

# Kerala stares at repeat of 2018 floods as rain fury continues

22 dead; swollen rivers inundate many areas; thousands shifted to relief camps

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala once again stares at a flood situation with high-intensity rain triggered by strong monsoon winds lashing central Kerala. In addition, a low-pressure system is expected to form over the Bay of Bengal by Sunday, which is likely to intensify the rain.

The situation is precarious in the State, especially in central Kerala where swollen rivers have started inundating low-level areas. Haunted by the bitter experience of the 2018 floods, the State administration in central districts swung into action on Thursday afternoon, starting evacuation of people from flood-prone areas to relief camps.

Three persons were killed in various rain-related incidents on Thursday, taking the total deaths to 22 in five days.

A total of 6,411 people were shifted to 221 relief camps after a combination of intense rain and overflowing rivers, with several reservoirs reaching full levels, created a worrying scenario.

The release of water from the Parambikulam and Thoonakkadavu dams to the Peringalkuthu dam has resulted in the Chalakudy river breaching the banks in many



**Heading to safety:** Residents leaving their flood-hit homes near Chalakudy in Thrissur district on Thursday. \*K.K. NAJEEB

places, forcing the administrations of Thrissur and Ernakulam district to evacuate people from the banks of the river.

## **Water inflow from T.N.**

The inflow of water into the Chalakudy river will gain strength by night as authorities had announced the opening of Kerala Sholayar after inflow from Tamil Nadu Sholayar to Kerala Sholayar increased.

Kerala Minister for Water Resources Roshy Augustine has written to his counterpart in Tamil Nadu S. Duraimurugan requesting steps to regulate water discharge from the Mullaperiyar dam

following heavy rain in the catchment area.

The rivers in Central Travancore, including the Mee-nachil, Pampa, Manimala, Achencoil, and Pullakayar, and Manali, Kurumali and Karuvannur in Thrissur, are in spate, and evacuation of people began by Thursday afternoon.

Landslips were reported from Kodunga near Koottickal, Vagamon and Aranamudi along the Angamoozhi-Vandiperiyar route in Pathanamthitta.

The floodwaters gushing through the Pampa took over the causeway at Arayanjilimon for the second time in just a few days, while the

causeway to Kurubanmuzhi on the upstream of the Perumthenaruvi waterfalls has remained submerged for days on end.

## **CM's appeal**

Considering the grave situation, the devotees who reached the Pampa-Triveni base camp to attend the Niraputhari celebrations in Sabarimala were banned from trekking up the holy hill after 3 p.m.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan appealed to people in vulnerable areas to move to safer locations on the instructions of the authorities.