

South China prepares for more storms after 24 die

March 22 2013



Hailstones are shown after a heavy storm hit parts of Dongguan, in south China's Guangdong province, March 20, 2013. South China has been warned to prepare for more heavy rain and hailstorms, as five provinces continue to repair damage caused by severe weather which resulted in the deaths of at least 24 people.

Southern China was warned Friday to prepare for more heavy rain and hailstorms after 24 people died when severe weather lashed five provinces, including a "super-tornado" in one city and egg-sized

hailstones.

The [extreme weather](#) will continue until Sunday, the [China](#) Meteorological Centre said, after parts of the country were battered by huge hailstorms and heavy rain which caused widespread devastation and a ferry to capsize.

"All parts of [southern China](#) should take measures to be on guard against the negative influence of thunder and lightning, high wind and hail," the meteorological centre said.

The storms began on Tuesday, but climaxed the following day when a ferry overturned in a river in the city of Nanping, in the south-eastern province of Fujian, killing 11 people.

Chinese newspapers Friday showed images of overturned cars and flattened buildings from Dongguan, in Guangdong province in the south, the scene of nine deaths during the storm.



Damaged houses are shown after a tornado hit Yongzhou, in central China's Hunan province, March 20, 2013. The tornado struck in the early morning and affected over 110,000 people, state media reports.

The city was hit by a "super tornado" on Wednesday afternoon, making it difficult for emergency response teams to react, the China Daily said, citing a local official.

Force eight winds swept through the area, the newspaper added.

Online news reports showed images of egg-sized hailstones and car windows smashed by the force of the storm. Other reports said the strong winds had caused a refrigerator to be blown from a store, narrowly missing a passing motorist.

Most of the deaths in Dongguan were caused by residential buildings collapsing.

Across the storm region a total of 2,000 structures collapsed and 248,000 were damaged, media reported.

Local authorities in Nanping said they were continuing to investigate the number of missing from the ferry accident. The official Xinhua news agency said four people had not been found.

Other provinces affected by storms and torrential rain were nearby Jiangxi, Hunan in central China and Guizhou in the southwest.

About 215,000 people were evacuated from their homes and the

economic loss is estimated at 1.31 billion yuan (\$210 million), the China Daily cited the ministry of civil affairs as saying.

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