

Lake created by coal waste landslide floods Bosnian highway

February 25 2017



Workers survey damage after a landslide near the Bosnian town of Kakanj located 50 kms north of Sarajevo on Friday, Feb. 24, 2017. More than 150 people have been forced to evacuate their homes in central Bosnia due to a major landslide at an open pit coal mine that threatened to bury their villages. (AP Photo/Amel Emric)

Flooding from a new lake created by a landslide of mine waste shut down one of Bosnia's main highways Saturday and raised fears of further

flooding.

Earlier this week, a massive landslide of mine waste from an open pit coal mine had blocked a river near the central Bosnia town of Kakanj, creating the lake.

The lake overflowed Saturday morning following heavy rain overnight, forcing the closure of a busy highway connecting the capital of Sarajevo with the central town of Zenica. The town of Kakanj is 50 kilometers (31 miles) north of Sarajevo.

Fahrudin Solak, a Civil Protection official, said emergency crews have redirected drivers to alternative roads and were struggling to defuse the lake's flooding threat by channeling its water into drainage ducts.

Authorities on Friday evacuated more than 150 people from two villages in the direct path of the landslide, Ribnica and Mramor.

Officials from the Kakanj coal mine said the evacuees will receive compensation for their lost homes and will likely have to abandon their villages permanently.

Ismet Delibasic of Ribnica said the only thing left for villagers to do was to wait for the complete "disaster" of watching their houses disappear amid the [landslide](#).

"Regardless of the amount, compensation alone cannot erase the trauma," Delibasic said.



Engineers inspect the top soil after a landslide near the Bosnian town of Kakanj , 50 kms north of Sarajevo on Friday, Feb. 24, 2017. More than 150 people have been forced to evacuate their homes in central Bosnia due to a major landslide at the nearby open pit coal mine that has threatened to bury their villages. (AP Photo/Amel Emric)



An abandoned house near the Bosnian town of Kakanj, 50 kms north of Sarajevo on Friday, Feb. 24, 2017. More than 150 people have been evacuated from their homes in central Bosnia due to a major landslide at the nearby open pit coal mine that threatens to bury their villages. (AP Photo/Amel Emric)



Local man Islet Delibasic talks to journalists after a landslide near the Bosnian town of Kakanj , 50 kms north of Sarajevo on Friday, Feb. 24, 2017. More than 150 people have been evacuated from their homes in central Bosnia due to a major landslide at the nearby open pit coal mine that has threatened to bury their villages. (AP Photo/Amel Emric)



Engineers surveying the damage after a landslide near the Bosnian town of Kakanj, 50 kms north of Sarajevo on Friday, Feb. 24, 2017. More than 150 people have been forced to evacuate their homes in central Bosnia due to a major landslide at a nearby open pit coal mine that has threatened to bury their villages. (AP Photo/Amel Emric)

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