood affected goods.

Mubashir Hussain, a shopper from district Budgam said, “I came here with my wife for shopping after I got to know about the heavy discounts on various items.”

He said that the traders sell the flood affected items at much lesser prices in the Sunday market.

“Some items like readymade garments and dress materials are discolored and have stains on them but that can be ignored given the price on which we get to buy them”, he added.

Aware of the consequences of using infect-



ed clothes, people are ready to compromise on health over price and discounts.

“Although the darners have washed the clothes, I will still wash them again at home and use some antiseptic, if needed,” Irshad Ahmad

Shah, a resident of downtown area of the city, said.

The damage caused to the branded and well reputed companies made it possible for a commoner to dream of buying something ‘branded’.

A youth, Ghulam Ahmad, from district Ganderbal said, “I could not resist the temptation of having a pair of branded shoes at Rs 1500, it normally costs more than 3000”.

The women did not lag behind in rushing towards sale outlets. Long queues were formed outside the shops selling wedding suits and ladies dress material.

Waiting for her turn, a shopper Rubina Parveen said, “This shop is very famous for the stuff it sells. And as there are discounts for the dresses, I want to make sure I get many at the best deals”.

Flood Aftermath

BEMINA RESIDENTS RECOUNT HORROR

● **Bhat Sumaiya**

A Days of horror are over, but the miseries of September 7 floods still haunt the victims.

Mohammad Asem Shah, a resident of Bemina, was trapped in a rented flat along with his family for five days before they were evacuated by their relatives.

Shah said it was at about 5 pm on Sunday (September 7) when water level started rising in the colonies.

"There was hue and cry all around. People were running here and there and there was a rumor that Jhelum is going to breach the bunds at many places. Water was gushing towards Bemina," he said.

Soon after hearing the news, he had gone out to check the level of water and the safe passage to flee. Till then, the drains of the colony had choked. He said he first time witnessed the "black water" coming out of a gutter like that.

After witnessing water was rising steadily, Shah and his family started shifting their belongings to second floor and the tenant living on second floor helped them in saving their belongings.

Recalling the chilling moments, Shah said when they were shifting buckets of rice from the store, water started gushing to their rooms through windows, doors and all sides where from water got its way. It was horrible.

"We were seeing our space shrinking in front of our eyes. Water was filling in the rooms and our belongings started floating. Within half hour water level was raised up to one story and we failed to save our essentials things," he added.

Another resident Ishfaq Amin of this area while narrating his story said that he and his family members did not sleep just to keep eye on water level. As they

were feeling helpless, the residents started helping each other. "We distributed our some of saved food items, water and other essentials according to needs," Amin said.

On second day, all the members of the colony had decided that they would not move out of the colony. "But when an army helicopter would hover over us, some would wave their red shirts and some would wave their red trousers with a hope to be airlifted from their homes. The chopper would come close to us, drop some packets," Shah recalled.

On third day the residents gave up the hope of being rescued by choppers. "We saw choppers airlifting people in Tengpora side, later we came to know that dozens of non-local laborers and tourists were stranded in new court complex Tengpora and they were being airlifted," he added.

It is this time when residents felt that they had to help themselves as no one was going to help them. "We felt we are orphans as there was no government. Choppers were picking people selectively," they added.

Residents said the youths made makeshift boats out of wheel tubes and empty cans to supply essential material to trapped victims.

After five days of self-help, locals said they saw a relief boat. "A group of youths came in boats and gave us biscuits medicines and candle," The visit of volunteers to the colony gave hope to the residents that life still exist.

"Apart from food items we would wait for the volunteers to tell us about the situation of other areas," he recalled The youths told us motivating tales that we were not frightened".

Till Friday, the colonies around the main road were evacuated and volunteers started reaching to inner colonies where hundreds of residents were stranded.

PROTESTS AGAINST IRREGULARITIES IN DISTRIBUTION OF RATIONS

● **Showkat Latief**

Even as the government is making boastful claims about helping flood-affected people with free rations and other relief materials, people in several city areas including from Batwara and Shalteng are complaining of shortage of food-grains.

They accused the concerned officials of Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution department (CAPD) of poor or no distribution of free rice. People of some areas allege that they are being given only half of the quota assigned per Ration ticket.

"Our CAPD Supervisor has been distributing only 25 kgs per ration ticket while two trucks of 72 quintals each were sent to our depot to cater to only 576 registered ration cards," said Shaheen Ahmad Wani, a resident of Batwara.

