

Beat: Technology

Wall of water from hydropower project kills 24 students in India

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USPA News - Twenty-four engineering students were presumed drowned after a sudden surge of water was released from a hydropower project in northern India without proper warning, officials said on Monday, ordering a high-level probe amid accusations of negligence. The incident happened on Sunday evening when a group of 48 engineering students stopped to take pictures of the Kullu Valley in the northern state of Himachal Pradesh.

Many of those in the group were standing on the banks of the Beas River when they were suddenly swept away by a surge of water. "I am deeply pained over the tragic incident of engineering students getting drowned in a flash flood in Himachal Pradesh," said Home Affairs Minister Rajnath Singh. "I have instructed the authorities to dispatch a rescue team for immediate action and save precious lives trapped in the floods." District officials said five bodies had been recovered by late Monday but 19 others remained missing and were presumed to have drowned in the flash flood. Divers, army troops, helicopters, and small boats were being used to search downstream of the Beas River to find those still missing. Authorities have promised a high-level investigation amid negligence allegations from locals after it became clear officials at an upstream dam had released the water without warning. Although dam employees claimed to have activated sirens to warn people along the river, angry locals said the sirens only sounded after the accident had already taken place. All staff members at the dam were suspended as an investigation continued.

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