

Thousands evacuated from Hanoi as Typhoon Yagi death toll climbs to 179

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A woman rows a boat along a flooded street carrying packages of food in Thai Nguyen province on September 10, 2024, in the aftermath of Typhoon Yagi hitting northern Vietnam. (AFP)

Hanoi, September 11 (RHC)-- Thousands of people have been evacuated from Vietnam's capital Hanoi as the Red River's waters rose to a 20-year high, flooding streets days after Typhoon Yagi battered the country's north, killing at least 179 people.

Asia's most powerful typhoon this year, Yagi brought gales and heavy rain as it moved westwards after landfall on Saturday, causing the collapse of a bridge this week while it scythed through provinces along the Red River, the area's biggest.

Across the country, the typhoon and subsequent landslides and floods have killed 179 people while 145 were missing, the government estimated on Wednesday.

Mai Van Khiem, head of the national weather bureau, told state media that the water level in the Red River in Hanoi was at its highest since 2004, warning of serious widespread flooding in the provinces surrounding the capital in the days to come.

Thousands of people were evacuated from the city on Wednesday. Police, soldiers and volunteers helped residents to leave their homes on the riverbanks as the water level rose rapidly.

“All residents must leave,” he said, refusing to be named. “We are bringing them to public buildings turned into temporary shelters or they can stay with relatives. There has been so much rain and the water is rising quickly.”

Yagi has also forced the closure of many factories and flooded warehouses in industrial hubs east of Hanoi, with some only expected to resume full operations after weeks, executives said.

The disruptions threaten global supply chains as Vietnam hosts large operations of multinationals. Vietnam’s state-run power utility EVN said on Wednesday that it had cut off power from some flooded parts of the capital due to safety concerns.

Some schools in Hanoi have told students to stay home for the rest of the week, while thousands of residents of low-lying areas have been evacuated, the government and state media said.

Nearer the city center, charity Blue Dragon Children’s Foundation evacuated its office on Tuesday, after authorities warned of flood risks.

“People were moving frantically, moving their motorbikes, relocating items,” said spokesperson Carlota Torres Lliro, expressing concern for dozens of children and families living in makeshift houses by the river.

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