The supervisors had promised the people of distributing the outstanding amounts of rations in the coming days, but after waiting for days together they were left high and dry.

"Our Supervisor did not dispense the rest of 25 kgs and we were forced to knock the doors of higher authorities but to no avail, as they showed no response to our repeated pleas," said Javed Ahmad Reshi, another resident of Batwara.

While similar complaints came from rest of the city areas, the people of Nowshehra complained that no free rice was distributed at their local CAPD depot.

"Free rice was distributed at several places, however, not even a single grain of free rice was distributed in our area," Muzaffar Ahmad, a local resident said.

"Though our area was not affected by floods, but almost every household here had accommodated the flood victims from the flood-hit areas, but to our shock we were left craving for rations by our local CAPD officials," he added.

The residents of Lal Bazar said only 30 kgs were distributed in their area in comparison to the assigned 50 kgs.

"We heard the announcement by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah announcing 50 kgs per Ration card. But these CAPD officials are clearly violating the orders of CM," said Mohammad Shafi, a Lal Bazar resident.

Meanwhile, Police booked three CAPD officials (Ghat Munshis) for violating the recent government order for distribution of free rations to the flood-affected, a police spokesman said Thursday.

FLOODS SHATTER A BRIDE'S DREAM

● **Ishan Fazili**

As the mud laced suit cases were being unloaded from the load carrier, Razia stood frozen at the window of her room. The luggage drenched in water encased her trousseau. For a year she had been busy in shopping, buying clothes and other accessories for her wedding.

Razia's wedding was scheduled to be held in the mid-September. But the nature had other plans. On the night of September 7, exactly a week prior to her wedding, the raged Jehlum crashed through the city affecting Rajbagh the most. It was in a rented flat in Rajbagh itself, that Razia had kept her luggage along with other goods of the house.

As the deluged suit cases were brought inside, gloom clouded the house. Women started weeping silently yet consoling each other that the mates of the house were safe. "dapaan Rambagh tujikh raath maharn'i henz laash. Tem haal chu shukur saeri chu theek, (they said dead body

of a bride was retrieved from Rambagh. We should be thankful that we are all safe)," a lady said.

A suit case was opened just to reveal wet, soiled and discolored clothes. A small glittering sequin conveyed that the clothes were once fresh and bright.



"Nothing remained in any of the suit cases. The clothes have been reduced to muck," the bride-to-be murmured. "I worked in private school and saved the money for this. But look what has happened," she said.

Amid the stalls of spoilt clothes a

small polythene bag containing a dupatta symbolized hope. As the water level had risen in that room, the bag had floated on the top, keeping the contents safe.

Razia and her family had been living in anxiety for the one week. They were gripped in tension since the news of flood reached them. They lived in a flat in Rajbagh and had come to visit a relative's place few days before the disaster. Each moment ticked away slowly in suspense. The water logged roads had made access impossible. It was after a week of the floods that men of the house decided to go and see the place and retrieve whatever they could.

Razia's tale of a spoilt marriage is one among many in Kashmir. The rash floods ravaged everything and broke the chain of smooth life here. Many weddings were scheduled for the month of September, prior to Eid-ul-Adha. But the deluge devastated all

hopes and plans. At some places grooms could not reach out to their brides. Other weddings were left incomplete. The houses where weddings were planned were damaged. The ceremonies were later rescheduled and held in a simple and quite manner.

SMC FAILS TO CLEAN SRINAGAR

● **Nelofar Jan**

The residents of Srinagar accuse Srinagar municipal corporation of failure to dispose off the garbage that is covering the worst hit areas after the flood.

According to the Srinagar municipal corporation, 32,275 metric tonnes of garbage were lifted from Srinagar city between September, 11 to October, 10.

"Against average garbage of around 400 metric tonnes the SMC has lifted 2422 metric tonnes, the highest ever, on October 4, said SMC commissioner Dr GN Qasba.

The garbage was six times higher than an average waste lifted from Srinagar city. The highest amount of garbage lifted by SMC at a peak tourism season was only 600 tones a day.

Such a quantity of garbage has never

been collected by the SMC in such short span of time. The flood water not only marooned over 70 percent of Srinagar but also filled the city with Garbage, carcasses and debris.



The SMC claims it took 91 drums of black phenyl, 6000 kg deodorant 7000 black

phenyl and 3500 decomposed to battle stench inside lanes and contain any spread of epidemic in flood affected areas.

