

Landslides after heavy rain in India's Kerala kill 106, many still trapped

KOCHI, India, July 30 (Reuters) - Landslides swept through tea estates and villages in southern India's Kerala on Tuesday, killing at least 106 people while they slept as unexpected heavy rain collapsed hillsides and triggered torrents of mud, water and tumbling boulders.

The hillsides gave way after midnight following torrential rainfall on Monday in the Wayanad district of Kerala, a state known as one of India's most popular tourist destinations. Most of the victims were tea estate workers and their families who lived in small houses or makeshift shelters.

Television images showed rescue workers scrambling through uprooted trees and flattened tin structures as boulders lay strewn across the hillsides and muddy water gushed through. Rescuers were being pulled across a stream, carrying stretchers and other equipment to rescue people.

At least 106 people were killed in the landslides, 128 injured and dozens unaccounted for, state authorities said. Local Asianet TV put the death toll higher at 119.

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