

Assessing the Impact of the Rasuwa Flood on Media and Journalists



1. Background and Context

1.1 Rasuwa/Bhotekoshi Flood

On 26 August 2026, a devastating flood [affected](#) the Bhotekoshi River corridor in Rasuwa district of Nepal, with severe impacts in Rasuwa, Nuwakot and Dhading districts and wider downstream areas. The disaster caused extensive loss of life, people going missing, displacement, and destruction of homes, roads, bridges and other infrastructure. Communication, electricity, internet and transport services were also disrupted, making rescue, reporting and access to affected communities difficult. Search, rescue, relief and recovery operations remain ongoing.

Journalists and media workers have been affected both as disaster, affected citizens/workers and as frontline providers of public, interest information. Some have lost contact with family members, homes, property or equipment, while others have faced serious risks while reporting from affected areas. At the same time, disrupted electricity, telecommunications, transport and access to affected communities have constrained media's ability to provide timely and verified information.

1.2 Rationale for the Assessment

The assessment aims to systematically document affected journalists and media workers; verify missing/out of contact cases; assess personal and institutional losses; examine safety and

psychosocial impacts; assess information and misinformation challenges; and identify immediate, medium, and long, term recovery and resilience needs.



2. Assessment Objectives

Overall Objective

- To assess the human, economic, professional, institutional, safety, psychosocial and information, related impacts of the Rasuwa/Bhotekoshi flood on journalists, media workers and media houses, and identify priority measures for recovery and resilience.

Assessment Methodology

The assessment used a rapid qualitative approach, combining desk review with targeted interviews and follow up communication to verify the situation of affected journalists and their families.

Desk Review: Review of information from the civil society organizations, government updates and other relevant reports on journalists and media affected by the Rasuwa/Bhotekoshi flood.

Interview with Journalists and Professional Associations: A key informant interview was conducted with an FNJ representatives in Rasuwa and Nuwakot to understand the overall impact on journalists, missing/out of contact cases, damage to property and media houses, and emerging support needs.

Interviews with Affected Journalists: Telephone Interviews were conducted with journalists directly affected by the flood to document their personal, professional, economic, safety and psychosocial impacts.

Communication with Relatives: Telephone communication was undertaken with relatives of journalists who were reported missing or remained out of contact, to verify their status and understand the impact on their families.

Field Observation: Media Action Nepal conducted field observations and held conversations with local journalists, particularly in the affected areas of Nuwakot district. The photographs used in this report reflect observations made during the field visit.

Triangulation and Verification: Information from different sources was compared to identify consistent findings and distinguish between reported missing, out of contact, and confirmed cases.



3. Journalists Reported Out of Contact

The assessment identified four journalists who were reported of being out of contact following the 26 August 2026 Rasuwa/Bhotekoshi flood.

1. **Tekraj Thami , Naya Patrika National Daily [Status: Out of contact] :** Tekraj Thami, a journalist associated with Naya Patrika and originally from Dolakha district, had [travelled](#) towards Kerung, a border town in Tibet. Following the flood and disruption of

communication along the Rasuwa–Kerung route, he could no longer be contacted. Journalist Thami's wife, Kalika Khadka, also publicly raised the issue through a Facebook post, seeking information about his whereabouts and immediate rescue.