However in various areas of Srinagar tons of garbage can be seen on main roads as well as on the interior streets.

Bashir Ahmad a local from Parimpora said "The SMC is claiming that it removed tones of garbage, but this all is fake. "Come and see our areas where people are living in miserable condition and under constant threat of epidemic outbreak."

The locals claim that in majority of areas, the SMC has apparently called off the emergency operation and is conducting the normal drives.

"There is no special drive started by SMC. The leftover slit and mud by the flooded waters and other stinky garbage is not completely removed," said Arif a local.

AZIZ LOST CATTLE, ORCHARDS TO FLOODS

● **Mohmad Yonus**

Three kanals of apple orchard got uprooted along with the land of Abdul Aziz Trumbo when the banks of river Jhelum breached on September, 7 at Padgampora area of district Pulwamma.

“When the water level raised above the danger line, the pressure of water rifted the bank of Jhelum adjoining our village and the rivulet it created went through my orchard and uprooted all 120 trees I had planted and washed the land away as well,” Aziz said.

The five years old orchard was on the brink of supplying produce after a couple of years, “I was expecting the produce after two years, as it takes an apple tree approximately six to seven years being capable of bearing the fruits,” he said.

He added the orchard was a result of many years of hard work and investment “I filled an uncultivable land with a chunk of soil and got the level of soil risen up tinged with manures and fertilizers and made it worthy for apple plantation”.

For the maintenance of the grove, he had spent a sum of Rs 60000 for pesticides, fertilizers and other required material which, according to him, was a huge burden.

About seven kanals of land which used to fetch him self-sufficient production of rice also got submerged and damaged.

The floods left him with nothing except his house. He said that “The fencing all around my house got crumbled down because of the overwhelming pressure of the water leaving my house exposed to the water, but it somehow hovered there albeit the cracks got developed in the walls aftermath.”

He also experienced a lost to his cattle. “The rushing waters destroyed the cowshed killing all the cows. The price of a cow for a farmer is incalculable” An approximate number of 110 cows lost their lives in the village costing 50 thousand each, he said.

Aziz narrated a story about his fellow. Abdul Raheem Guru, a milk vendor, who had recently bought a cow for Rs 70 thousand. He lost her along with the other cow in the floods. Aziz was mourning the loss of Raheem more than his own, “I feel more secure than him, and such a loss for a milk vendoe is terrible.”

While asking him about the relief operations, if any, carried out there, he said, “we received 50 kg rice last month from the government ration centers.” He applauded the generosity of tractor companies like Holland and Escort who provided them basic amenities free of cost.

VICTIMS QUESTION GOVT'S REHABILITATION EFFORTS

● **Yasir gaffer**

The State government is unable to rehabilitate flood-hit people, victims.

Some people got relief material in bulk quantities while others were left empty handed. Ghulam Rasool a resident of Bemina said, “Neither anyone from the government nor from any organisation reached our locality during the floods.”

Government announced 35 kg free ration in aftermath of the floods for six months, “At our ration depot, no truck of ration has been deputed so far, with the result, our ration depot is empty” said Nazir Ahmed, a resident of Omer Colony, Qamarwari.

Another announcement of Rs 75,000 to the houses that were damaged during the floods was to no avail for Israr Ahmed. “The walls of my house developed severe cracks, but no one from the revenue department came to survey our house. They were surveying the houses of blue-eyed persons.” he said.

Mohammad Yusuf a resident of Jawahar Nagar narrated his woeful tale. “My

house collapsed in the recent floods. I was hoping that the government would provide me relief and rehabilitate at the earliest, but to my utter shock I have been left high and dry without any relief even after passing of months of floods.”

He added, “People had high hopes on Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government. People were expecting some sort of big relief package and some measures to streamline the relief distribution, but all in vain.”

Firdous Ahmed, a resident of Rajbagh said, “After the state government failed to tackle the situation people were expecting that the Modi’s government having absolute majority would declare it natural disaster but to our disappointment the government not only failed to declare it a natural disaster but even failed to give proper relief in proportion to the calamity that befell Kashmir.”

“The walls of my house developed severe cracks, but no one from the revenue department came to survey our house. They were surveying the houses of blue-eyed persons.”

HEAPS OF GARBAGE LIE UNATTENDED ON SRINAGAR ROADS

● **Sami ullah Khan**

Two months after floods hit Kashmir, heaps of garbage lie on the roadsides in Srinagar at many places, irking the locals.

