

## **Impact of Rasuwa Bhotekoshi flood on media and journalists**

The August 26, 2026- Rasuwa Bhotekoshi flood struck five districts - Rasuwa, Nuwakot, Dhading, Chitwan and Gorkha of Nepal. According to National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority (NDRRMA) assessment, Nepal will need Rs 723.31 billion to rebuild the infrastructure damaged by the floods. The disaster has caused significant damage to homes, public buildings and essential services in five districts. A total of 7,570 private homes were damaged, along with 48 public buildings, 18 schools, seven health facilities and 30 cultural heritage sites.

Recovery in these sectors is estimated to require Rs 103.54 billion.

As of latest update on Rasuwa Bhotekoshi flood, Nepal Police has declared total 1399 human casualties and 5179 people are still reported missing. Rescue efforts and search operations in affected areas are ongoing with total 13742 rescued as of September 15, 2026 update. Of those, 2155 are residing in various 30 holding centers in Nuwakot, Rasuwa and Dhading districts.

Freedom Forum has assessed the flood's damage to media and journalists. Majority media and journalists in Rasuwa and Nuwakot are highly affected. Journalists have lost their family members, their house/ lands have been damaged or covered with flood debris and some media have been only partially operating.

According to Freedom Forum's assessment, total four journalists are missing, around 14 family members of journalists are missing, two lost their vehicles and six community radio stations were affected due to irregular electricity and internet supplies.

FF also conducted need-based assessment among affected journalists. All the journalists were asked to fill up an assessment form providing their current status (living and working) and urgent need for support.

FF categorizes flood impact upon media persons into four categories.

### **1. Missing journalists:**

Total four journalists have been reported missing. FF contacted their families and documented their status.

a. Sangita Simkhada, wife of Journalist Suresh Simkhada, Publisher at Shilapatra.com: Journalist Simkhada was on a family trip to Kailash Mansarovar, a religious place in Tibet region of China, with his mother and sister. He has been out of contact since the flood.

"My husband had gone to a religious trip to Kailash Mansarovar with his mother and sister. He has been missing since August 26. But I have hope that he will come into contact one day. Though many people have started performing final rituals of their missing family members, I cannot do it. I am waiting for him."

Support requested: She refused to say anything regarding support. FF is planning to provide financial support to her.

b. Kalika Khadka, wife of Journalist Tekraj Thami : Khadka is herself a journalist at Rastriya Samachar Samiti (RSS). Journalist Thami has been missing since the day of flood. He had travelled to Kerung, a border town in Tibet, to attend an event.



*Missing notice of Journalist Thami shared on Kalika Khadka's Facebook wall on August 31, 2026.*

"I am still waiting for him, but my family has lost hope. They have been forcing me to perform his final rituals. I still have a hope that he will return back. I have been unable to work since then. My blood pressure has shot up and I am suffering from urine infection."

Support requested: Financial support

c. Bishnu Nepali, brother of journalist Raj Kumar Nepali (National Dalit Journalist Association): Journalist Nepali has been missing from Nuwakot district since the day of flood. "I tried to search for my brother but I have not been able to find any information about him yet."

Father of Raj Kumar Nepali, Sanu Darji: I have four sons. Two of them live with their families, while my youngest son is working in Qatar. Raj Kumar was the only son living with me and my support. We are still searching for him but there is no any information yet. The only son who took care of me is take away by the flood, I am devastated.

Support requested: Financial support

d. Swarup Dhungana, Son of journalist Shekhar Dhungana: Journalist Dhungana was on a family trip to Kailash Mansarovar with his wife, mother-in-law and father-in-law. He has been out of contact since the flood.

"My parents were at the immigration office bordering China on the day of flood. Since then, they have been out of contact. We have already completed their final rituals. Me and my brother lost our whole family. We are devastated."

## 2. Missing family members of journalists

a. Maya Shrestha, Former journalist at Ratopati.com from Kathmandu: Her husband has been out of contact since the flood.

"My husband Nikesh Shrestha had gone to Rasuwa district for business purpose and he is out of contact since August 26 following the flood. I have a three months' child and I am living with my in-laws currently. I had to leave my job five months before due to my pregnancy. I am in need of psychosocial support and financial support."

