

Avalanche: A Great Disaster



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Abstract

2017 winter has witnessed extreme weather condition for instant the northern hemisphere faced extreme cold in all the three continent viz. Europe, Asia, and North America. Heavy snow and avalanches hit various countries of Himalayan region. It killed hundreds of people, cattle and buried villages. Media reported that dozens of people still missing in one region. Several deaths were caused by collapse of home roofs and many road accidents took place. There avalanches cut off several regions, disrupting disaster management as govt. offices had to be closed. Many more people along with children were trapped in collapsed building. There remained no way to rush injured as the entered region had been blocked due to heavy snow. The rescue workers were also killed when an avalanche struck a check post. The snow wreaked havoc on roads and high ways where police and soldiers had rescue a large number of people who were trapped besides hundreds of buses, cars and daily vehicles.

Keywords : Avalanche, Natural Calamities, Himalayan Region.

Introduction

To understand this natural calamity we have to understand the nature and meaning of avalanche. Avalanche is a vast mass of snow and it's at high altitude which has accumulate to such an extent that is own weight cause it to slide rapidly down the mountain slope. An avalanche this work immense havoc, destroying villages, roads, forests etc. in its parts. An avalanche carries with it thousands of ton of rock. Avalanche wind in its turn causes destruction at a considerable distance from the avalanche itself.

Landslides

Downslope transport of soil are rock resulting from naturally occurring vibrations changes in direct water content, removal of lateral support, loading with weight and weathering resulting in manipulation of water causes and slope composition. Land slides are more wide spread then any other geological event. Land slides vary in types of movement viz. slides, flows, heavy storms etc. Frequency of occurrence extent and consequence of landslides may be approximately estimated and areas of high risk determined by use of information on area geology, geomorphology, hydrology, climatology and vegetation Factors which contribute to landslide vulnerability may be many e.g. settlements built on steep slops, Softer soils cliff top. Again settlements built at the base of steep slops; on mouth of streams from mountain valley are land slide hazards. Besides roads, communication lines in mountain area, building with weak foundation prove vulnerable.

Avalanches and landslides cause tremendous physical damage. Anything on the top or in the path suffers damage; its rubble may block roads and lines of communication. Consequently, loss of productivity of agriculture or forest lands, flooding reduces property values Avalanches and landslide cause casualties. Fatalities occur due to slope failure, history bears testimony to the fact that catastrophic debris fines slides or mud flows have killed several thousand of people cattle and wild life.

Kashmir govt. authorities have issue avalanche warning advising residents in mountainous areas no to venture out. Soldiers were rescued after beeing buried in snow. Kashmir valley ruled under heavy snow over several weeks. Some soldiers went missing after a path way cheered in snow caved area was rescued. This group was earlier feared dead. These soldiers are on patrol near this camp. They were buried under several feet of snow. Snow tracks are path ways carved out through snow to facilitate movement of man and vehicles. Another avalanche buried a military post and swept away a patrol party burying 21 Indian soldiers. Seven soldiers were rescued. The entire Kashmir region has been witnessing one of the most severe winters in recent decade's with heavy snow across the territory and temperature troping to minimum seven degree Celsius.

After a few days normal life was disrupted in Kashmir due to fresh snow fall which had to the closure of Srinagar Jammu National highway and affected flight operators in Srinagar as well. Fresh snow fall was recorded across Kashmir with some places in the higher reaches of the valley witnessing very heavy snow fall. In one single night north Kashmir received 2 feet of fresh snowfall. Meteorological department reported heavy snow fall in many of the high reaches of the state as well. Nearly 300 km. Srinagar Jammu National highway was closed due to snowfall in around this area and very bad weather. About two feet snow fall as reported near Jawahar tunnel. Traffic was suspended here also several air flight was cancelled to and fro Srinagar international airport due to snow fall.

Through this is a natural disaster in the Kashmir Valley and is a cause of concern there yet fresh snowfall in Shimla, Manali and other part of Himachal Pradesh has resulted in a boost it's the state's tourism industry. Himachal Pradesh wrapped in blanket of snow is a great attraction of tourists there.

The avalanche hit an army camp killing an army major. Army men who were missing have been rescued civil population also suffered. A family with four of its members died due to house collapse. Besides military weather has always been a major adversary of the armed forces in Kashmir of 242 soldiers killed in the valley between January 2007 and March 2012, 62 were consumed by natural calamities.

In Kashmir the Dal lake in Srinagar was found snow covered and a man walked over it on the snow covered path inside it. The Govt. again issued a fresh medium danger avalanche warning. The national highway remained closed for traffic.

Global warming, ecological changes and heavy shelling by Pakistan troops are triggering avalanches. Ceasefire violations and use of heavy weapons by Pak troops are leading to loosing of soil creating damage of a landslide. Global warming is also leading to crack in glacier. The state of J.K. is witnessing heavy snowfall over past 72 hours and is likely to record similar condition for the next 2-3 days. Due to global warming glacier are witnessing cracks. There are avalanche is many area for the first time.

Avalanches have killed dozens of people in the steep slopes of the Himalayas during early February this year. The avalanche accompanied by snow fall caused deaths of more than 50 people and dozens more was reported missing. Some more deaths were reported from roof collapse. Avalanche caused road accidents; heavy snow blanketed the valley and lower slopes of the hills, in some areas avalanche and snow wreaked havoc on major roads and high way where police rescues people trapped by storm. Valley has been blocked by heavy snow fall.

In Kashmir snowfall and rain have created havoc. Bad weather has disrupted air connecting. The Met department further forecasted snow fall in the plains, heavy rain and snow fall are again executed to disrupt life of people. All precautionary measures fail to manage disaster damages about by avalanches and snow fall in the area.

People have to trudge along steep slopes in mountain states where in some remote areas people take 2-3 days trekking in snow affected areas. The inhabitants of some settlement zone to battle harsh weather conditions. Police, paramilitary forces and civil defence people all try to manage disaster but nature is however unconquerable.

Conclusion

Icy winds in many places in the Gangotri places intensified the cold wave condition with heavy snow fall is many parts of lower Himalayas coming fall of mercury. The Met office said there icy winds aware carrying the winter but from the hilly region which have witnessed heavy snow fall and avalanches. In this poor visibility has disrupted air and rail traffic winter vacation have been extended in this area.

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