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Pajhwok

37 dead as big avalanche hits Badakhshan village

By Farid Tanha

03/06/2012

FAIZABAD - At least 37 people were killed after an entire village was buried under a massive snow avalanche in northern Badakhshan province, officials said on Tuesday.

Another six people were rescued in injured condition after the disaster struck the Deh Pasin village in the mountainous Shiki district late on Monday, the deputy governor told Pajhwok Afghan News.

Shamsur Rahman Shams said hundreds of household animals had perished and dozens of houses destroyed. The wounded were taken to a local health clinic, where officials said some of them were in a critical condition.

Located near the border with Tajikistan, the village is reachable only by helicopter. Local officials warned the situation could worsen as most of villages in the area were cut off by the heavy snow.

Around a hundred residents of villages in the vicinity were the first to reach the site and launch a rescue effort with bare hands and shovels, the official said.

Separately, five people lost their lives to a snow avalanche in Nasi district. Governor Shah Waliullah Adib confirmed the deaths, saying the incident took place on Monday.

In late February, 42 people including 35 children died of snow slides and harsh weather conditions over in the rugged mountainous province, according to local authorities. So far 2,289 animals have been lost to cold in the Pamir-i-Badakhshan area alone.

Muhammad Usman Abuzar, a natural disaster expert at the governor's house, said domestic animals including sheep, cows, horses and camels had been lost to harsh weather conditions.