



The Grand Canyon National Park on Sunday. (AP/PTI)

2 dead as flash flood hits Grand Canyon

Grand Canyon Village: State and federal officials ramped up efforts on Monday to locate around 15 people who are missing after a major flash flood swept through in the Grand Canyon, killing two people.

Weather forecasters warned rain and thunderstorms could bring more flooding to the popular tourist attraction from where scores of visitors were evacuated following the flood on Saturday in Bright Angel Creek. The deluge also destroyed the only water pipeline in the canyon, leading to emergency water restrictions for year-round residents. Tourists have been barred from staying at lodges and hotels inside the park.

Visiting the Grand Canyon — a crown jewel of the national park system — can be particularly dangerous in the summer because of the risk of flash flooding that accompanies the monsoon, or rainy season. Clear days can give way quickly to thunderstorms and downpours.

"With deep monsoonal moisture in place and already saturated soils in some locations, an elevated risk of flash flooding will be in place through Monday," the National Weather Service said on Monday.

The body of a 46-year-old man was recovered on Sunday evening near Crystal Rapids along the Colorado River, the

National Park Service said without providing details. More than 60 people were airlifted from the depths of the canyon. The park service asked anyone with details about hikers or campers still unaccounted for to provide information. The Arizona department of public safety helped with evacuations on Sunday.

In response to questions from Reuters on Monday, the National Park Service confirmed the existence of the second body but did not offer more details about the victim or provide an updated count of the missing.

"My heart is with the families and loved ones of every person unaccounted for after the flash flooding at the Grand Canyon," Arizona governor Katie Hobbs posted on Sunday.

The state department of emergency and military affairs was coordinating with the park service and county emergency management officials in search and recovery efforts, Hobbs said.

Parth Desai was hiking through a narrow passage in Bright Angel Canyon with fellow physicians and a park ranger when heavy rain started falling on Saturday.

"We saw the creek flood, waterfalls coming up out of nowhere, boulders, mud, landslides happening everywhere," he said.