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Flashfloods Triggered by Heavy Rain in Dagestan Kill At Least 5 People

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Rescue crews search for people trapped by flooding in Dagestan. **@mchsdagestan / Telegram**

A second weekend of major flooding in the North Caucasus republic of Dagestan has left at least five people dead, regional authorities said Monday.

Dagestan's health ministry said a woman was killed when a house collapsed in a landslide in the southern village of Kirki. Separately, a woman and a child drowned after being swept away by floodwaters.

Russia's Emergency Situations Ministry said the latter two victims were among a group of people inside two cars that overturned into a river. It said four people, including one child, were rescued from those vehicles.

Later on Monday, regional authorities said two children drowned in a car after it was submerged underwater.

Police investigators launched a criminal probe into the four deaths involving vehicles.

In the regional capital of Makhachkala, officials said a structure attached to a six-story apartment building collapsed due to soil erosion, adding that the apartment building was also at risk of collapse. Tenants were evacuated as a precaution.

Dagestan, a mountainous region with a population of over 3 million, suffers from poor infrastructure and the intensifying effects of climate change, which amplifies the impact of natural disasters like flooding.

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On Sunday, the Head of Dagestan, Sergei Melikov, blamed flooding in Makhachkala on "reckless" real estate development along the embankment of a local river.

"Several houses have been built right in the riverbed itself! Buildings obstruct the natural flow of water, which finds other ways: streets, houses, residential areas," Melikov wrote in a post on Telegram.

Regional health officials warned residents against drinking tap water to avoid contracting waterborne diseases. Earlier, dozens of people were hospitalized after drinking contaminated water.

More than 4,000 people were forced to evacuate their homes after a dam breach at the Gedzhukh reservoir, the Emergency Situations Ministry said.

Meanwhile, in the neighboring republic of Chechnya, officials said flooding damaged vehicles and pedestrian bridges, while no homes were reported to have been flooded.

Emergency officials warned that the threat of landslides, rockfalls and mudflows remained as heavy winds and rains were expected to continue into Monday.

Last weekend, Dagestan was hit by its worst flooding in more than a century. No deaths were reported, but hundreds of towns and villages lost power due to infrastructure damage.

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