

Torrential Rains Continue to Lash Southern Latin America



Rio de Janeiro, July 9 (Xinhua-RHC) -- Torrential rains continued to lash southern Latin America this week, including Brazil and Uruguay.

Brazilian media reported Tuesday that the number of sites declared to be in a state of emergency due to heavy rainfall and flooding rose to 121 in Brazil's southernmost state of Rio Grande do Sul. That number represents 24.3 percent of the state's townships.

At least 145 cities in the southern state were affected by rains and floods, with some 20,436 people forced to leave their homes, the report said, citing the latest press release from Brazil's Civil Defense. Officials have also reported two deaths and a missing 23-year-old woman as a result of the floods.

In neighboring Uruguay, the number of people evacuated along the country's western Atlantic coast rose by 300 to 1,576 on Tuesday, Uruguay's National Emergencies System (SINAE) said.

The level of the region's Uruguay River, which runs along the borders between Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina, has risen from over seven meters in areas of Uruguay to 20 meters in parts of Rio Grande do Sul, overflowing its banks and inundating surrounding towns.

Uruguay's worst-hit town is Paysandu in the department of Paysandu, which is located 400 km northwest of the capital Montevideo, and where 764 people have been evacuated, SINAIE said.

Uruguay's police said six roadways continued to be cut off by flooding.

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