

Philippines: At least 146 people dead after Typhoon Rai hits country - More than 300,000 people forced to evacuate

Monday 20 December 2021, by [BAYNESS Megan](#), [Sky News](#) (Date first published: 19 December 2021).

At least 227 cities and towns have been without electricity after Typhoon Rai hit the country, with power only being restored in 21 areas

At least 146 people have died in the Philippines after its strongest typhoon of the year caused devastation across the country.

Governor Arthur Yap of Bohol province, which is in the country's Central Visayas region, announced 72 deaths have been recorded in the area.

At least 39 other typhoon deaths were reported by the disaster-response agency and the national police.

Nearly 100,000 evacuated after Typhoon Rai hits the Philippines

Officials on Dinagat Islands, one of the southeastern provinces first pounded by the typhoon, separately reported 10 deaths just from a few towns.

However, Mr Yap has warned the number of fatalities may still increase as only 42 of 48 mayors in Bohol have been able to report back to him due to downed communications.

A further 10 people have been reported missed and 13 have been injured in Typhoon Rai - which at its most powerful packed winds of 121mph.

Hundreds of areas left without electricity

In statements posted on Facebook, Mr Yap ordered mayors in his province of more than 1.2 million people to invoke their emergency powers to secure a large number of food packages and drinking water.

He added that it was an urgent problem since water stations were down due to a power outage caused by the typhoon.

At least 227 towns and cities were left without electricity due to the extreme weather event, with only 21 areas since having their power restored, officials said.

The Philippine Coastguard said on Sunday that a total of 869 passengers, drivers, and cargo helpers remain stranded on vessels in Eastern Visayas, Central Visayas, and North Eastern Mindanao and 163 boats are still taking shelter as a precautionary measure.

*MARITIME SAFETY ADVISORY: As of 4PM today, 19 December 2021, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) has monitored the following: [pic.twitter.com/s6aKIYWta](https://twitter.com/s6aKIYWta)
— Philippine Coast Guard (@coastguardph) December 19, 2021*

More than 300,000 people forced to evacuate

The country has been hit with landslides and extensive flooding due to the typhoon which rampaged through the central island provinces on Thursday and Friday.

The government said about 780,000 people were affected, including more than 300,000 residents who had to evacuate their homes.

Floodwaters rose rapidly in Bohol's riverside town of Lobo, where locals were trapped on their roofs and up trees until they could be rescued by the coast guard.

On Dinagat Islands, an official said the roofs of nearly all the houses, including emergency shelters, had been damaged or blown away.

President Rodrigo Duterte flew to the region on Saturday where he promised to provide two billion pesos (£30 million) in aid.

He is due to visit Bohol province on Sunday.

Three regional airports were also damaged in the typhoon, two of which still remain closed.

Unfortunately, such an event isn't rare in the Philippines, with around 20 storms and typhoons battering the country each year.

The archipelago is located in the Pacific Ring of Fire region, making it one of the world's most disaster-prone countries.

- Sky News. Sunday 19 December 2021 15:17, UK:
<https://news.sky.com/story/philippines-at-least-146-people-dead-after-typhoon-rai-hits-country-12499704>

Nearly 100,000 people have been evacuated after a powerful typhoon hit the Philippines.

Around 10,000 villages lie in the path of the typhoon, which has a 400-kilometre (248-mile) wide rain band and is one of the strongest to hit the country this year.

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In one video, shared online by the coastguard, a baby was saved from floodwater that reached neck height on the rescuers.

*PANOORIN: Sinikap ng dalawang Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) rescuers na ito na mailikas ang isang buwang gulang na sanggol sa kasagsagan ng pagbaha sa Barangay Tablon, Cagayan de Oro City ngayong araw, ika-16 ng Disyembre 2021. pic.twitter.com/I1l2k3Hr4H
— Philippine Coast Guard (@coastguardph) December 16, 2021*

Officials have also warned some high-risk areas could be devastated by flash floods, landslides and tidal surges after Typhoon Rai reached sustained winds of 185kph (115mph).

Gusts of up to 230kph (143mph) blew from the Pacific Ocean into the Siargao Islands.

There were no immediate reports of casualties or major damage but military and coastguard personnel have been helping residents stranded by fast-rising waters.

Domestic flights have been cancelled and schools and workplaces have been shut in vulnerable areas.

However, crowding in evacuation centres has complicated efforts to keep people socially distanced after authorities detected the country's first Omicron COVID-19 infections.

Ben Evardone, governor of Eastern Samar province, said he had suspended vaccinations in his region of nearly half a million people due to the typhoon.

More than 70% of villagers in the province have had at least one jab, and Mr Evardone expressed concern because some vaccines stored in Eastern Samar will expire in a few months.

He said overcrowding was "impossible" in the limited number of evacuation centres in his province, where more than 32,000 people have been moved to safety.

Philippine Coast Guard personnel assist in the evacuation of residents due to flooding caused by Typhoon Rai in Cagayan De Oro City, Philippines, December 16, 2021. Philippine Coast Guard/ Handout via REUTERS. THIS IMAGE HAS BEEN SUPPLIED BY A THIRD PARTY. NO RESALES. NO ARCHIVES. MANDATORY CREDIT

Image: Overcrowding in evacuation centres has made social distancing impossible. Pic: Philippines Coast Guard

The country has been one of the hardest hit in south-east Asia, with confirmed infections of more than 2.8 million and more than 50,000 deaths.

Around 20 storms and typhoons hit the Philippines each year, which the archipelago located in the seismically active Pacific “Ring of Fire” region.

Megan Baynes

News reporter @megbaynes

- Sky News. Thursday 16 December 2021 19:43, UK:
<https://news.sky.com/story/nearly-100-000-evacuated-after-typhoon-rai-hits-the-philippines-12497569>

P.S.

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