Support requested: Psychosocial and financial support.

b. Bidhya Rajput/ Nirajan Paudyal (Ratopati.com): They lost five members of their family and whole property owned by their family (house, land, etc) in a village, Sole in Nuwakot. With no information about missing members' whereabouts, they performed final rituals in Kathmandu on September 2, 2026.



*Residence area before the flood*



*Everything swept away after the flood*

Nirajan Paudyal: "August 26, the darkest day of my life, the day that took away my happiness, my home and everything I had. The raging flood that swept through the Bhotekoshi River destroyed my entire world in just a moment. The flood took away my parents, my uncle and aunt and my younger sister separating them from me forever. For seven days, I had a faint hope that my missing loved ones would return. In the end, I had no choice but to perform their final rites empty-handed. I, no longer have any expectations from the government. I am already in a pain of being left without my parents but when I could not see the presence of the state despite our continuous request, I felt even more abandoned."

Bidhya Rajput: We have lost pillars of our family. Our family is forever incomplete due to the flood. This is the biggest trauma for us.

### 3. Journalists who lost residence and properties:

FF recorded total six journalists losing their house, lands and vehicles.

a. Kiran Adhikari, Editor of Sundaradevi Sandesh Weekly newspaper from Nuwakot: Adhikari lost his residence and media archives and reporting equipment in the flood. Currently, Adhikari is living with his family in Kathmandu with support from his relatives and fellow journalists. He had visited Freedom Forum office on September 11.



*Kiran Adhikari's residence marked with green spots flooded*



*Residence and media archives covered with flood debris*

"The day I myself became a victim; I lost all my property. Losing my property is okay, I can stand and earn again. But all the personal documents, data, newspaper archives I had

collected since I started journalism were also swept away. That is what breaks my heart when I think about it. I had to stop publishing my newspaper since the time I became ill few months before and was receiving treatment in India. But it had become my own brand. Other property can perhaps be rebuilt over time, but the documents I had collected since I began journalism cannot be recovered even by spending money. All my old records and materials are gone. Two laptops I was using were also swept away.

Recalling the incident, on August 26, 2026 morning, I had gone toward Pipaltar. As soon as I reached there, I received a call from Kathmandu saying, "Very big flood has struck Trishuli, so stay safe. Where are you?"

As soon as I hung up, I immediately called the Chief District Officer (CDO). When he didn't answer, I called the Superintendent of Police (SP). He told me that a massive flood was coming and that there was longer possible to save anything else, main priority then was to save as much human lives as possible.

After receiving that information, I immediately called the ward chairperson and told him that the people living along the Trishuli riverbank had to be evacuated. I also called people in the Trishuli Bazaar area and told them, "You need to get out of there immediately."

As I was returning, I had reached Battar area when I received the news that "Dhunge Bazaar has been wiped out."

The flood came in a way that was even more terrifying than those huge ocean waves we see in movies. Before our eyes, it swept everything away.

There was no way to go and pull belongings out and there was no way to save anything. However, I managed to save my mother and father by a difference of just five seconds. As soon as I called and told them to get out of the house immediately, they left and saved themselves. There was no any way to go back and save anything. As for my situation now, I am in Kathmandu with my family. Fellow journalists have collected some funds for my living and that has helped me to manage my family in Kathmandu. With their support, I have somehow managed to carry my livelihood. This cloth I am wearing is also from the relief support. My children's education is yet uncertain. How am I supposed to manage everything? My parents are living in my uncle's house. They are staying under someone else's shelter. I do not know how long will we stay under someone's shelter.

At this situation if I go and stay at a holding center, people will say, "He is a journalist, yet he is staying at a holding center."

Now our main problem is rehabilitation, while the immediate problem is simply food and shelter. We are also suffering from mental trauma. I have been counseling my family to keep them safe but what about me!

Support requested: Financial support, Alternative source of electricity, internet, transportation, laptop, power bank and temporary shelter.

b. Shiva Devkota, Uttargaya daily and online news portal :- Devkota lost his vehicle in the flood. He shared a brief status report on media affected in Nuwakot with FF. According to the report, some journalists in Nuwakot are currently out of contact, some have lost their entire families, while others have been left without a place to live. Despite these extremely challenging circumstances, journalists working in the district have remained continuously active in sharing information with the general public about search and rescue efforts, relief operations and other related activities.

