

Typhoon Haima Hits Northern Philippines, Killing at least Four



Manila, October 20 (RHC)-- Typhoon Haima has landed on the northern Philippines, killing at least four people and displacing thousands of others in the Southeast Asian country. The powerful typhoon struck late on Wednesday with rains and ferocious winds of 225 kilometers per hour and of 315 kilometers in some coastal areas.

Official reports said the storm, strongest in power to hit the Philippines in three years, inflicted severe damage on farms and houses, forcing nearly 100,000 people to evacuate high-risk communities on its path. Landslides and flooding have also caused power outages and the blocking of roads. Communication lines are also cut off.

Among the reported fatalities were two construction workers who died when a landslide buried their shanty in the mountainous province of Benguet and two villagers who drowned in floodwaters in the same area.

"We have received several reports of roofs that were ripped off because of strong winds," said Mina Marasigan, a spokeswoman at the Filipino disaster risk management agency. "Power lines have been cut off and mobile phone signals were intermittent."

Storms generated over the Pacific Ocean often hit the Philippines as the first major landmass before

approaching the southern coasts of China and other countries. About 20 major storms are recorded in the Southeast Asian archipelago each year, with most of them inflicting casualties.

Haiyan was the deadliest of such typhoons, which left huge destruction in the heavily-populated areas of the central Philippines and claiming more than 7,350 lives three years ago.

Experts said Haima could be the second strongest after Haiyan. Typhoon Sarika had hit the northern Philippines days earlier, leaving one person dead and three others unaccounted for.

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