In many places that were affected by the floods, people have been cleaning their houses and are dumping garbage on the pavements. The garbage heaps remain unattended for days together.

In Jawahar Nagar, which was worst hit by floods, and recorded huge damage to life and property, debris and garbage is lying on the pavements.

“The Srinagar Municipality Corporation nomatter has cleaned huge garbage in our area but there are still many areas which are yet to be cleaned. This garbage which is lying here has now dried up and it may become a breeding ground

for many diseases. We appeal the concerned authorities to clean it on immediate basis,” said locals of Jawahar Nagar.

Similarly, Gaw-Kadal area where more than 25 houses have been completely razed to ground, debris is lying in many streets.

“Many inner streets are closed still with the debris due to which people can’t move freely in the area. Here debris have blocked many important streets,” said Ali Mohammad a resident.

For past two months, SMC has started a cleaning drive in Srinagar.

In many other areas including Gogji Bagh, the locals have dumped rotten eatables on pavements, which is emitting foul smell.

“The foul smell is irritating us. We appeal authorities to clean up this mess as soon as possible,” said locals of Jawahar Nagar.

RAJBAGH CRAVES FOR BASIC AMENITIES



● **Waseem Nasir**

Even after passing of two months, Rajbagh area of Srinagar is still craving for basic amenities. The people are fuming with anger because of government's lackadaisical approach.

According to the locals, they are still craving for clean water, electricity because of the alleged apathy of government.

Waqar Hussain, a resident of Kursu Rajbagh said, "The people residing in this area are wondering when government would come out of slumber,

we have been craving for electricity since floods hit our area."

The people are also aghast at the governments' 'irresponsible attitude' towards the repairing of roads. After "flood, the roads are filled with muck and debris, it is simply impossible to walk" The locals added.

Farooq Ahmad, a local shopkeeper, said "the roads present pathetic look as the debris and muck lie all around stench emanating from debris is unbearable."

Another resident, said, "The government has miserably failed to restore the basic amenities without them the life is simply not possible."

FLOOD-HIT CHADOORA BRIDGE CLOSED FOR TRAFFIC

● **Irshad Khan**

Flood-hit main bridge at Chadoora in district Budgam is leading to frequent traffic jams.

The main bridge over River Doodganga here that links Chadoora and the adjoining areas was damaged in floods on September 5. It developed a bend forcing the authorities to close it for traffic. However, light vehicular traffic was allowed to ply just two days after the floods.

But later on, the bridge was completely closed for all kind of traffic by the Roads and Buildings Department (R&B) citing safety reasons.

"We couldn't afford to compromise on the safety of the people travelling on the bridge, so we decided to close it.", Nazir Ahmed, Junior Engineer at the R&B office, Chadoora told MERC Times.

However the district administration took notice of the situation immediately, and a temporary mini bridge was constructed a few meters down the river, but owing to heavy traffic load, it's proving to be insufficient as vehicles can be seen struck in heavy jams for hours, especially during peak hours.

The authorities seem to be in no mood to provide an immediate respite. "We are looking into the possible ways of repairing the bridge. We will see if the bend can be repaired by any machine available outside the state, otherwise a new bridge has to be constructed and that will take time", he added.

FLOODS, CONFINED CHILDREN TO HOMES

● **Ubaid Jeelani**

At a time when September 7 flood ravaged Kashmir, the parents were the only ones to support children mentally and physically.

During floods, children who would go to their schools, play in the parks and enjoy every moment of their lives remained confined to homes.

"Our sweet ,enthusiastic children were trapped in as if they were caged from where they could never come out . They were highly disturbed mentally as well as physically", said Abdul Majeed of Raj bagh. "The children should always

be kept busy in some activity in such a situation so that they don't get mentally disturbed and spoil their health. So, it is the responsibility of parents who may or may not have been affected by floods that they should not let their children suffer physically or mentally", said Mushtaq Wani, a parent said.

Some parents can be seen taking their children away from the haunting devastation. They can be seen accompanying their children to the public parks and playgrounds.

Nazir Ahmad said: "During flood, my son always told me when will the schools open and when will he get to play with his

friends .Feeling concerned about his health, I decided to take him to a playground at Kashmir university and now I daily bring him to this ground to have some fun by playing football with other boys. This has worked a lot".

