

Anger overflows as rains flood villages in Villupuram, Puducherry

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INCESSANT rain coupled with the opening of Sathanur dam have led to the flooding of over 300 villages in Villupuram, with thousands of people stranded in their homes on Monday. Several thousand hectares of agricultural land got inundated, incurring heavy loss. One person died allegedly by drowning at Kundalapuliur in Villupuram but officials are yet to confirm it.

Due to the flooding, Collector C Palani announced one-day holiday for schools and colleges on Tuesday in Villupuram while Kallakurichi Collector MS Prasanth

announced leave for schools and colleges in Thirukovilur taluk alone, on Tuesday.

The water level at Sathanur dam in Tiruvannamalai has reached 118 feet out of its total capacity of 119 feet on Saturday. As a result, 1.68 lakh cubic feet of water was released, and officials issued a flood alert late Sunday night for over 200 downstream villages.

Unaware of the flood warning, people living along the banks of the Pennai river in Thirukovilur, Thiruvannamalai, Gingee and Vikravandi taluks woke up to flooded homes and streets.

As the Thenpennai river flooded due to heavy inflow of water from Sathanur dam, its tribu-



People moving to safety after their houses got flooded in Chinnakanganamkuppam in Cuddalore on Monday | SRIRAM R

tary, the Malattar, running across Perangiyur village washed off the Chennai - Trichy national highway.

Meanwhile in Puducherry, the

floods triggered by overflowing Sankaraparani and Then Pennai rivers inundated fields and residential areas. While urban regions have begun recover-

ing with 90% of power supply restored and stagnant water drained from most areas, the rural communities still fear the worst as water levels are on the rise. Tuesday has been declared a holiday for all schools in rural areas.

Bahour MLA R Senthil Kumar said the volume of water now flowing in Then Penniyar is thrice that of the inflow during the 2021 floods. "Over one-fourth of the riverbank has submerged," he added.

Many rural areas remain without power, particularly Bahour, where outage has now exceeded 48 hours. While electricity has been restored in some regions, the villages near the riverbanks

are still cut off, says V Chandrasekhar, a resident of Bahour.

Lt. Governor K Kailashnathan, Chief Minister N Rangasamy, PWD Minister K Lakshminarayanan, and District Collector A Kulothungan visited affected areas to assess the situation.

However, the residents have been faulting the government for issuing no prior intimation before opening dam shutters. A resident of Nonankuppam whose house has been flooded, criticised the lack of timely warnings about releasing water from Veddur dam. However, Chief Minister N Rangasamy clarified that the release was unavoidable due to heavy rains in the dam's catchment areas.

The Hindu dt: 3/12/2021