2. **Shekhar Dhungana , Freelance Journalist and Member of FNJ Bhaktapur [Status: Out of contact]** : Shekhar Dhungana, a freelance journalist and member of the FNJ Bhaktapur Chapter, was travelling to Kailash Mansarovar with his wife, mother, in-law and father, in-law when communication was lost. According to Sundar Shilpakar, President of the FNJ Bhaktapur Chapter, who shared details with Media Action Nepal , Dhungana was recorded as having completed immigration procedures on the Nepali side at Kerung. However, according to the information available to the FNJ chapter, there was no corresponding record of his arrival on the Chinese side on the same day.
3. **Raj Kumar Nepali, President, Nuwakot District Chapter, National Association of Dalit Journalists [Status: Out of contact]**: Raj Kumar Nepali, President of the Nuwakot District Chapter of the National Association of Dalit Journalists, was working in Rasuwa when the Bhotekoshi flood occurred. He has remained out of contact since the disaster. The FNJ reported that it had received information from Nepali's family regarding the loss of contact. The organization subsequently included him among journalists whose whereabouts remained unconfirmed following the flood.
4. **Suresh Simkhada – Publisher, Shilapatra Media Network [Status: Out of contact]** : Suresh Simkhada, publisher of Shilapatra Media Network, was [travelling](#) towards Kailash Mansarovar when communication was lost following the Bhotekoshi flood. According to information published by Shilapatra, Simkhada had left Kathmandu on 9 Bhadra for the Kailash Mansarovar journey and had stayed at Hotel Kailash in Timure, Rasuwa. He was travelling with his mother, Goma Simkhada, and elder sister, Sharda Simkhada. The media network reported that Simkhada and both family members had been out of contact since the morning of the following day, after the devastating flood in the Bhotekoshi River.



4. Family Members of Journalists Reported Missing or Out of Contact

The impact of the Rasuwa/Bhotekoshi flood extended beyond journalists themselves, with several journalists reporting that their immediate family members had gone missing or remained out of contact following the disaster.

- 1. Five Family Members of Journalist Nirajan Paudel Out of Contact :** Five members of journalist Nirajan Paudel's family have remained out of contact since the flood. Despite search efforts over several days, their whereabouts could not be established. The prolonged absence and lack of information placed Paudel and his family under severe emotional distress. After seven days without any confirmed information, Paudel performed symbolic funeral and mourning rituals using a Kush effigy, in accordance with religious customs. The information was publicly reported by Ratopati, where Paudel works, while photographs and social media communication from Bidhya Rajput also documented the situation.
- 2. Parents-in-Law of Journalists Logshari Kunwar Out of Contact:** Journalist Logshari Kunwar reported that her father-in-law and mother-in-law had been travelling towards Kailash Mansarovar and remained out of contact following the flood on 26 August. In a detailed social media account, Kunwar explained that the last communication from her father-in-law was made from the immigration area at Kerung.
- 3. Brother of Journalist Anu Acharya Out of Contact:** Journalist Anu Acharya, Pardafas.com, reported that her brother had been out of contact from the Ghattekholā-Rasuwadagadhi area since the flood. Acharya publicly appealed for

information, identification and rescue of her brother. In communication with Media Action Nepal (MAN), she reported that no further information regarding his situation had been received at the time of the assessment.

4. **Brother of journalist Shyamsundar Yadav Out of Contact:** Journalist Shyamsundar Yadav reported that his brother, Ajaya Yadav, had been out of contact since the flood. Ajaya Yadav, an electronics and computer engineer who was also associated with teaching at Nilkantha Secondary School, Nuwakot, was reportedly in the affected area when the disaster occurred. In communication with Media Action Nepal, Shyamsundar Yadav, former Chairperson of the Madhesh Mass Communication Authority, confirmed that his brother remained unaccounted for and that the family was still waiting for information regarding his whereabouts.
5. **Husband of journalist Maya Shrestha Out of Contact:** Journalist Maya Shrestha reported that her husband, Nikesh Shrestha, had been out of contact since the flood. Maya told Media Action Nepal that he had been missing since August 25, a day before the flood, from the Timure Customs area of Rasuwa district.

5. Journalists Whose Houses or Property Were Damaged or Lost

The assessment found that the flood caused damage to the homes and personal/professional property of several journalists, particularly in Dhading and Nuwakot districts. The impacts ranged from partial damage to residential buildings and loss of vehicles to the destruction of household belongings. In few cases, journalists and their families have been displaced and are temporarily staying with relatives or neighbors.

