

Rescue on as Typhoon Yagi leaves 40 missing, 63 dead in Vietnam

AFP – Emergency workers raced to evacuate thousands of people from severe floods Tuesday after Typhoon Yagi swept through northern Vietnam, killing 63 people and leaving 40 others missing.

Yagi struck on Saturday with winds in excess of 149 kilometres (92 miles) per hour, making it the most powerful typhoon to hit northern Vietnam in 30 years according to meteorologists.

The storm downed bridges, tore roofs off buildings, damaged factories and triggered widespread flooding and landslides.

The north of the country – densely populated and a major manufacturing hub for global tech firms including Samsung – is now battling serious flooding, with several communities partially underwater.

One-storey homes in parts of Thai Nguyen and Yen Bai cities were almost completely submerged in the early hours of Tuesday, with residents waiting on the roofs for help.

Rescue forces were trying to reach residential areas to retrieve old people and children. On social media, relatives of those stuck in floodwater posted desperate pleas for help and supplies.

In Hanoi, communities along the swollen and fast-moving Red River, which flows through the capital, were also partially under water, with people forced to evacuate.

Phan Thi Tuyet, 50, who lives close to the river, said she had never experienced such high water.

“I have lost everything, all gone. I had to come to higher ground to save our lives. We can not bring with us any of the furniture. Everything is under water now.”

As well as the dead and missing, flooding and landslides have also injured at least 752 people, officials at the ministry of agriculture said Tuesday.

– Bridge collapse –

Authorities stopped heavy vehicles crossing a major bridge over the Red River in central Hanoi Tuesday and suspended a train line across Long Bien bridge as the water level rose.

The action followed the dramatic collapse of a bridge higher up the river in northern Phu Tho province Monday.

Pictures on state media showed half of the 375-metre Phong Chau bridge gone.

Five people who were crossing the bridge at the time have been rescued, but eight others were still missing Tuesday, authorities said.

Forecasters warned central Hanoi would be affected by flooding later Tuesday.

The storm has also caused power blackouts and major disruptions to factories in northern Vietnam, which is a major production hub for global tech firms such as Samsung and Foxconn.

At least 24 others were killed as Yagi tore through southern China and the Philippines before hitting Vietnam.

Typhoons in the region are forming closer to the coast, intensifying more rapidly, and staying over land longer due to climate change, according to a study published in July.

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