

Spain hit by more wildfires as heatwave continues

June 29 2019



A Canadair drops water over a wildfire in the outskirts of Cenicientos in central Spain as Spain was hit by more wildfires amid soaring temperatures

Spain was hit by more wildfires as temperatures remained sky-high in the Europe-wide heatwave, authorities said Saturday, just as firefighters

finally managed to contain another blaze.

More than 700 soldiers, hundreds of firefighters, water-dropping planes, helicopters and vehicles battled four wildfires in the sizzling-hot centre of Spain and its northeast, parts of which were due to reach temperatures of 42 degrees Celsius (107.6 degrees Fahrenheit).

A fire that started Friday evening in the central town of Almorox had already burnt more than 2,000 hectares (4,900 acres), spilling over into the Madrid region and forcing the evacuation of a village, emergency services said.

Another blaze near the city of Toledo some 60 kilometres (37 miles) to the southeast also forced the evacuation of 22 residents, as water-dropping aircraft assisted firefighters on the ground, according to the regional government.

And some 60 kilometres to the west of Almorox, another fire raged.

Meanwhile, a major blaze in the northeastern region of Catalonia had finally been contained and "was in the process of being stabilised," the regional government said in a statement.

But it warned that a small part of the blaze remained of concern.



Spain's weather agency said temperatures on Saturday would exceed 36 degrees Celsius (97 degrees Fahrenheit)

"Today the weather conditions continue to be extreme and the next hours will be critical and decisive, not just for this fire, but also for the rest of the territory," it said.

The fires come as Europe is hit by a major heatwave, with temperatures in some parts of France reaching record highs.

Spain's weather agency said temperatures on Saturday would be above 36 degrees Celsius in a large part of the country, and would likely reach or go over 40 degrees C in the centre including Madrid and south.

Meteorologists blame a blast of hot air from northern Africa for scorching temperatures early in the European summer, but the heatwave is due to die down from Sunday.

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