

Typhoon Kills 89 in Vietnam Ahead of APEC Summit



Hanoi, November 8 (RHC)-- The death toll from a typhoon that struck Vietnam's south-central coast last weekend, causing widespread flooding, has risen to 89 with 18 others still missing, the government said Tuesday. Typhoon Damrey caused extensive damage ahead of this week's Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation summit that will be attended by leaders from around the world, although the meetings in the central city of Danang will not be affected.

However, the ancient town of Hoi An, a 30-minute drive away, was badly flooded and it remains unclear whether scheduled visits Saturday by the spouses of APEC leaders will go ahead. An official from the National Committee for Search and Rescue Operations said soldiers, police, militiamen and villagers have been mobilized to search for the missing.

Those who perished were killed by collapsing houses, washed away by floods or drowned in capsized ships. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media, said the storm also injured 174 others. Weather forecasters said water levels in most rivers in the region were declining, but the Vietnam Disaster Management Authority said parts of a main highway were still covered with up to a meter (three feet) of water, disrupting traffic.

The disaster agency said the government has ordered relief aid of \$44 million for the typhoon's victims. It was the second natural disaster to hit the Southeast Asian country in a month. About 75 people died and

28 others were reported missing in several northern and central provinces last month by flooding triggered by a tropical storm.

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