Bipin Malla Survives the Flood, but Loses His Home and Property: Bipin Malla, associated with Radio Rajmarga, reported substantial damage to his residence in Dhading district. “The entire first floor of his house was damaged and filled with flood debris, rendering the house unsuitable for normal occupation. His personal and office motorcycles were also swept away. His personal motorcycle was subsequently recovered, although partially damaged. Following the flood, Malla informed to Media Action Nepal that he along with his family moved to temporary accommodation at a neighbor's house located on higher ground. Local authorities have provided food, clothing and other essential supplies, including an induction heater, while the family initially received NPR 10,000 in assistance. The local government has also conducted health checkups.

Despite being physically safe, Malla identified stable and safe accommodation as his immediate priority. He also emphasized the need for a technical assessment of the damaged house to determine whether it remains structurally safe. If reconstruction is required, he indicated that compensation, concessional loans or other financial assistance would be necessary.

The impact is also psychological. Malla reported that his son has experienced fever and significant fear since the flood, repeatedly asking whether another flood would come and destroy

their home. This suggests that the impact of housing loss extends beyond material damage to children's emotional wellbeing and families' sense of security.

Journalist Shiva Devkota Loses His Vehicle

Shiva Devkota, a member and immediate past President of the FNJ Bagmati Province Committee, lost his motorcycle after it was swept away by the flood at Benighat Bazaar, of Nuwakot district. The loss was confirmed to Media Action Nepal by Ramhari Gajurel, President of the FNJ Nuwakot Branch.

Kiran Adhikari lost his residence and personal property

Journalist Kiran Adhikari's residence and belongings were swept away by the flood, resulting in substantial loss of household and personal property. Adhikari and his family have subsequently been staying with relatives in Kathmandu. The loss represents more than damage to a physical residence, as the destruction of household belongings also affects the family's immediate living conditions and ability to return to normal life. His situation was confirmed to Media Action Nepal by Ramhari Gajurel, President of the FNJ Nuwakot Branch.

Sunny Shrestha lost residence and land damaged

Sunny Shrestha, a journalist with Lokpath.com, experienced damage to her residence and her land (property) as a result of the flood. The loss of land and damage to the residence have raised the possibility of displacement. The damage was reported in an FNJ statement issued by Ramhari Gajurel, President of the FNJ Nuwakot Branch.



6. Impact on Media Houses and Continuity of Media Operations

The assessment found that the Rasuwa/Bhotekoshi flood affected at least seven media houses in Rasuwa and Nuwakot districts. The impacts included physical damage to offices and equipment, loss of archives and data, prolonged electricity and internet disruption, and inadequate backup power.

Nuwakot FM [Status: Operations disrupted]: Nuwakot FM sustained significant damage to its fibre, optic connection and other essential equipment, resulting in the suspension of regular operations. The case demonstrates how damage to communication infrastructure can directly affect the continuity of local broadcasting, particularly where stations have limited alternative connectivity and backup systems.

Radio Langtang , Rasuwa [Status: Operations disrupted]: Radio Langtang in Rasuwa was affected primarily by the prolonged electricity disruption and lack of adequate backup power. As a result, the station was unable to maintain regular broadcasting.

Rasuwa FM [Status: Partially operational] : Rasuwa FM experienced disruption to its operations following power, supply problems and damage to its telephone hybrid system. The

combination of electricity disruption and damaged communication equipment reduced the station's capacity to maintain normal broadcasting and communication with callers and sources.

Radio Chinteshwor , Nuwakot [Status: Operations resumed with alternative energy] : Radio Chinteshwor experienced operational disruption following the disaster, particularly because of electricity and communication problems. The station was able to resume operations on 28 August using solar energy, demonstrating an important local adaptation to the disruption of conventional power supply.

