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APPEAL FOR VICTIMS OF FLOODS in INDIA

Salesian Missions Australia have launched an Appeal for the victims of severe floods in the Indian State of Kerala, which has been hit by its worst monsoon in almost a century.

After several days of heavy rain, floodwaters, bursting dams and landslides have all combined to cause severe damage across the southern tip of India. The death toll has already exceeded 320, with another 220,000 people forced to take up refuge in makeshift camps.

The Director of Salesian Missions, Br Michael Lynch, said the local Salesians from Don Bosco Vaduthala have opened a relief camp at Don Bosco School and Youth Centre for the people affected by floods.

There are 6000 people from more than 1400 families who have registered in this camp. Don Bosco, along with the government, local people and NGOs collected water, food, clothes, medicines and emergency articles and distributed them to the people.

Medical checkups were organised to prevent epidemics and for emergency health needs.

A further nine Don Bosco Schools have participated by providing shelter, counselling and sleeping kits to locals who seek refuge. Salesian and locals arranged boats from fisherman to reach out to those affected, distributing items to over 4000 people in two days.

There have been at least 35 confirmed landslides so far, damaging or destroying at least 35,000 homes. Among these are several Salesian Communities and schools, including the Don Bosco School in Angamaly, which dealt with waters as high as 2 metres. People associated with the school who were caught out by the floods have been forced to take refuge in the second floor of the school as it has become quite isolated due to its proximity to a river.

In response to this request, Salesian Missions Australia has established an appeal to assist the people of Kerala in this emergency.

Donations can be sent to Salesian Missions Office, P O Box 264, Ascot Vale, Vic 3032 (Tel 03 9377 6060) or made via the website

www.salesianmissionsaustralia.org.au (Donations are Tax Deductible)

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