Saliq, a 14year old boy, said, "I study at Biscoe school and my school was submerged. So, I had to stay at home . To relax I used to leave with my football kit to play at Kashmir university with my friends .My father never stopped me from coming to Kashmir university playground as he knew that my school was off and staying at home was quiet tiresome and could lead to mental fatigue".

FLOODS MAR BROADBAND SERVICE IN KUPWARA

● **Zafar Aafaq**

Kupwara, a frontier district of Jammu and Kashmir, has been without broadband internet facility since the floods hit the valley in September.

The area was not directly affected by the heavy deluge, but the floods in Srinagar disrupted the telecommunication services. It left the area disconnected from rest of the world.

Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), resumed its landline telephone service after one week. However, the broadband internet service provided it is yet to be restored.

"In other districts of the valley BSNL's broadband internet, is functioning but Kupwara has been ignored" said Zahoor Ahmad, a subscriber. For the last two months, the work in government and private offices remained undone due to lack of internet facility which leaving public to suffer.

In Rural Development office Kralpora, heaps of files were lying on the table waiting for processing.

"For past one week I have been visiting here daily hoping my application would be put online" says Tariq Ahmad at Rural Development Office Kralpora.

In the district, BSNL's land line and broadband internet services extends to five blocks. The services are availed by common masses, offices, and business establishments.

"I have been using BSNL's broadband internet for past two years for educational purpose, to watch videos on YouTube, to

chat with friends over Skype, and to download movies and, but for the past two months I can't do all of this" says Abid Mir of Handwara.

The lack of the facility in district has also affected the business establishments like travel agencies, departmental stores, DTP shops.

For Babar Telecom and Travel agency in Kupwara, lack of internet facility is a huge setback.

"On an average, we would make profit of a Rs 1000 per day, but since floods we are seeing more loss and less gain, it has put the future of agency at stake" said proprietor of the agency.

BSNL has only one major exchange at Srinagar for the whole valley to control and monitor its functioning. As the exchange remained inundated for many days, it disrupted the internet communication throughout the valley.

"The whole equipment required for broadband got damaged due to floods. We have to get the new machinery from outside the state and its installation will require a lot of time and man power" says DGM BSNL, Kashmir.

"Initially we restored internet facility to Airport through makeshift arrangements then our next priority was city for which the services have almost been resumed," he added.

He said, "The work on restoration of services in North Kashmir, which includes three districts, Kupwara, Bandipora, and Baramulla, is going on and within one week broadband internet will start functioning".

UPTOWN BECOMES 'ISLAND OF HOPE'



● **Moosa Hayat**

Barzulla-Baghat-Old Airport Road-Hyderabad had a very fortunate escape from the inundation and thus became an 'Island Of Hope' for the victims of rash floods. It became home to thousands of homeless people who were affected by the floods.

A number of medical and relief camps were established on this 'island of hope' by professionals from varying backgrounds like doctors, businessmen, lawyers, students and even local masjid and intizamia committees.

"We distributed medicines worth Rs 25 lakh among the distressed people", Dr Sajjad Fazili, valleys renowned ophthalmologist and one of the organizers of the camp said.

"We also organized rescue operations at different places but unfortunately that didn't last long as all our boats were damaged, so we completely focused on relief and medical camps and Alhamdulillah that went well", he added.

Dr Zahida Shah, one of the first medicos to start a camp, said that they began the initiative with just four medicos and later on many renowned doctors joined

in. They included Dr Fazal Parrey, Dr Arshid Farooq, Dr Farooq Mir, Dr Yasir Wani, Dr Jameel Mir, Dr Humayan, Dr Sajjad Nazir, Dr Irfan Peer, and Dr Saleem Najar. Many volunteers from the adjoining areas had joined the camp for assistance. The volunteers, mostly youth, were involved in rescue operations besides providing baby food, water and medicine to the flood victims.

According to Yamin, a local volunteer, everyday 1200-1500 patients turned up at the camp.

"We provide them whatever aid and medicines was available here," he further added.

The marriage hall situated at Sanat Nagar Bypass turned out as a shelter for the victims and scores of people took refuge there. They were paid visits by people from adjoining areas and offered food and other services. The local masjid committee provided food to stranded people and organized rescue operations with the help of local youth.

"On an average 800-1000 displaced persons are served breakfast, lunch and dinner", said a committee elder, Mohammad Ramzan Parrey.

"The shopkeepers of the locality also assisted us in running the camp," he added.



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