Radio Jalapa , Nuwakot [Status: Operations disrupted] : Radio Jalapa experienced disruption due to electricity outages, inadequate backup power and interruption of internet services. These constraints affected the station's ability to maintain regular broadcasting.

Sundaradevi Sandesh Weekly, Nuwakot [Status: Publication suspended; office and archives damaged]: The rented office of Sundaradevi Sandesh Weekly was completely flooded, resulting in the suspension of publication. Important documents, data and media archives were lost, representing both a financial and institutional loss. The loss of archives is particularly significant because it represents the destruction of accumulated journalistic records and historical information that cannot easily be replaced.

Radio Trishuli , Nuwakot [Status: Operations disrupted]: Radio Trishuli was affected by electricity interruptions and inadequate backup power, resulting in disruption to its regular operations. Station Manager Sharmila Upreti confirmed to MAN that the station's operations were affected by electricity disruption and the lack of an alternative power supply.

7. Safety, Security and Reporting Conditions

The assessment found mixed experiences of safety and security among journalists covering the Rasuwa/Bhotekoshi flood. While some journalists reported no significant security concerns, transportation and accommodation were identified as the most immediate practical needs for safe reporting.

Access to affected areas was also challenging. Bal Krishna Shah, a journalist, reporting from the field noted that there was no clear written mechanism for approval to report from flood-affected areas by helicopter, making the process difficult and time consuming. He added that a police officer “threatened him to take him and other journalists with him,” indicating that journalists could face intimidation while carrying out their professional duties.

Access to information was viewed relatively positive by some journalists, particularly through digital channels. However, concerns were raised about selective or restricted coverage of sensitive issues, including reporting related to the Chinese side/Tibet.

The desk review further identified an incident in which FNJ reported that journalists Radheshyam Khatiwada and Sant Kumar Chaudhary were stopped while reporting on unidentified bodies, with Khatiwada's phone reportedly seized and recorded materials deleted.

8. Misinformation

Following the 26 August Bhotekoshi/Rasuwa flood, the disaster information environment was further complicated by a wave of misleading, recycled and AI generated content circulated through social media and online platforms. Fact-checking investigations [identified](#) an AI generated “before and after” image falsely presented as showing Rasuwa before and after the flood. An old video from Alaska’s Columbia Glacier was also [circulated](#) as footage related to the Rasuwa flood, despite having no connection to Nepal. These are just a representative cases, Press Council Nepal has [documented](#) long list of the misinformation being circulated.



9. Recommendations Based on the Needs Assessment

- **PROVIDE** immediate assistance to affected journalists and families including temporary accommodation, food and essential household support for those whose homes have been damaged or who have been displaced.
- **STRENGTHEN** search and information support for missing persons, expedite search, rescue and identification efforts and establish reliable channels for regularly updating families of journalists and media workers who remain out of contact.

- **PROVIDE** recovery assistance for lost property and livelihoods — affected journalists should have access to compensation, concessional loans or other appropriate financial support for damaged houses, vehicles and essential professional equipment.
- **RESTORE** media operations and provide targeted support for damaged broadcasting equipment, internet connectivity, electricity, backup power systems and recovery of essential archives and data.
- **ENSURE** safe and predictable access for journalists - establish clear, transparent and practical procedures for journalists seeking access to disaster affected areas, including arrangements for transport where normal routes are inaccessible.
- **PROTECT** journalists' safety and freedom to report by ensuring that journalists are able to perform their job without intimidation.
- **PROVIDE** psychosocial support to affected journalists and families experiencing displacement, property loss or prolonged uncertainty over missing relatives.
- **STRENGTHEN** media disaster preparedness and resilience by supporting to develop business continuity plans and emergency communication systems.
- **ENSURE** reliable public interest information during disasters by strengthening timely, accurate and verified information flows.
- **INVEST** in media capacity building and resilience initiatives to strengthen journalists' preparedness and ability to respond to immediate and future disasters, ensuring they can continue reporting effectively during emergencies.