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At Least 8 Russians Missing in Nepal Following Deadly Himalayan Flood

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A security officer and his sniffer dog search for survivors following devastating floods in Nepal.
REUTERS / Navesh Chitrakar

At least eight Russians are missing in Nepal after a catastrophic and deadly torrent of floods and mud swept through the border region with China, Russia's Embassy in Kathmandu said Thursday.

In a statement, the embassy said it is coordinating with Nepalese authorities to establish the location of the missing Russians as search operations continue across the devastated valley.

Two Russian women survived the disaster by escaping up a mountain slope, embassy officials added, noting both survivors later contacted diplomatic personnel while awaiting transit clearance at a Nepalese-Chinese border checkpoint.

The disaster struck Wednesday when a massive collapse of rock and ice unleashed a wall of mud and water down a Himalayan river. Local authorities estimate nearly 1,500 people remain missing, including around 800 foreign tourists.

Nepalese police warned the death toll is expected to surpass 165, while Chinese authorities reported three fatalities on their side of the border.

Scientists at the Kathmandu-based International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development said an ice-and-rock avalanche originating in a high-altitude area likely blocked a tributary river before giving way and triggering the cascading flood.

The U.S. Geological Survey reported that the disaster generated a seismic event equivalent to a magnitude 5.2 glacier collapse, sending a massive flow of debris downstream.

Reuters contributed reporting.

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