

14 feared dead in East Java landslide

A landslide killed seven people in Kopen hamlet, Ngrimbi village, while a 10-year-old died in a flash flood in Karangwinongan, both in Jombang, East Java, on Tuesday. Jombang Disaster Mitigation Agency (BPBD) prevention and preparedness section head Gunadi said that the latest landslide victim had been identified as Lilik, 35. "His dead body was buried in soil," Gunadi said as quoted by Antara news agency on Tuesday. He said that the BPBD would continue to search for victims with the help of the Jombang Search and Rescue (SAR) team, military personnel and locals.

The landslide buried 14 people, seven of which were found dead. The rest, however, are still missing. Following heavy rain on Monday night, a high cliff buried four houses at about 2 a.m., while most people were asleep. Meanwhile, a 10-year-old child from Karangwinongan village, Mojoagung, Jombang, was found dead some 500 meters from his house after being carried away by a flash flood. Jombang Police spokesperson Adj. Comr. Sugeng Widodo said that the child was at home when the flash flood hit and dragged him away. His family members tried to find him.

"But, he was found dead," Sugeng said on Tuesday. In North Sulawesi, the death toll as a result of the recent floods and landslides has reached 19: six in Manado, six in Tomohon, six in Minahasa and one in North Minahasa, as of Jan. 15.

A landslide killed 12 residents in Duku Kembangan, Menawan village, Gebog subdistrict, in Kudus, Central Java, on Jan. 21. The landslide completely buried five houses and damaged three others. A flash flood hit the subdistricts of Karangwinongan, Demangan, Mojotrisno and Mojoagung in Mojoagung district, submerging the area up to 2-meters deep, forcing people to evacuate. The overflowing of the Gunting, Kademangan and Gambiran rivers were blamed for the flash flood, which also destroyed a number of river embankments.

The flash flood also inundated agricultural fields and public facilities, including the main road connecting Madiun and Surabaya, paralyzing traffic. The height of floodwater on this road section reached up to over half-a-meter. Heavy downpours over Central Java's northern coastal region since Monday night have also caused floods in a number of regencies, namely Pekalongan, Kendal, Semarang, Demak, Kudus, Jepara, Pati and Grobogan. The floods have forced thousands of people in the areas to evacuate as their homes were inundated with up to 1 meter of floodwater.

In Kudus, flooding was reported to have destroyed 10 houses and lightly damaged 34 others in Wonosoco subdistrict, Undaan district. "We call on the evacuees to remain at the evacuation centers because floods can return at any time and they are difficult to predict," Kudus disaster logistic coordinator Budi Rahmat said on Tuesday, adding that the regency administration was equipped with sufficient logistics. Flooding in the northern coastal region was reported to have caused severe damage to roads in the region. Central Java Governor Ganjar Pranowo said he had received reports on the matter. "We are mulling to mend the roads with concrete so that they are stronger," Ganjar said.