He said, "In the flood, I also lost my office vehicle (motorcycle) from Devighat-5, Bidur Municipality. This has caused problem in my daily commute to gather news reports. This has directly affected access to information."

Support requested: Two-wheeler Vehicle

c. Sunny Shrestha, Reporter at Lokpath.com: He is himself a victim, as his house and land was swept away in the flood in Nuwakot district.

"The earthquake of April 25, 2015 first destroyed our home. But we managed to rise together with what little remained and after much struggle we finally built a new house. But now the flood has left us with nothing; neither land to lay a new house nor any property to claim as own. My dream of keeping my mother happy, settling down and living happily has merely become a dream. That terrifying day August 26, 2026, I was watching a movie in Kathmandu when I received call from my elder sister- Trishuli area has been flooded. We (herself and my mother) are safe but our house and lands have been swept away.

At the moment I was watching 'Toxic' movie, dreams I had for my own life have also been left unfinished, much like the story of that film.

Remembering my mother's trembling voice saying that they managed to escape the flood climbing to higher ground while everything swept away, frightens me even more now than it did that day.

The suffering of my mother, who came to Bhainse, Nuwakot carrying me in her arms when I was just 10 days old in search of shelter, her struggles to educate me and the pain

of having our lives repeatedly devastated by disasters on top of all those hardships - these are sufferings that words cannot fully express.



*Sunny Shrestha standing, where his house used to be*

Even though I had lost everything myself, I did not want to sit around feeling helpless. Even though there was no pressure from my office to return to work, I wanted to bring voices and experiences of those affected to reach the government, so I travelled to Rasuwa district to report on the situation with my colleagues."

Support requested: Temporary shelter, camera, laptop, power bank and financial support.

d. Bipin Malla, Journalist at Radio Rajmarga: His house and land was hit by the flood and filled with debris. He and his family are staying at a relative's home. He also lost his vehicle in the flood.



*Bipin Malla's residence filled with flood debris.*

Support requested: Renovation of his own house and financial support.

e. Laxman Dangol, Editor at Revoscience.com: His house and land in Nuwakot was flooded. "Betrawati of Bidur-10, Nuwakot was among the severely affected places by the August 26 flood. I have not been able to work since the day of flood. While my property was also damaged, I had to make arrangements and help with the loss of around 134 people from the place including my close relatives."



Support requested: Temporary shelter and financial support

f. Balaram Ghimire, Kantipur national daily Rasuwa district reporter: His work was completely disrupted for a week and has partially resumed. He also lost land and other property in the disaster.

Support requested: Power bank, solar charger for mobile and internet device.

#### **4. Media houses affected:**

In Rasuwa and Nuwakot district, community radio stations have been reported the most affected due to electricity and internet disruptions. Most have started their operation normally. However, few are still operating partially due to irregular power supply and few lack internet support.

Station Manger Shri Ram Adhikari at Nuwakot FM: "Around 2.9 kms long fibre was been completely damaged. Few equipment sent for repair- Yamaha mixer, 3 KVA online UPS, 9 batteries, laptops, camera, Uplink device and connectors were also damaged as the shop was swept away in the flood. I have however, managed to start airing after repair of the fibres."

Support requested: Laptop, power bank, internet connectivity device, psychosocial counseling.



*Nuwakot FM's optic fibre damaged after the*

Station Manager Geeta Neupane at Radio Langtang: " We are still facing internet disruptions and there is no internet connection at my office. I am seeking support to regarding this. Although our media house has not suffered major physical damage and is able to operate with minimal support, our main concern is sustainability. The entire market area has been swept away, and we have lost our main sources of advertising revenue. Even collecting pending payments has become impossible.

We have continued to provide people with vital information during this crisis, but our own future remains uncertain."

Support requested: Satellite internet connection

Radio Trishuli, Sharmila Upreti: Although the radio station itself has not suffered any damage, frequent power outages and fluctuations have affected the computers, causing technical problems.

Support requested: Solar or backup power, laptop, power bank.

Radio Chinteshwor, Ram Hari Neupane:

Support requested: Satellite communication device, laptop, shelter, solar power connection would be most helpful.

Radio Jalapa, SM Jagdish Khanal: Flood entered into the studio and caused damage of battery, UPS and other equipment.

Support requested: UPS, Internet device, generator/ UPS and financial support

